

High Schools, Beware

The best-seller "A Season on the Brink" introduced millions of readers to the precocious Indiana high school basketball player Damon Bailey. As an eighth grader, he caught Bob Knight's eye in a way that moved the smitten coach to ask a friend, "Who does Damon remind you of?"

The friend named a shooting guard from Indiana's 1987 national champions. "Steve Alford."

Knight said, "No." The friend clicked down a few notches. "Stu Robinson." Again Knight said no and so the friend said, "Who

then?" "Jerry West." Some other day we will talk about Damon Bailey as the next Jerry West, but for today's conversation he serves best as a symbol of a subject that is discomfiting, if not discouraging. Practically unnoticed, high school sports has become a duplicate of the college and pro

An Indiana cable-TV outfit did one of Bailey's games on a pay-per-view basis. More than 300 households paid \$10 each to have Bailey delivered into their dens. The Tyson-Spinks fight sold fewer than 200 houses in Bailey's bailiwick.

A Minneapolis TV station paid \$1.5 million to broadcast the state high school hockey tournament the next three years.

ESPN, the national cable sports network, has a weekly half-hour show on high school sports. It has televised the Texas high school football and New York City basketball championship games as well as all-star games in both sports.

■ In 1987, Reebok and Coca-Cola made a five-year, \$1.92 million deal with the California Interscholastic Federation to sponsor athletic programs.

The Big Money Starts to Roll In

■ Nike gives 30-50 top high school coaches as much as \$250,000 annually in merchandise and cash.

School Properties U.S.A., Inc., is working with California schools and Champion Sporting Goods on merchandising agreements. Put together by the man who created NFL Properties, Inc., such agreements could generate "multi-millions" for schools across the nation, said Larry Kent.

A national high school basketball game of the week likely will be the key element in a cable-TV deal between SportsChannel America and the National Association of State High School Associations.

"It's not a done deal, but it's close," said Warren Brown, the school group's assistant director.

Though reports have estimated the deal as worth "millions of dollars," Brown said the figure was much lower. He also denied reports of a national championship tournament. He said, "We'll be programming only regularly scheduled season games and state tournaments. There'll be no made-for-TV games."

In addition to these recent developments, there still is the daily newspapers' work at the high school level. Such work is the staple of most sports sections because most newspapers are in small cities where the high school is the community's heartbeat.

We could say there is nothing new here. The 1954 Illinois state basketball championship game was on television. Twenty-two years ago, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar's high school team out of New York City lost only once, that to a team visiting from Bethesda, Md.

Scouting Day Care Centers Next?

Even if TV and national competition is old stuff, there still is something unsettling in the recent commercialization of high school games. A national game of the week? Multimillion dollar merchandising? Shoe deals for coaches?

What's next? A national letter-of-intent for eighth graders? Coaches prowing the halls of day care centers to scout the children of tall

Defending themselves against skeptics' worries, high school officials have said the right things. They will control television; it will not control them. The 17,000 principals will not allow a handful of schools to dominate the TV package. In any case, TV money will be so small as to be insignificant. Education is the schools' most important product, not athletics. Schools will use TV to tell positive stories of sportsmanship and drug education. They want to create interest which will result in parents supporting their local schools.

Noble goals. You bet. So noble that our nation's universities have preached them for a century.

Alas, with depressing regularity our colleges have shown us that preaching those goals is easier than reaching them. From the Pandora's box of commercialization flew a thousand wretched little demons eager to befoul nobility.

I love high school sports. As for high school games going big-time commercial, I have only one thing to say: Uh-oh.

Bulldogs, Eagles Near '92 Football Agreement

□ Bell Is Defensive Coordinator, Page 3D By Thomas O'Toole

Staff Writer ATHENS - Georgia and Georgia Southern are on the verge of signing a one-game football contract for the 1992 season, officials from both schools said

Tuesday. "I really think it's going to get done in the not-too-distant future," Georgia assistant athletic director John Shafer said. "We're going to try to go ahead with it.

The details have not been finalized and the contract hasn't been signed, but we've had serious conversations."

Added Georgia Southern athletic director Bucky Wagner, "I think it's pretty well on track." The tentative date for the game is Oct.

3, 1992 in Athens. Georgia athletic director Vince Dooley said last week that he favored the game but that new coach Ray Goff was unsure if he wanted to play the Eagles, who belong to the Division I-AA and began their football program in 1982. "Ray's a young coach," Dooley said of his 33-year-old successor. "We'll talk about it some more."

Goff said Tuesday, however, he would adhere to Dooley's wishes.

"He's my boss, and I'll go along with him," Goff said. "Anything on scheduling should come from him."

According to Shafer, negotiations with Wagner will resume once Dooley returns from a brief vacation.

When Dooley was head coach, he and Georgia Southern had discussed a twoyear contract. "But that was before Ray [was hired]," Wagner said.

Wagner said he is happy with the oneyear deal but hopes for a more lengthy agreement in the future.

"They [Georgia officials] certainly have apprehensions about playing us, but I think it's really good for the state," he said. "We'd like to play every year."

BULLDOGS Continued on 5D



WILLIAM BERRY/Photo Illustration

The Braves are sticking to their guns and betting the ranch on promising young pitchers such as (left to right) Derek Lilliquist, Tom Glavine, Pete Smith, John Smoltz and Tommy Greene.

MODIFIED EDIS

Braves Are Rounding Up What Could Be Baseball's Most Youthful Rotation

□ Alicea Cleared to Resume Normal Activities, Page 3D By Joe Strauss

Staff Writer

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. — A tin of snuff and youthful resilience is their bond. On many other teams, they might fit one by one into a rotation of elder protectors. But here and now with the Atlanta Braves, a franchise that sacrificed its present for what it sees as its near future, five young pitchers must toughen quickly.

They include:

John Smoltz, the peach-fuzzed owner of a fastball-

curve combination that general manager Bobby Cox lik-

ens to "Dwight Gooden stuff." Tom Glavine, a former hockey player who shunned

the NHL's Los Angeles Kings to sign with the Braves. ■ Pete Smith, once considered more talented than motivated when he was a No. 1 pick of the Philadelphia Phillies, but now recognized as a prospect who has ar-

Tommy Greene, a hulking, homespun kid nicknamed "Jethro" with an overwhelming fastball who was plucked from the Tobacco Road outpost of Whiteville,

■ Derek Lilliquist, the former University of Georgia All-America considered "the perfect pitcher" when the Braves made him their first choice and sixth pick overall the 1987 amateur draft.

Smoltz (21), Glavine (22), Pete Smith (23) finished last season in the Braves' starting rotation. The oldest of the starters is Zane Smith (28). Should either Lilliquist (22) or Greene (21) become the fifth starter, the Braves would have the major leagues' youngest rotation.

BRAVES Continued on 9D

Walters-Bloom Judge Says Trial to Begin, Not a 'Morality Play'

By Chris Mortensen Staff Writer

CHICAGO — Almost two years since their dealings with college athletes were exposed, former sports agents Norby Walters and Lloyd Bloom today are scheduled to go on trial here in a U.S. District Court on charges of racketeering, mail fraud, wire fraud and

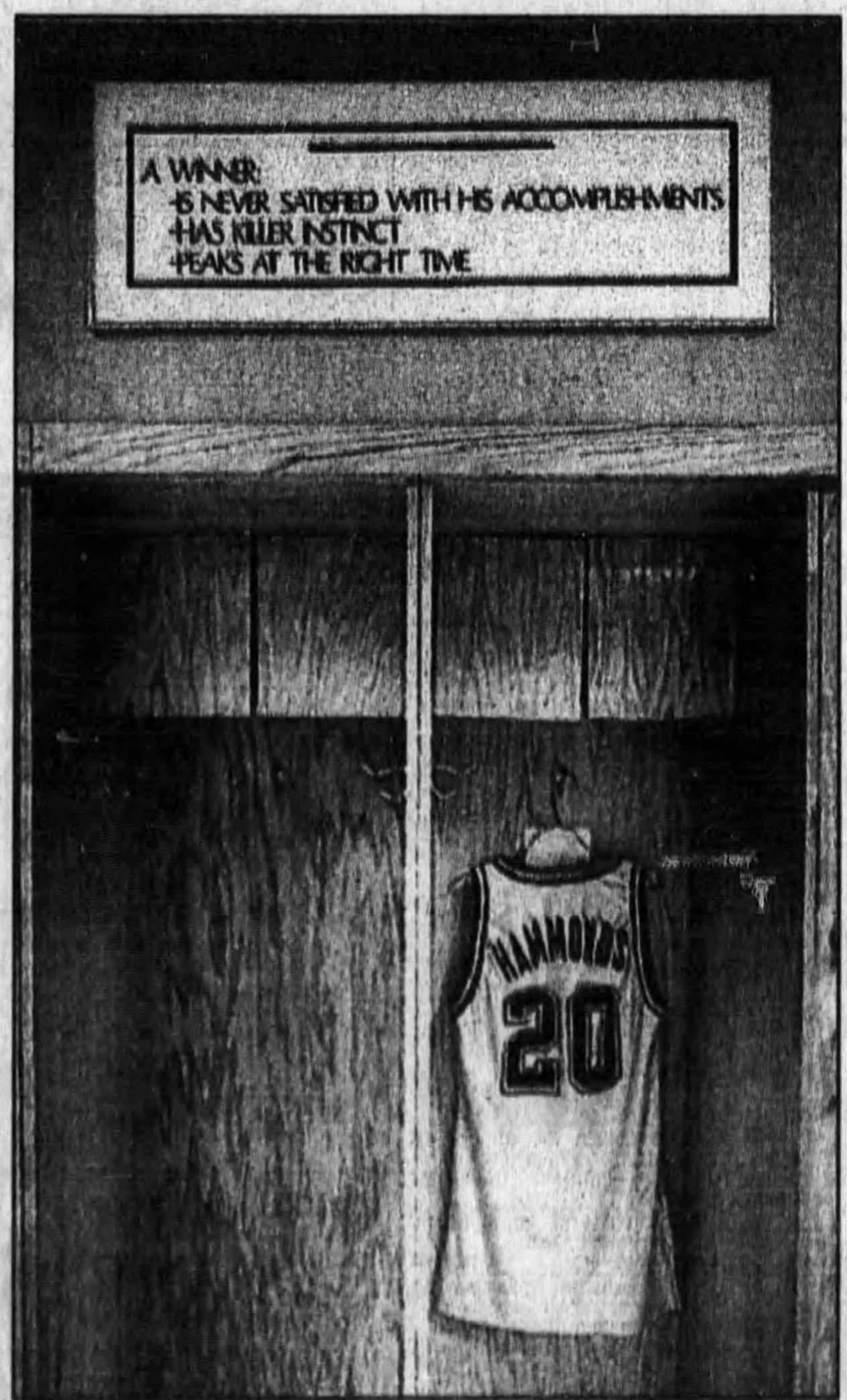
The trial, expected to last at least one month and possibly two, begins with jury selection before U.S. District Judge George M. Marovich, who says both prosecutors and defense attorneys have exhausted their pretrial legal maneuvers and adds, "It is time to put the tourniquet on this baby and stop the bleeding."

There is added intrigue because the trial will match Chicago's two most recent United States Attorneys: Anton Valukas, currently in office, and Dan Webb, now in private practice and Bloom's attorney.

Webb's services come at a high price, estimated at between \$250,000 and \$350,000. Bloom's parents, who once owned a credit collection agency in New York, have agreed to foot his legal bills, but will deduct the cost from his inheritance.

Now chiefly represented by New York laywer Robert Gold, Walters has run up steep legal bills. He recently sold his lucrative New York entertainment agen-Prior to becoming a sports agent in early 1985, Walters was a leading booking agent for black music acts for 20 years.

WALTERS Continued on DD



FRANK NIEMEIR/Staff Tom Hammonds's jersey will be retired tonight before the North Carolina game.

Hammonds Gets Jump On Party to Celebrate Retirement of No. 20

□ Tech Gets UNC in Alexander, Not Omni, Page 4D □ Scouting North Carolina, Page 4D

> By Thomas Stinson Staff Writer

The party was still nearly 46 hours away, but Tom Hammonds could not restrain his own festive spirit and decided to mingle with some of his guests-to-be late Monday. It was dark and drizzling when he came upon the early merrymakers, Georgia Tech students lined up in a parking lot off Third Street, around 11 p.m. They were waiting overnight to pick up tickets for the most salient interlude in Hammonds's life. Hammonds wanted to order pizza for the group.

■ Ga. Tech-North Carolina: 9 p.m., ESPN

"It was kinda nice," he said. "One guy had a couch ? and a TV with a VCR. We sat back for a while and watched a Robert Townsend special."

Beautiful. The Fabulous Fishin' Forward parties it up big-time by catching some tube out in the rain. Hand him a wrench and a carburetor and the guy might still be out there.

Tech retires Hammonds's number tonight, before the Jackets play North Carolina in Alexander Memorial Coliseum (9 p.m., ESPN). If Hammonds accepts the honor as he has the other trappings the sport has presented him these past four years, he'll glare for a moment

TECH Continued on 5D

Brawl at Hotel Causes Arrest of Lavette

Robert Lavette, a former running back for Georgia Tech, the Dallas Cowboys and the Atlanta Falcons, was arrested Monday night in connection with a Jan. 22 fight at an Atlanta hotel.

Lavette, 25, who left Georgia Tech as its all-time leading rusher, receiver and scorer, was charged with kidnapping, battery and aggravated battery at the time of his arrest, said Investigator R.J. Lawrence of the Atlanta Assault Squad. Those charges were reduced to two counts of simple battery by Municipal Court Judge Andrew Mickle at a hearing Tuesday.

The charges stemmed from an incident involving Lavette's former girlfriend, Arlecia Sheppard, 24, who works at the Hyatt Regency on Peachtree Street. Lavette called and asked to see Miss Sheppard at the hotel, but when she refused to lcave with him, he began to

drag her from the hotel, Investigator Lawrence said. Three security guards came to her aid and one, Benjamin Franklin Pierce, 40, received a broken collarbone in the ensuing scuffle, the investigator said. Miss Sheppard sustained a concussion when she was thrown to the sidewalk by Lavette, he said.

Lavette, who lives in Powder Springs, was arrested at his job Monday night at an auto dealership on Thorton Road in Lithia Springs.

Lavette was released on his own recognizance after Tuesday's court hearing.

Lavette was a fourth-round pick of the Cowboys in 1985. He signed as a free agent with the Falcons in 1988

but no longer is on the roster.

-Sandra McIntosh

Braves Count on Young Pitchers' Improvement

From Page 1D

"I don't think it could have worked out any better," said Cox. "We're at the stage where we want to be.'

When Cox arrived in Atlanta in October 1985, the Braves had made Ira Thomas Greene their No. 1 selection and the 14th overall pick in the previous summer's draft. In 1984, Glavine was taken in the second round by the Braves and the fourth round by the NHL's Kings.

Cox wasted little time implementing his plan. "It was a matter of putting the club back in the baseball business," said Braves director of scouting Paul Snyder.

The process hasn't been without

In his first trade, Cox dealt Steve Bedrosian and outfielder Milt Thompson to the Phillies for catcher Ozzie Virgil and Pete Smith. Bedrosian went on to win a National League Cy Young award with Philadelphia two years later while saving more games (40) than the entire Atlanta bullpen. Smith went 1-8 in 1986, had shoulder surgery and became a questionable acquisition. Two seasons later, he is a highly sought property.

Glavine, Smoltz and Pete Smith no longer will be afforded the excuse of first-year pitchers robbed of minor-league experience. Cox and manager Russ Nixon expect them to have been toughened by a 54-106 "season.

"They're major-league pitchers now. We expect them to keep us in every ballgame," says Cox.

Pete Smith jumped to the National League without stopping at the Braves' Class AAA team in Richmond, Va. Glavine, a lefthander, was promoted after only seven wins in 29 starts at Richmond. Smoltz was in the Atlanta rotation less than a year after appearing at Class A Great Falls.

All acknowledge the rapid advancement was intimidating and eventually caused introspection.

Pete Smith, who started 2-6 at the Braves' AA team in Greenville, S.C., the year before, arrived after being excoriated by then-manager Jim Beauchamp and pitching coach Leo Mazzone, who saw Smith rationalizing his poor performances rather than addressing them. "We got him out of that stuff in a hurry," said Mazzone. "He's a different

pitcher now." Before the All-Star break last season, Smith struggled to a 3-9 record with a 5.14 earned run average. After the break, he went 4-6 with a 2.27 ERA and pitched three shut-

outs during a seven-week period. Glavine has rushed through a system with little left-handed opposition. Few, if any, contest his

fortitude.

Glavine never missed a start last season, going a hard-luck 7-17. At one point, he received an average 2.6 runs during a seven-game losing streak. His last 10 appearances included nine quality starts. yet he was 4-8 after the All-Star break. The arrival of Nixon as Chuck Tanner's replacement helped get Glavine through the rough

"It got a little tough to take. You start to wonder if something weird will hurt you or if you're going to get runs," said Glavine. "But you learn from those situations. Hopefully, it's made me tougher.

"For a while, I wondered if they would stick with me. But when Russ came in, he told me I was his guy. That helped."

Given only 12 major-league starts, Smoltz experienced less than a half-season but nonetheless was confronted by his weaknesses.

Smoltz believes he tried to finesse his pitches too much last year rather than allowing the natural movement of his fastball and sweeping curve to carry him. Smoltz walked 33 in 64 innings with Atlanta compared to 37 in 1351/3 innings at Richmond.

"The big thing I have to do is pitch inside. That comes with confidence," Smoltz said. "Challenging hitters is what it's all about. It's how I got here."

Cox readily traded a recalcitrant Doyle Alexander to Detroit in August 1987 for Smoltz, who then was a 20-year-old Class A pitcher. Alexander immediately went 9-0 in helping Detroit to a division title. Smoltz dominated the International League last summer, going 10-5 with a 2.79 ERA. The Braves have faith that he returns more self-assured.

"We like John's makeup," said Cox. "There's nothing that should really stand in his way. He just didn't get a chance to start the year like Pete and Tommy [Glavine] did."

Barring surprise developments, the fifth spot will go to Greene, Lilliquist or the veteran Charlie Puleo.

Braves scout Smoky Burgess, who signed Greene, calls him "the best young pitcher I've ever scouted." When Greene signed at 18, Burgess predicted it would be five years before he pitched in Atlanta. This is Greene's fifth year.

"The arm is definitely there," said Mazzone. "Tommy just needs to mature. He's this big kid with this big ability. He just needs to channel

Greene's ability enabled him to pitch several low-hit games at Richmond last season. Cox equates his ability to Smoltz's. But Greene's impetuous nature is blamed for what inning per game that limited him to else, but it still takes time."

when he balked home two runs.

"The difference between Tommy and Lilliquist is that Derek would go out and make adjustments if he had a bad inning," Mazzone said. "With Tommy it would ruin

"I've grown up a lot," Greene insists. "I struggled, but you've got to learn from that. I know I have. That's why I think I have a shot."

Lilliquist speaks analytically of mechanics and confidence, two of his strongest traits. He has immersed himself in the auditions for fifth starter, showing up lighter and fitter in order to confront the pressure of being a non-roster

"Some will buckle under it," Snyder said of the pressure. "He's going to thrive on it. You're not going to deny him."

"I know what it takes for me to get prepared," said Lilliquist, who worked out in Richmond during the off-season. "I can recognize hitters' strengths and weaknesses. I know how to get the most of my

Snyder describes Lilliquist as "the perfect pitcher," always in command of himself and his assortment of pitches. Few can recall him ever being cowed.

"When Derek got here, it took him about two or three days to establish himself as the No. 1 guy," said University of Georgia head baseball coach Steve Webber. "Everybody knew it, not just him."

At Georgia, Lilliquist had a 31-12 record and also established a career home run record (35) that stood until last weekend and hit .308 as a designated hitter.

"I'm in competition with all the pitchers here, at least that's the way I'm looking at it," Lilliquist says. "As soon as I go out on the field, I'm trying to make them say, 'He's doing everything right. He's our guy.' Whenever I'm out there, I want to compete."

Beyond the breakthrough bunch are reinforcements David Miller. Kent Mercker, Rusty Richards and Andy Nezelek. All were obtained since Cox's arrival.

"I think they're in better shape with pitching quality and quantity than anybody else in the National League," says Toronto general manager Pat Gillick, who has approached Cox on several possible

Steve Avery, last year's No. 1 pick, already is considered to be close. Because they have stayed with their youth, the Braves no. longer look to a farm system barren of left-handed pitching.

"You've got to be patient," said Gillick. "Pitching can make you became a predictable one horrible competitive quicker than anything a 7-17 record. The first loss came Braves Notebook, Page 2D

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Walters-Bloom Jury Selection Begins in Chicago

From Page 1D

The government, and the taxpayer, is bearing considerable expense in an attempt to prosecute two sports agents who did what many say has been standard practice in the business, namely the premature signing of college athletes in -violation of NCAA rules.

show that Walters, 55, and Bloom 29, were part of a criminal racketeering conspiracy that involved the money and muscle of New York or-Michael ganized crime boss

Attorneys for Walters and Bloom have given mixed signals on defense strategy.

Valters has filed recent motions which reveal he will attempt to prove legal counsel had advised him that no law was being broken when he signed college athletes to representation contracts.

Bloom's defense will attempt to put the NCAA, college athletics, amateurism and the NFL on trial, according to sources within the defense team. However, Marovich recently

tactics relating to college athletics, according to court transcripts examined Tuesday. "We're going to have a trial. We're not going to have a morality

-- play," Marovich told the lawyers.

warned defense counsel on certain

"There may be a number of woes that beset intercollegiate athletics, but we are having a trial that involves specific universities and specific athletes, and that's what we are going to focus on."

Regardless, defense sources say limited scope will reveal the broader abuse of college athletics.

The stakes are high for both The prosecutors will attempt to sides. Walters and Bloom, who pleaded not guilty after their indictment by a federal grand jury last Aug. 24, each face maximum penalties of 70 years in prison and \$2 million in fines if convicted on all

The underlying factor, which sources say could produce new information relating to Walters's activities in the music business, is the organized crime element raised by the grand jury.

Franzese, who last year said he refused to cooperate with prosecutors, is now scheduled to testify for the government. Franzese was a silent partner with Walters in the music business and provided at least \$50,000 seed money for the sports agent operation, the grand jury

Also on the prosecutors' witness list is Kathy Clements, a rival agent who was beaten by a masked intruder in which police detectives termed a "message beating" on

March 16, 1987. Four days earlier, the Atlanta

time detailed Walters's and Bloom activities, which included the signing of more than 50 college athletes, some of whom were threatened with physical or economic harm if they reneged on contracts, the indictment alleges.

Journal-Constitution for the first

Walters and Bloom have not been charged with the Clements beating, but she says she was threatened by Walters prior to the incident.

Already, one athlete and one agent have pleaded guilty to charges stemming from nvestigation. Former Ohio State All-America

wide receiver Cris Carter, now with

the Philadelphia Eagles, entered a guilty plea to one count each of mail fraud and obstruction of David Lueddeke, a Los Angelesbased agent who also paid Carter

money in college, pleaded guilty to

two counts of perjury and one count

of obstruction of justice. Carter and Lueddeke will be sentenced after the Walters-B trial. Additionally, 43 other athletes entered a pre-trial diversion program devised by the U.S. Attorney's office in which they agreed to reimburse their colleges for scholarship benefits they were not entitled after

signing with the agents.