



Sports Talk

by Ron Sykes
Sports Editor

The NFL season opened for 1979 and promises to give pigskin followers another year of excitement. Tampa Bay got things started by defeating a highly touted Detroit Lion team 31-16. Last year's rookie phenomenon, Doug Williams, had a relatively good day throwing for three TD's against a tough Lion defense anchored by all rookie Al Baker, Detroit's 6'6", 260 pound, giant that anchors the right side.

The Tampa Bay Buccaneers are finally getting the offense to go along with an already good defense. And if young Doug Williams can remain healthy, then the Bucs will surprise a few people this year.

Williams showed last year, before going down, that he is a strong-armed leader type quarterback. With Ricky Bell, ex-UCLA great, carrying the ground game, while Leroy Selmon grabs everything within reach, and the silver fox, John McKay, supplying the brainwork from the sidelines, yes, Tampa is on the way.

Meanwhile in Seattle the Seahawks were dropping a tough decision to San Diego, led by ex-UO great, Dan Fouts. All Fouts did was to complete 21 out of 30 passes for 224 yards. While Fouts was superb, the usually reliable Jim Zorn was having his troubles. Zorn threw three interceptions and fumbled twice.

The Rams, losers to Oakland, 24-17 will continue to be so-so as long as they continue with the 5'10" Pat Haden. Haden, a Rhodes scholar, is perhaps in the wrong profession. With linesmen now averaging 6'6" around the league it makes things pretty tough for Haden when trying to pick up secondary and tertiary receivers.

On the brighter side for L.A. it's good to see all-pro running back Lawrence McCutcheon return to action after missing most of last season, due to a torn hamstring muscle.

Pittsburgh Steelers, last year's champions, had to come from

behind to lick a very tough New England Patriot team. The Steelers, playing without mean Joe Greene and losing L.C. Greenwood early in the third quarter, needed a 41 yard field goal from rookie kicker Matt Bahr to finally beat the Patriots 16-13 in overtime. Pittsburgh unwrapped a new running back in second year man Bob Thornton, 6'2", 240 pounds, a bruiser who should eventually replace the aging Rocky Bleier. Thornton has good hands, as do most Pittsburgh receivers, and delivers a mean, and crunching block. Young Thornton is bigger and better than Bleier and should make the already potent Pittsburgh offense even better.

Seattle can still score with the best in the league, but will suffer a long cold winter until their defense is holstered.

Carl Eller, acquired in a pre-season trade with the Vikings, will help but cannot do it alone. Seattle is two defensive linesmen away.

So the Indiana Pacers, already suffering at the gate and threatened with bankruptcy, and needing a shot in the arm to help attendance, has now announced that they just might sign Ann Myers, 5'10", ex-UCLA player to a standard NBA contract. Indiana officials are remaining mum, but as of Tuesday they would neither confirm or deny it.

Be it gimmick, joke, promotional, whatever... the truth is Ann Meyers, or any other female is not yet ready for strenuous duties of the NBA. To the best of my knowledge Calvin Murphy has been the only player under 6' to make it in the NBA in years.

No offense to Ann, but there isn't a woman alive with the speed and strength to play with the best pros in the world. It would be simply asking too much to expect that Indiana is doing everything other than seeking a publicity stunt. (One Black man's opinion.)

NAACP sets western conference

NAACP leaders, members, friends of the Association and leadership from government, business, and the political arena will convene at the Asilomar Conference Grounds on the Monterey Peninsula the weekend of September 21st-23rd.

The Conference will review the work of the NAACP and the policy resolutions adopted at the 1979 National Convention; exchange information about the activities, problems, needs, challenges at the levels of the branches, youth councils and area conferences; strengthen special programs such as ACT-SO (Afro-Academic Cultural Technological Scientific Olympics), Corporate Employee Membership Task Force, education, legal and others; develop legal, legislative and political strategies.

The 1979 Conference theme is "From Defense to Offensive and on with the Unfinished Agenda." The spirit of the theme is one which motivates members, leaders, and friends to force the harsh realities which Blacks and the poor are up against, to identify the resources among us, to mobilize all that we have, to lead the fight for freedom and liberation.

In the words of Frederick Douglass:

"...The general sentiment of mankind is that a man who will not fight for himself, when he has the means of doing so, is not worth being fought for by others, and this sentiment is just. For a man who does not value freedom for himself will never value it for others, or put himself to any inconvenience to gain it for others..."

"Power concedes nothing without a demand; it never has and it never will. Many may not get all he pays for but he certainly must pay for all he gets."

Conference keynote speakers will include: Dr. Aaron Henry, president Mississippi State Conference, NAACP, Clarksdale, Miss.; Attorney Nathaniel S. Colley, member, National Board NAACP; Joseph Madison, director, Voter Education, NAACP; Ina Boone, Regional Director, Region IV, National Membership Director.

Dr. Asa Hilliard, Dean of the School of Education, California State University, San Francisco, will keynote the opening session on Friday evening. Workshops on Saturday include: Education, economic development and employment, energy, youth development, legal, religious affairs, voter registration, voter education, memberships and members—the heart of NAACP, housing and youth perspectives.

In these workshops, the participants will explore many central issues and formulate recommendations for branches, youth councils, area conferences and the regional office to use as guides to the on-going activities.

Adult registration fees are \$30, with youth registration costing \$10. A package including food, housing, registration, banquet is available and prices vary according to the type of housing accommodation desired. Reservations must be made directly with the West Coast Regional Office of NAACP, 870 Market St., San Francisco, CA. 94102, (415) 986-6992.

Ali promoted for U.S. Senate

An Ad Hoc Committee formed by a group of nationally prominent Black and white citizens to serve as a core of a larger out pouring of expression to draft and run Muhammad Ali for the U.S. Senate.

The committee is co-chaired by Lloyd Von Blaine and Huntington Hartford. Von Blaine spokesman for the group stated that the decision to make this name was based upon the following:

Blacks have no representation in the upper house since the untimely defeat of Ed Brooke.

Through the normal political process, it will be decades before another Black is likely to be elected. We should, if we subscribe to the percentage quota, have ten Black members in the Senate and 53 in the House.

A strategy must be revised whereby we can penetrate the walls of self-Senate isolation from the Black Americans and the only way this seems possible is to bring forth a person who has developed a national and international constituency of all ethnic groups and introduce him into the political arena. That person agreed to by the committee is Muhammad Ali. Further, according to Von Blaine, he is qualified, young, alert, independently wealthy, cannot be intimidated, has good religious values. Likes helping people, not swayed by power, money nor fame. In addition he is from outside the establishment, free from obligations, can attract a great segment of ethnic support, white males and females, youth, Hispanics and most of the Blacks. He can be a forum for many of the problems affecting the majority especially the poor.



MUHAMMAD ALI

The other members of the committee are Hank Aaron of baseball fame, Atlanta, GA.; Dr. Betty Shabazz (Mrs. Malcolm X), Professor, Medgar Evers College, New York; Jimmy Ellis, former World's Heavyweight Champion, Louisville, Kentucky; Steve Lockett, Vice President of Seagrams Distillers, New York; Vince Martinelli, Vice President, Deak Perera Group, New York; Robert King, President, King World Productions, New Jersey; Ulysses Boykins, Vice President, WGPR-TV62, Detroit, Michigan; Tullie Evans, Real Estate Developer and Investment Broker, Houston, Texas; and Fred Allen, President, Essex and Union Mortgage Company, New Jersey. Fred Allen is also Treasurer of the committee and any donation or contributions should be sent to Treasurer, Muhammad Ali, Ad Hoc Committee, 210 West St. George, Linden, New Jersey 07036.

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