SPORTS AGENTS

Walters sure re-trial won't be pursued

"Yesterday, today, every day from now on will be the greatest day of my life, 'cause they're all free days."

Norby Walte

By Mike Fish Staff writer

Norby Walters was asked Tuesday if he had learned his lesson, or if he would consider dabbling again in the sportsagent business.

"No, I'm going to do the college [lecture] circuit and tell them what not to do," Walters laughed into the telephone from his New York home. "How to not get in trouble."

Federal fraud and racketeering convictions of Walters and his former partner, Lloyd Bloom, were overturned Monday by the U.S. Court of Appeals in Chicago, which ruled that both men were denied a fair trial. The ruling allows the government to bring the defendants to trial again in separate proceedings, but Walters and his attorneys are confident the government will not seek a re-trial.

"I hope that the federal government feels there is no reason at all," Walters said. "The trials and tribulation of the trial have been enough for anyone."

Walters, 58, was a successful booking agent who had represented pop sing-



"loans" to ath

Norby Walters says his "loans" to athletes have never been paid back.

ers before he and Bloom, 30, set up business in 1984 to pitch themselves to college football players. They were convicted last year on charges they compromised the eligibility of college football players by offering them thousands of dollars to sign contracts in violation of NCAA rules and threatened those who attempted to renege on the deals.

Former Temple running back Paul Palmer testified he took \$4,000 to sign with Walters and Bloom in June 1986. Maurice Douglass, a defensive back who played at Kentucky, testified that Bloom threatened to "have somebody



Lloyd Bloom says he wants to put the sports agency business behind him.

break my legs" if the athlete stopped doing business with the agents without returning the money and cars they had given him.

"The only reason this entire thing came up is I started all these lawsuits," said Walters, who sued several athletes for neglecting to repay what he considered loans. "Had I just walked away from the clients, it would never have happened. These kids took the money and still haven't paid me."

Bloom, contacted in Los Angeles, said he had expected the reversal.

"I want to put the sports business behind me," Bloom said. "I have no hard feelings towards anybody."

Country club set, Falcons fans get their chance to strike back

It's that time again. My lovely readers have a few things to say about everything from my philosophy on all-white country clubs that host PGA tournaments to my belief that the Atlanta Falcons won't be heading to the Super Bowl this season without tickets.

I, by the way, didn't read my current stack of letters until after the Detroit Lions ruined the Falcons' chances for an undefeated decade Sunday with a 21-14 victory.

As a result, my letter from Mr. Paulin of Duluth, Ga., is slightly dated. Mr. Paulin wrote on his envelope "47-27, Guess Who Dude?" His reference was either to the Falcons' opening victory over the Houston Oilers or to the numbers on his Florida Lotto ticket.

Terence Moore:

This is about your article ("Bad news for the Falcons: The next 16 games count"). As you know, we have had a bad team for years. The season hasn't even started yet, and here you are already starting with the badnews bull.

You rave on about the Los Angeles Rams and the San Francisco 49ers like they are immortal or something.

The only thing else I have to say is if you can't support "Our Falcons," why don't you move to Los Angeles or San Francisco?

Marty Paulin, Duluth, Ga.

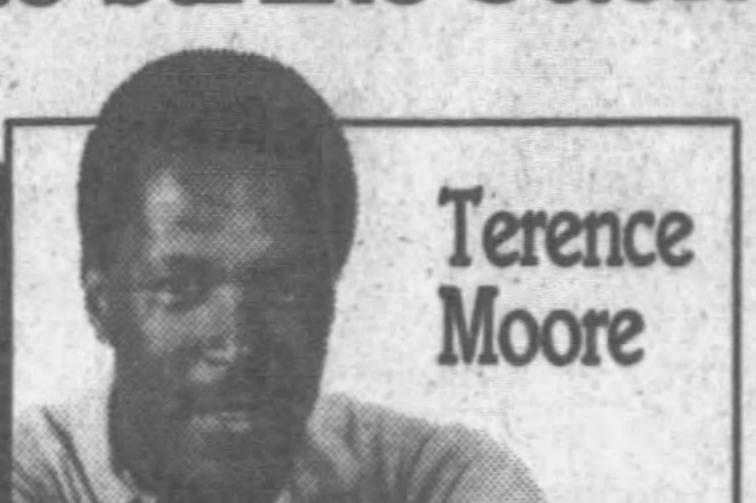
I worked in San Francisco for five years when the 49ers won two of their four Super Bowls. And, yes, there probably is a red "S" underneath Joe Montana's jersey. According to today's NFC West standings, the 49ers are leading the division again at 2-0. The Rams are 1-1 after clubbing Tampa Bay 35-14.

This is the same Tampa Bay team that ripped Detroit 38-21 the week before Detroit beat Atlanta.

C:---

After reading your article (on the Falcons' 1990 season), I was compelled to write back. Whatever happened to a little team spirit? Maybe the Falcons won't go to the Super Bowl this year, but we don't need pessimists like (you) clogging the sports pages.

If you want to write something de-



pressing, try writing an article about the Georgia prison system.

John Fisher and Charles Chambley, Jackson, Ga.

An article on the Georgia prison system would be slightly less depressing than an article on the Atlanta Braves.

Sir:

I find it difficult to believe that an educated man such as yourself would depreciate his column ("Masters policy raises questions") to the level I have witnessed today.

Augusta National is indisputably the premier golf club in the nation.
... A diminutive amount of research on your part would portray the club for what it is, a private gathering bastion for those lucky few who have roots to the club or corporate elite from our business establishment.

The membership committee has the authority to decide who fits into the club and who would be happier elsewhere. Why should any individual be afforded the privilege of joining Augusta National over another because of some physical trait?

Think about it.

Robert S. Prater, Marietta, Ga.
I've thought about it, and so has
Augusta National, which invited a
black to join its all-white club this
month.

Dear Mr. Moore:

I came to Atlanta a number of years ago as a wild-eyed Yankee liberal. I haven't changed my views in any way, but columns reflecting an attitude such as yours on the Masters move me rapidly toward the racist designation.

J.L. Smith, Atlanta

If you're bothered that much by my columns, there always are the comics and the Disney Channel.

ARENA FOOTBALL

Atlanta one of three cities on expansion list

By David Davidson Staff writer

Atlanta is one of three cities under consideration for an Arena Football League franchise, Bob Dhue, president-/general manager of The Omni, said Tuesday after a meeting with league commissioner Jim Foster.

According to Dhue, the possibility of a franchise here depends on whether financially sound local ownership can be found.

"We didn't get into specific names today," Dhue said.

Dhue said Foster told him the league would like to expand from eight teams to 10. Foster also is visiting Charlotte and Tampa this week.

The Arena League plays a May-June-July schedule, concluding competition just as NFL camps open. Each team plays eight regular season games.

League games averaged an announced 8,700 in attendance last year. The championship was won by the Detroit Drive, quarterbacked by former Ohio State star Art Schlichter, for the

third straight season.

The Omni was the site of a semifinal playoff game in 1988.

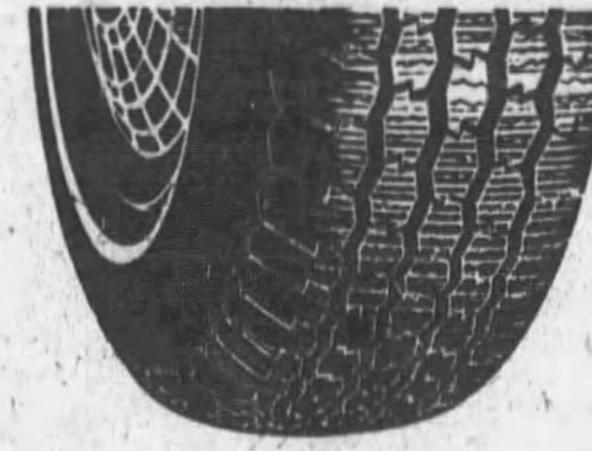
Foster was unavailable for comment Tuesday. In an interview late last month, he expressed confidence in the league's future, saying, "For the first time in the history of the league, we have nine months to prepare for the next season. I know when I get up to-morrow morning I will see a paycheck a week later, which has never been the case."

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