

TODAY IN New York Newsday

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Travel
Part II Arts & Entertainment

Books
News
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MAGAZINE



TV PLUS



COLOR COMICS

Ravaged by fire, Yellowstone National Park is making a comeback.

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WEATHER

Today: increasing cloudiness, around 80; tonight: mostly cloudy, chance of rain, mid 60s; tomorrow: cloudy, chance of rain, mid 70s. Color Map / Forecast Sports-Classified / 64-65

LOTTERY

For yesterday's winning numbers, see Page 2 in the Sports section

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SWITCHBOARD

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NY Strt 07/30/89

It's 4th Down and 10 And Norby's Dancing

The big social occasion in the Hamptons took place Friday night at the home of **Norby Walters**, Dune Road, right on top of the water, speedboats spraying all who were drinking cocktails on the deck.

"Where am I supposed to live, in a house behind the sand?" **Norby** said.

Happy throngs spilled in and out of the house so that nobody would miss anybody who was dancing on the deck, or was inside at the huge Italian buffet. The occasion was to celebrate a ruling in **Norby's** favor by U.S. District Court Judge George M. Marovich of the Northern District of Illinois, which includes the city of Chicago. The judge ruled that **Norby**, 58, could stay home rather than in jail while his case was being appealed.

Nobody at the party mentioned that this was the second of two rulings by the judge. The first was that **Norby** is sentenced to five years in federal prison. "That wasn't nice," **Norby** said.

Norby, an agent, was charged with racketeering, mail and wire fraud in illegally signing football players while they were still in college and then selling them to the pros. At first, that doesn't sound like much. **Norby** once paid 20 players to sign, and they all made a wide end run on him and signed big contracts with the pros without him. At Friday night's party, **Norby** knew all the temperatures at the professional football training camps. "It is way over 90 where Kansas City is. Liberty, Missouri. I hope it goes to 150 on them tomorrow."

Norby is also mad at the colleges. "The only thing that happened out of this is that **Norby Walters** got convicted," he was saying. "The colleges had these football players taking finger painting, watercolors. And they failed. How do you like it, you fail finger painting at Iowa? At least I took algebra at Thomas Jefferson High School. All the colleges have done is put different names on the courses. So now you don't take watercolors. You take 'Agriculture.' That's grass cutting. But they don't put the heads of the colleges in jail for fraud. They want **Norby Walters** to go."

For a while, prosecutors suggested that perhaps **Norby** had fixed a Rose Bowl game. Some Iowa player he had under contract fumbled the ball four times and blew the game. I hope that **Norby Walters** fixed the Rose Bowl game and at the party Friday night I kept asking him to reveal how he did it.

"I don't know how they play football straight. How am I going to know to dump a game?" he said.

Norby's trouble in Chicago came from football players who said that when they broke their contracts with **Norby**, his partner and codefendant, **Lloyd Bloom**, 29, said some things over the phone that the players regarded as threats.

Norby regards this as a personal insult. "They owe you ten, twelve thousand dollars and run out on us. You call them up, you don't say that you're going to bite their neck if they don't give you the money back? That's the American way. Somebody beats you, you can't even let off steam, you're supposed to sit there like a beach chair?"

The prosecution brought in Michael **Franzese**, a name on organized crime charts. **Franzese** was said to be **Norby's** partner.

"They're doing that for the jury!" **Norby** said. They sure were. When the jury came back with a guilty verdict, the United States attorney jumped up in the air and landed on **Norby's** shoulders. "He's ours!" the prosecutor said. He wanted **Norby** remanded immediately.

Norby, in tight in the front of the courtroom, was going to tell Judge Marovich that his father's real name was Czechonovich. **Norby's** father took the name of Soldier Myer and ran a great saloon and dance hall on Sutter Avenue and Junius Street in Brownsville.

"The lawyer told me that I shouldn't use that," **Norby** recalls. "The judge doesn't even come from Poland. He's from a country that doesn't exist."

The judge said there were "substantial reasons" for an appeal and he released **Norby** until the appeal is heard. "The brief is being written by Andrew Frye," **Norby** said Friday night. "He was the solicitor general for the whole United States. He is a genius. But I call him up every day to see if he's all right, he don't have a headache."

And meanwhile, **Norby** entertained about 100 people Friday night. He wanted to make up for all his tales of grief about his trial and he offered laughs, food, a drink and a dance. Which has been his life. He came out of the World's Fair in 1964, where he had the Arabian Nights, a big loud saloon with a go-go dancer named Goldie Hawn bouncing around, right over the cash register. "She was a dancer. What was I supposed to do, take one look and see stardom?"

In 1968, he had **Norby Walters'** club next to the old Copacabana nightclub on 60th Street in Manhattan. The wise guys from the Copa were in **Norby's** for a drink late one night and a kid who worked as a busboy in another restaurant came in for a drink on his way home. Three of the wise guys at the bar began to abuse the busboy. They threw ice cubes at him.

"I'm going to get a gun and come back here and shoot you," the busboy said. All laughed at him. But he was an honorable fellow. His word was good. Fifteen minutes later, he walked in with a gun and said nothing and killed the first two guys, and missed the third, Carmine Lombardozzi, then a boss from Brooklyn, because Carmine flopped on the barroom floor and held onto it like

he was riding an airplane wing. All the shots went into the floor around Carmine.

When the shooting was over, the chef stuck his head out a window from the kitchen. "What happened?" the chef said.

"I just blew my joint," **Norby** said.

He went on to become an agent for big music acts, Luther Vandross and Kool and the Gang. Then he thought he saw sure millions in sports, but instead he got busted and convicted.

Norby, however, always has regarded defeat as just a passing cold breeze. Friday night, with his usual style, he took a drink, ate ziti and announced to the crowd, "I'm going to have another big party like this. I got faith in my lawyer. The party won't be at Allenwood."



Jimmy Breslin



UPI / Bettmann Newsphotos
Norby Walters: A free kick