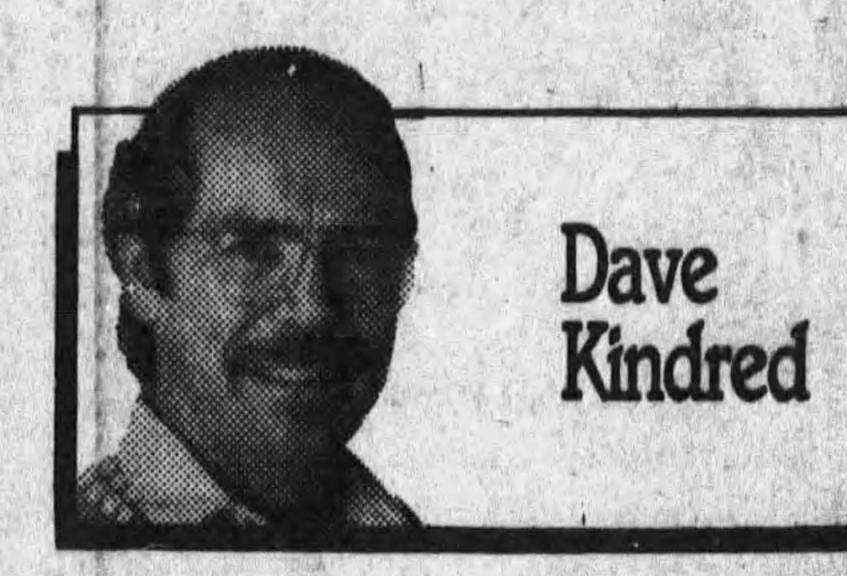
AREA



#### Agents, College Sports Share Same Sickness

Only fools and hypocrites can say the Norby Walters-Lloyd Bloom guilty verdict will make any difference in college athletics. As the respected sports agent Ralph Cindrich said in this newspaper yesterday, the college problem goes deeper than two wiseguy hustlers trying to make a buck by signing up football studs. College athletics is sick. Period, paragraph.

Presidents of universities as well as coaches know the sickness is systemic. They know they are exploiters of young men. Ashamed, they hide the exploitation under the cover of myth. The endearing myth is that college athletics is amateur sports for students. Everyone knows better. It is pro sports making millions of dollars by using cheap labor. The college folks live a lie.

It's college athletics that is corrupt, not just Walters and Bloom, whose only real crimes, as most people understand crime, were threats of physical punishment if athletes backed out of deals. Everything else that Walters and Bloom did is no worse than what many schools do as a matter of routine. The agents were accused of fraud for paying players who then lied in order to keep their scholarships.

A prosecutor defined fraud a lie done to get money. Well. In that case, schools commit fraud daily because the college athletics system is a fraud. Lie to get money? Colleges advertise basketball and football as amateur sports for students. They sell a myth that is a lie. The college games are big business for pros. It's time to treat them as such.

#### Athletes Promised the World, Get Shaft

North Carolina basketball coach Dean Smith has said players should be allowed to have agents while they're in school. Columnists Carl Rowan and Mike Royko have argued that college athletes should be paid some fair share of the revenue their work produces. In editorials saying it's time to make college athletics respectable, The New York Times, Chicago Tribune and Kansas City Star have advocated payments to athletes. Even NCAA executive director Dick Schultz has spoken in favor of \$200 a month payments.

The idea is not to turn the college game into the NFL or NBA. The idea is to be fair. A fraction of one percent of college athletes make it to the pros. Most of those wash out quickly. Too often athletes leave universities without an education let alone a degree. Too often they leave frustrated and bitter. They were promised the world. They got the

We could fix college athletics by admitting the problem. The problem is that we're trying to fit the square peg of college athletics into the round hole of academics. We must create an athletics majors. (We have music majors and art majors.) We must pay a player's way to school as long as he wants to keep trying. (Now there's a five-year limit, with a scholarship good one year at a time, renewed at the coach's whim.) We must be fair, admitting that it's pro sports, and find a way to pay players. (Try trust funds with payments made later, as in Olympic sports.)

We can call it "corruption." But is it? We're talking about under-the-table payments to players that amount to peanuts when judged against what the players as pros should earn. Until the system is reinvented, though, "corruption" will move in lockstep with college athletics. It has been that way for a hundred years. No one does anything about it except write more rules guaranteeing more "corruption." The tolerance of "corruption" leads to one conclusion. The universities think "corruption" is a small price to pay for the millions of dol-lars taken in at the box office.

#### Water Color Painting and Landscaping

How sad. Even the best and brightest of our national educators are co-conspirators in a scheme of exploitation that smacks of

If not, how does Miami (Ohio) University justify its academic history with a football running back named George Swarn? How does Iowa justify the classwork of the wonderful running back Ronnie Harmon?

To become eligible for his senior season - even saying "senior" implies progress as a student; the proper adjective should be "last" - Ronnie Harmon enrolled in Iowa's summer school. He regained his eligibility by racking up a D in water color painting.

Lloyd Bloom's attorney, Dan Webb, spoke of Miami's George Swarn in his opening statement to the jury last month: "Mr. Swarn was allowed to load up on classes such as racquetball, bowling, choral union, community health, track and field, basketball, and he still was placed on academic probation. To become academically eligible for his senior season, he got his grades up by taking one class: Trees and Shrubs."

## Walters-Bloom Jurors: College Are Guilty, Too

By Chris Mortensen Staff Writer

CHICAGO — The forewoman of the federal jury that convicted sports agents Norby Walters and Lloyd Bloom said Friday that there were "no innocent bystanders" in the case.

"I think the message in the trial was that there were no innocent bystanders the agents, the athletes, the universities need to look at themselves just as Norby Walters and Lloyd Bloom," said Majorie

Benson, the forewoman.

Added juror Doris Schloemann: "Schools are as much to blame — all they care about is having a good football team. When they get a good athlete, they'll do anything to keep them in school because we all understood that college football is big business. The message we have for college football is to clean up your act. We all felt that way."

Walters and Bloom were found guilty Thursday by the eight-woman, four-man

jury of racketeering fraud stemming prince dealings with colle quitted Walters and of mail fraud involve Iowa and Michigan

The jury appear ternoon for their file ing that had been cerning forfeiture the racketeering cause defense attorn

riday con-

agreed that Walters will be liable for \$250,000 and Bloom \$145,000.

Walters's attorneys told prosecutors that Walters "clearly had already lost a great amount of money." Many athletes have failed to repay money Walters gave or "loaned" them.

"Some of the jurors felt bad that these guys hadn't paid Norby back," said juror Willie Woodson. "But I also think N and Lloyd knew there was risk in what

AGENTS Continued on 10B

### LADY DOGS WIN NATIONAL TITLE



ATHENS — Georgia coach Suzanne Yoculan (right) lets out a yell after the fifth-seeded Lady Bulldogs wrapped

up their second gymnastics champ years Friday night. Story, Page 3B

## Real Casualties Feared in Tire

□ Wallace Wins Pole on Hoosiers, Page 10B By Ed Hinton Staff Writer

NORTH WILKESBORO, N.C. - The veteran driver stood watching his peers walk by and shook his head gravely. "Somebody in this garage area is going to get killed before this thing is over," he said, meaning the NASCAR tire war that is boiling over. "You just don't know who it's gonna be."

Each Sunday, he said, "every time you

see a tire blow, it's like walking through a mine field, wondering who's going to get it

That driver and another, as well as several crew chiefs, spoke on the condition of anonymity Friday at North Wilkesboro Speedway. Like most other drivers on the NASCAR Winston Cup tour, they say they fear both the political clout and loss of financial support from the giant Goodyear Tire and Rubber Co. and its feisty little rival in stock car racing, Hoosier Racing

But they are been ear for their lives on the tires t ommaies are bringing to the rac trying weekly ustem-made to one-up each the the tires hastily product

competition. "It's bad, and week by week," said and "I've alread

ing to get som something," sa

## Zane Smith Struggles In 7-5 Loss

#### After Braves Go Up 3-0, Giants Storm Right Back

□ Strength at Second Base, Page 5B □ The Braves Report, Page 5B By Joe Strauss Staff Writer

SAN FRANCISCO — Yes, it is early, and the Atlanta Braves' collection of young pitchers has been mostly outstanding. But nagging questions remain.

· One of those questions, opening day starter Zane Smith, resurfaced Friday night in what ended as a 7-5 loss to the San Francisco Giants.

The Braves assumed a 3-0 first-inning lead, then crumbled against a club that has dominated left-handed pitching this season.

Smith's excellent spring training has given way to a bothersome start. One excellent outing last Sunday has been surrounded by two performances reminiscent of his painful 1988, when he was bothered by bone chips in his left elbow. The Braves' anticipated stopper, Smith has started three losses.

"It's his third start. He's coming off good game. It should carry over," said manager Russ Nixon.

The Braves entered Candlestick Park 5-4, having surrendered 25 earned runs in nine games. Giddy over Derek Lilliquist's successful major-league debut and Tom Glavine's run of 18 innings without giving up an earned run, they waited for Smith to share in the suc-

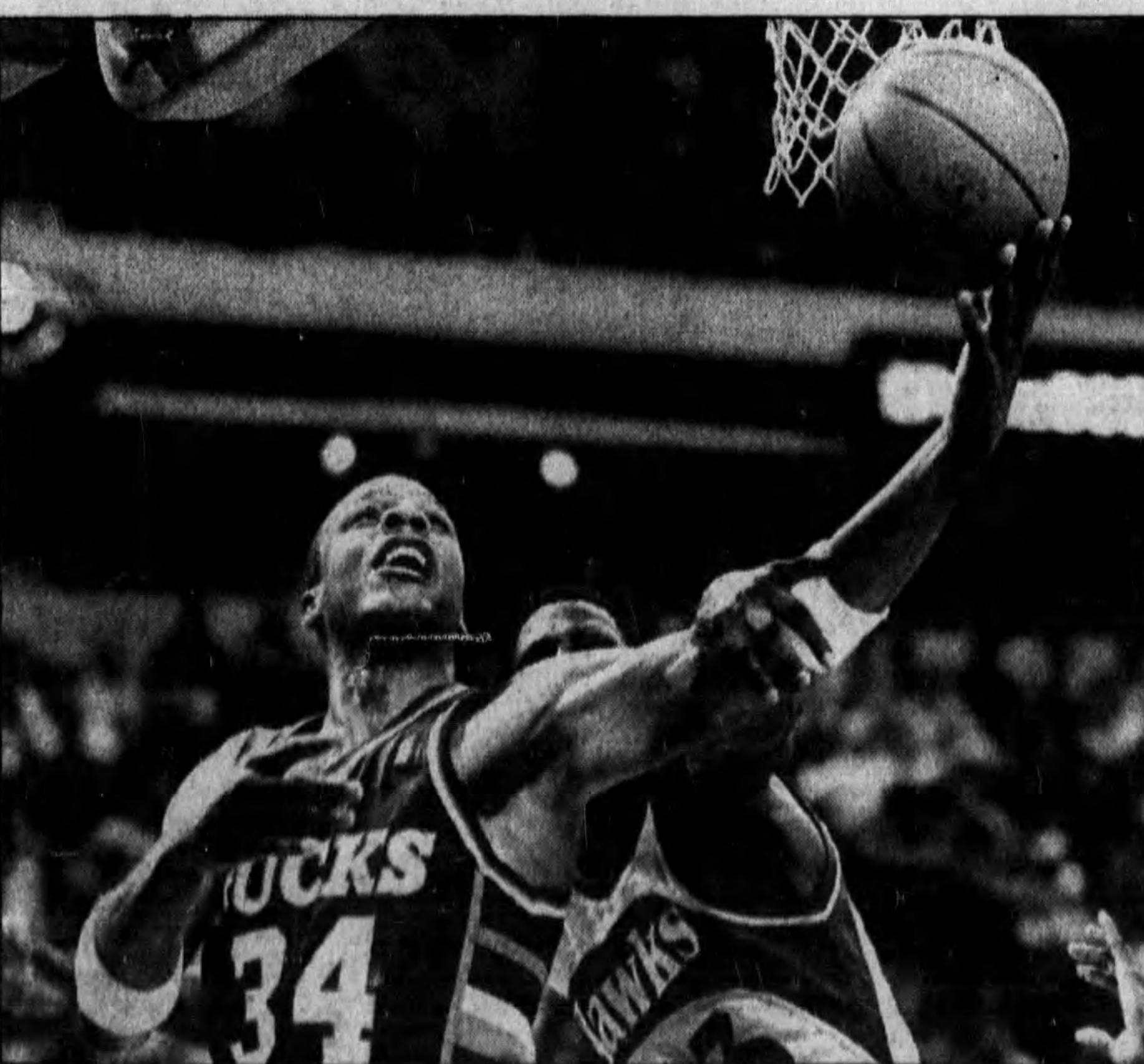
They're still waiting. Smith failed to go past the third inning for the second time in three starts. Nixon allowed him to absorb six earned runs before removing him for a pinch-hitter in the fourth.

"I know I didn't do it," said Smith. "I did it this spring, but right now I'm just having trouble throwing strikes. It's a weird thing. I wish I had an excuse, but I don't. The bottom line is I couldn't throw strikes."

The Braves threatened to dispatch Giants starter Rick Reuschel quickly but could not finish the job. Instead, the game grew sloppy.

"The game became sloppy beginning with the guy in the middle of the diamond," said Nixon. "If the guy on the hill isn't putting out for you, you'll have some problems."

ZANE Continued on 5B



WILLIAM BERRY/File

Atlanta's Cliff Levingston grabs Bucks' Terry Cummings instead of the basketball in earlier game this season.

□ Scouting

By all should no for home here tonis

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a top 10 drag pi

■ Milway Be' ■ Milwa

in their 30s s the man who: genius, coach D immediate after son to 42 victori straight over 50

# necourt Race

#### Eastern Conference Race Top eight teams qualify for the playoffs; Top

four teams get the home-court advantage in first round; Team 1 is the division leader with the better record; Team 2 is the other division winner. Teams 3-8 are ranked according to their regular-season winning percentage.

|                  | W    | L  | Pct.       | GB    |
|------------------|------|----|------------|-------|
| x-Detroit        | 58   | 19 | .753       | _     |
| x-New York       | 50   | 28 | .641       | -     |
| Cleveland        | 55   | 23 | .705       | 31/2  |
| Atlanta          | 48   | 29 | .623       | 10    |
| Milwaukee        | 47   | 29 | .618       | 101/2 |
| Chicago          | 45 . | 32 | .584       | 13    |
| Philadelphia     | 42   | 35 | .545       | 16    |
| Boston           | 40   | 37 | .519       | 18    |
| Washington       | 38   | 39 | .494       | 20    |
| v-division leade |      |    | CAN PAGE 1 |       |

Milwaukee's elevator was on the way down. New coach Del Harris hot-wired the

REVIVED Continued on 6B

By Ed Hinton Staff Writer

NORTH WILKESBORO, N.C. -Rusty Wallace, discarding Goodyear's re-introduced radial tires at the last minute Friday, won the pole for Sunday's First Union 400.

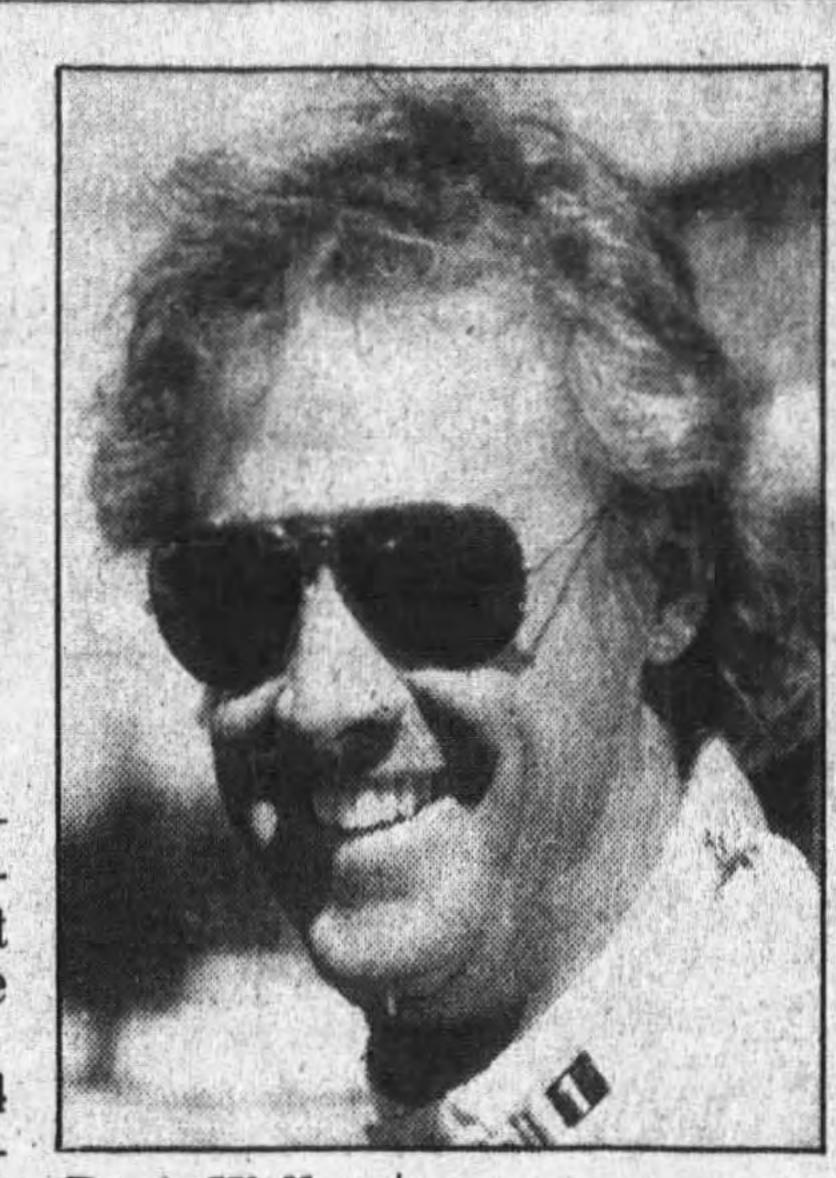
Wallace was clocked at 117.524 mph on the .625-mile North Wilkesboro Speedway, using traditional bias-ply tires made by Hoosier.

"I knew what I was doing with the Hoosiers; I didn't know with the Goodyears," said Wallace. "I had a bad experience on the radial tire testing here, and I was very unsure

Three weeks ago here, Wallace demolished one of his Pontiacs, not because a tire blew, but because the radials behaved so differently from what he was accustomed to with bias-ply tires.

This weekend is the first time Goodyear has brought out the radials since their ill-fated debut at Daytona Beach, Fla., in February. Goodyear had planned to supply them for the Daytona 500, but withdrew the radials from competition after Bill Elliott suffered a broken left wrist when his car crashed in practice due to a blown radial.

Geoff Bodine and Dale Earn-



Rusty Wallace

hardt, who qualified second and third Friday, used the new radials. The two drivers had practiced on both brands of tires and both said their cars worked better on the

Bodine praised the radials, saying, "We were at least two-tenths [of a second] quicker" on them. But Wallace said that Bodine "told me. 'I can't believe I ran that fast the way this car felt."

And this time, "The pole is pretty important to me, because of Unical's \$38,000," Wallace said, referring to a rollover bonus paid to any driver who can win both the pole and the race on one weekend. 'With the bonus, my winnings here could be more than \$100,000. We could all party on that."

□ Friday's Qualifying, Page 9B

## Tire War Getting Dangerous, Drivers Warn

From Page 1B

"No tire is safe now," said an-

other crew chief. But Leo Mehl, Goodyear's racing director, responded: "The drivers demand the speed. Even when they're concerned about safety, they always run the faster tire. We have to police ourselves as far as safety.

Goodyear, Mehl said, is "doing our best to stay on the right side of the safety line. Any time we have seen anything that concerns us as far as safety, such as Daytona, we have bailed out. That's what our policy is."

Hoosier president Bob Newton said, "I don't see any big safety problem. I think the tires are safer this year than last year."

Last week at Bristol, Tenn., there were a NASCAR-record 20 caution flags, most for wrecks caused by either blown tires or traction problems.

"What happened last week was 100 percent track," said Newton, referring to the recent repaying job at Bristol. "It came up."

One driver disagreed, saying, "It wasn't the track's fault. The track didn't go flat."

Tension mounted Friday during suffered a broken wrist due to a but I can't say anything."

crash in practice caused by a blown

Three drivers spun with no warning in practice Friday, apparently a result of the behavior of the radials.

Richard Petty, who wrecked his Pontiac, snapped his fingers and said, "It went just like that." Petty sent his crew home to Level Cross, N.C., to get a new car. But he missed Friday's first round of qualifying, and if he has trouble today, could miss making the field for the third time in the last four Winston Cup races.

The cars of Neil Bonnett and J.D. McDuffie were not damaged in their spins, but Bonnett said he didn't hit anything because "it came around so fast ... All of a sudden, it just turned around."

Darrell Waltrip stood stonefaced in the garage and was gravely non-commital.

"We have a choice," he said. "We don't have to do this [race]." Told that other drivers were speaking on the condition of anonymity, Waltrip said, "Look, I've already told you: I don't want to get my dog in that fight."

"I look at the newspapers," said another driver, "and see all these practice for Sunday's First Union other drivers praising the radials. 400 as Goodyear re-introduced the Then you get those same drivers off controversial racing radial tires it to themselves and ask, 'How'd those had withdrawn from the Daytona radials really feel to you And 500 in February after Bill Elliott they'll say, 'They felt [awful] to me,

Why don't the drivers refuse to race until something is done?

"When you've got a \$300,000-ayear tire deal with Goodyear," said one, "you can't say anything."

But, the driver added, holding his thumb and forefinger an inch apart, "We're about that far from getting somebody bad, bad hurt.'

Elliott, upon learning that Goodyear would re-introduce the radials here, said, "You don't even think about it [the tire situation] while you're in the car."

Elliott got on Goodyear's bad list last year by being outspoken about the tire war and this year is careful about what he says.

Elliott did say recently that " just wish they'd do something. I've been injured more since this tire thing started [at the beginning of 1988] than I had been before in my whole career."

One of the drivers said that after Dale Earnhardt narrowly avoided crashing due to a blown radial at Daytona, "I went to him and asked what happened. He said, 'I cut a tire.' I said, 'Cut, hell! It slung the rubber loose, like the others.' He wouldn't say anything.

"If I were the tire companies," the driver continued, "I couldn't sleep at night, worrying about liability insurance. How hard you think this stuff would be to prove in court, with all those TV tapes of torn-up tires up and down pit

Goodyear withdrew the radials from Daytona this year and bias-ply tires from Charlotte last May, citing safety concerns. Hoosier did not send tires to the March 19 Motorcraft 500, claiming it had not had sufficient testing at Atlanta International Raceway.

For nearly 20 years, Goodyear was the sole tire supplier in NAS-CAR. Without competition, the big tiremaker could use hard, relatively safe compounds and conservative designs. But when little Hoosier entered the market and began winning races early last year, the two companies went into battle to produce softer, faster, hastily designed and constructed tires.

By mid-spring of 1988, the tire war wasn't amusing to the drivers. By then, Harry Gant had suffered a badly broken leg (he only recently got off crutches), Buddy Baker had suffered a brain injury that later required surgery (he hasn't driven since), and Rick Wilson had suffered a broken shoulder.

Bobby Allison suffered a critical brain injury last June and to this day can't remember what happened. The last radio transmission his crew received from him before his crash was, "I've got a tire going" down," but that accident has generally been attributed to a cut in the tire caused by debris on the track.

## Agents Jurors Speak Out

From Page 1B

they were doing. They lost." Walters and Bloom are free on bond pending their sentencing, tentatively scheduled for late May. Walters, 58, and Bloom, 30, each face maximum penalties of 55 years in prison and \$1.5 million in fines.

"One of the most difficult parts of the verdict was knowing we were sending these guys to jail," said Woodson. "I think we felt they had to pay, but it still makes you feel bad when you know somebody is going to jail in a case that was pretty

Woodson said the element of organized crime, particularly the testimony of former Mafia captain Michael Franzese, provided a "scary" backdrop to the case.

"Just walking into the courthouse the day Franzese testified, seeing all the security, you knew that somebody different was on the stand," said Woodson. "It was scary. You sensed it. The guy, Franzes was scary ... but he was a good wit-

ness. He was believable." Karen Curley, another juror, said, "He [Franzese] made an impression on us. I believed what he told us. I think we believed N Walters is involved with [organized crime]."

Franzese testified that W and Bloom had used his reputation as an organized-crime figure to settle disputes with clients.

Benson said the jury was "quite aware that other sports agents" sign athletes with college eligibility

remaining. "It crossed our minds, but other agents weren't on trial," said Benson. "Norby Walters and Lloyd

loom were. Benson also said the jury felt Bloom was "a bit of a bungler." As part of the racketeering conviction, Bloom was found guilty of two exortionate acts for threats he made against athletes. Walters was not

charged with extortion. the background, but Lloyd had the big mouth and made the threats with the athletes," said Benson. Norby seemed more clever in the operation, but we were aware he was the mastermind of the

Bloom's defrauding of Kansas City Chiefs running back Paul Palmer of \$145,000 was damaging in

operation."

the minds of the jurors. "I think it showed that some of the other athletes were smart to walk away," said Benson.

All jurors interviewed said they wanted to hear Walters and B

(404) 976-1111 \$5 call

testify. The two agents did not take the witness stand.

"I think they could have helped themselves," said Curley. "I wanted to know why they did it, why they didn't wait until these athletes were eligible [to sign with agents], why they got involved with the mob, why they had to lie, lie, lie."

across as a fast-talking salesman, a pitchman, like you see in the movies."

The jurors said they did not give much credence to testimony by three attorneys from the prominent New York law firm of Shea and Gould who advised Walters and Bloom the agents were "doing nothing illegal" by pursuing college athletes. "I think we felt that [Walters

and Bloom] didn't tell their lawyers everything," said Woodson. "Maybe they would have gotten better Many jurors praised Bloom's de-

fense attorney, Dan Webb, who attacked the fraud case presented by the government.

"Webb left an impression, and his closing argument left an impression," said Woodson. "I think everyone thought Webb really represented Lloyd Bloom well, and that was a

tough job because Lloyd messed up a lot of things."

Webb showed that Iowa went to some length to keep running back Ronnie Harmon and defensive back Devon Mitchell academically eligible for its 1985 Rose Bowl season. Michigan State allowed wide receiver Mark Ingram to play his senior Schloemann said, "Norby came season despite a felony theft conviction.

"We didn't think Walters and Bloom defrauded those schools," said juror Linda Dishroon. "The schools defrauded themselves."

But the jurors did find that Michigan and Purdue were defrauded by the agents. The unchallenged testimony of Michigan coach Bo Schembechler had an impact, they

"I think when they [defense attorneys] decided not to cross-examine Bo Schembechler, that pretty much said it all," said Woodson. "Michigan was clean."

The length of deliberations six days — did not result from disagreement among the jurors.

"When you have an 80-page indictment and 100 jury instructions and all these racketeering acts, it was going to take some time," said

