

## Observer sports editor picks Super Bowl winner

January 21, 1982

The *Portland Observer* feels that the Super Bowl was last week. The game between Dallas and the 49ers was just the two best teams in the

League. We see the 49ers by five points over Cincinnati. How do you feel? Let us know how you feel about *Observer* sports. We'll be glad to hear from you, and we'll print your letters.



## Sport Talk

by Ron Sykes, Sports Editor

### V-I-C-T-O-R-Y

The *Portland Observer* proclaimed from the beginning that San Francisco was the team of the future. We declared early that the 49ers would go all the way. After the victory over Dallas we told our readers that the Super Bowl had already been played. Really, after defeating America's team 28-27, this victory over Cincinnati was somewhat anti-climatic. Give the credit for this victory to the 49er defense, but don't forget the wizardry of Coach Bill Walsh.

Walsh proved his worth by completely out-coaching Dallas' Tom Landry and then, in the Super Bowl, he annihilated the AFC Coach of the Year, Forrest Gregg.

The 49ers are certainly tough, but their edge is that they out-wit and out-think their opponents. Walsh has installed a beautiful offense—one that has so many variations that at times it seems to leave the defense helpless.

The 49er offense is as beautiful as anything ever composed by Beethoven. And the defense is simply awesome.

Walsh demonstrated his masterful abilities even further when the Bengals had the ball with only 58 seconds left on the clock and no time outs. He deceived the Bengals into throwing up the middle. This strategy encouraged completions be-

cause incompletes would stop the clock and Walsh wanted no part of that—especially with no Bengal time outs remaining. He guarded the sidelines, making sure that there would be no sideline completions to stop the clock. He dropped three backs to the goal line to make sure that he didn't get beat deep. After each completion, the 49ers closed in making the tackle and keeping the clock wondering.

It is still amazing that Forrest Gregg did not catch on to what had happened.

### Roberto Duran vs Wilfredo Benitez

On January 30, Roberto Duran will attempt to move closer to a return match with welterweight champ Sugar Ray Leonard by taking on the Puerto Rican Benitez. Duran will not move closer because Benitez will stop him inside of ten rounds. This Duran is not the Duran of old. Duran, at 5-7, will be no match for the master boxer, Benitez. Benitez, whose only loss was to the redoubtable Sugar Ray, will not be an easy target for Duran. There is only one man in the world today who can whip Benitez, and you know who that is.

### Blazers 123 - Celtics 119

On Super Sunday, the Blazers

turned in a super win by beating the Boston Celtics 123-119 on the Celtics' home court. And believe it or not, the key to this victory was playing time, that is, playing time for one Billy Ray Bates. Billy Ray was on the count an unbelievable thirty-three minutes, and whenever Billy gets the playing time, the Blazers are sure to receive a good effort. A loose Billy Ray is like money in the bank. In Boston, Billy entered the game with 9:34 remaining in the third period and did not leave until the game was over. It was a different Billy Ray that the Boston fans saw. He responded with 10-16 from the field, 6-7 from the line and committed no turnovers for a total of 26 points. And Lawdy lawd, wasn't Kelvin Ransey something. The second year guard out of Ohio State lit the Boston Garden up with 33 points.

Portland ended this six-game road trip with a good 3-3 record. And is not for the sudden collapse in Philadelphia, could have gone 4-2. And believe you me, that is not too shabby... and how about Philadelphia Seventy-sixer owner Harold Katz trying to lure Wilt Chamberlin out of retirement. Chamberlin, 45, is the only man his age who could still play in the NBA. When Wilt retired, seven years ago, he was on top of his game. There is little doubt that if the big man was willing to play, he could.

### Ronnie is a Lot(t)

"I was watching a Muhammad Ali documentary recently," said the 49er star rooked. "I was amazed that he talked like that when he was twenty years old. Isiah Thomas is 20, Magic Johnson is 22, and they are accomplishing these feats. I'm 22. Seeing what they have done and how they have handled themselves has really helped me grow up." Lott earned a bachelor's degree in Public Administration in four years, including two summers.

"It was very important to myself and my parents," he said, "to graduate on time."

"When Ronnie received his diploma from U.S.C. it was the happiest day of my life," beamed his mother, Mary, "and of all his numerous accomplishments, receiving his degree meant the most to me."

Ronnie hopes to live up to a New Year's resolution he made to his mother—that he would read one book a week. Some of those books will deal with real estate, a field he hopes to enter eventually. Ronnie appreciates the support he received from his parents, Roy and Mary Lotte.

"My dad is studying real estate now, and when he finishes, we plan to go into the business, along with my mother."

Ronnie Lott is one of those rare young athletes—one of those who haven't let success spoil his outlook on life.



LARRY HOLMES

## Holmes ready for Cooney

by Gary E. Johnson and Patricia A. Carrasco

EASTON, PA.—Larry Holmes, the World Boxing Council's (WBC) Heavyweight Champion, has already begun training for his upcoming fight with Gerry Cooney. It's not easy being the heavyweight champion, but hard work and Larry are old friends.

Larry won the title on June 9, 1978, from Ken Norton, and has defended his title eleven times, with the most recent TKO against Renaldo (Mr.) Snipes on November 6 in Pittsburgh's Civic Arena.

Larry, only two weeks after defeating Snipes, began training for the Cooney fight. His schedule involves rising early for a four to five mile jog, shadow boxing, jumping rope, and sparring. Closer to the match, Larry's vigorous training will be performed in the desert surrounding Las Vegas, where the fight will be held next March.

Larry had the following to say about his upcoming match: "I think this is going to be a very interesting fight, a lot of people will be surprised at the outcome." Larry prides himself as being a professional boxer. This is clearly evident when watching the champ fight. "I'm a boxer, Cooney is a puncher, that's the big difference. He doesn't have the experience or the stamina I have—he'll never last the fifteen rounds," commented Holmes.

And now, all eyes are on Holmes again, as he defends his title against Gerry Cooney next year in a match

that is expected to earn Holmes nearly \$10 million.

But Holmes, at the age of 32, is already a multi-millionaire. He can afford to give his family just about everything he didn't have when he was growing up in Easton, Pa., with his mother, Flossie, and eleven brothers and sisters. It was up to his mother to raise her children. Larry never forgot the love and devotion afforded him by his mother and has made sure that she is taken care of financially.

Larry has a lot going for him in his hometown of Easton. This includes a new, custom built \$500,000 eleven-room home, complete with nine bathrooms and a swimming pool shaped like a boxing glove; a \$250,000 night club called "Round One," and the \$150,000 Larry Holmes' Training Center gymnasium. It's used as a local recreation center for kids.

Larry Holmes first learned to fight at St. Anthony's Youth Center in Easton. The center was founded over 25 years ago by an Italian priest, Father Francis Barabato. At age ten, Holmes was first interested in learning how to wrestle and nine years later he decided to become a boxer. Holmes continued training and turned pro in March of 1973. The rest is boxing history, just five years later he would be the World's Heavyweight Champion.

Today, the 213-pound Holmes has an unblemished record, 39-0. (Snipes suffered the first defeat of his career after 22 straight victories.)

## Portland Beavers expect exciting season

The cards were stacked against him from the start. But this East young entrepreneur from the East came with a big stogie in his mouth and an open wallet in his hand. This was David Hersh. The young general manager who had a year ago shocked the baseball world by taking Toledo, a class AA minor league franchise and drawing fans to the ball park. Now he was moving to class AAA Portland, a franchise that has struggled over the last few years. Hersh's reputation preceded him into town, and after a dazzling start the young man's dreams hit rock bottom when the bills began to pile up. "It took me eight months to establish credibility here in Portland," said Hersh, "and lost it all in one month. My first year here I learned a valuable lesson."

Good things are expected from the 1982 Beavers. Fresh off of a 72-66 1981 record, which helped them draw 192,768 fans, the best attendance mark since 1967. A winning record plus a renovated stadium should make for an exciting year for Beavers fans.

The 1982 season promises to provide some good summer excitement. The refurbished Civic Stadium will feature better seating, a new roof, an expanded concession and convenience areas to further enhance the attractiveness of Beaver baseball

for the fans. In the past the Beavers have scheduled the parent Pittsburgh Pirates at Civic Stadium. In addition to the Pirates, the fans can look forward to seeing Houston, San Francisco, Seattle, and maybe San Diego.

"I think Portland is still a major league town," Hersh said, "and my long range goal is to lure a major league franchise to the City of Roses." With Portland's new lease, Hersh plans to decrease all ticket prices across the board, with the exception of general admission which will remain the same as last year. "We're happy with our lease agreement," beamed Hersh, "and we plan to share it with our wonderful fans."

Hersh has long made it known that he has major league intentions for Portland. But the foremost question remains to be the inclement Portland weather. "Our weather [Portland's] can't be worse than Montreal's," said Hersh. Out of 193 dates in three years, we only had 14 rainouts, six the first year and four in each of the last two.

The Beavers drew well last year because they had an exciting team in the field. Hersh believes that if you put a strong team on the field, the fans will show their appreciation by turning out.

The 1981 Beavers were exciting. They boasted the top defense in the

Pacific Coast League. The team fielding a percentage of .979 led the PCL as the Beavers were guilty of only 102 errors in 137 games, thirty-six fewer miscues than any other club in the league. Third baseman Dave Hilton established himself as one of the top hot-corner men in the league and was flanked by shortstop Jimmy Smith and second baseman Vance Law. In the outfield Rusty Torres played 134 with just one error.

In 1982, the Beavers plan to field a young exciting team. They have high hopes for center fielder Jose Rodriguez, the twenty-three-year-old who came up from Buffalo, Junior Artiz, 22, and 19-year-old Raphael Belyard, who took the Dominican League by storm.

Pitching was an important part of the 1981 Portland success story. Luis Tiant combined with hard-

throwing Odel Jones and Submarine Robert Long to give the Beavers a matchless threesome of starting pitchers. Long had an awesome 15-3 record, while Jones was leading PCL hurlers in strikeouts with 135.

In the past the Portland Beavers franchise was one of the healthiest in minor league baseball and to help regain that status, a Portland Beavers Booster Club was formed. Last year the Club boasted 207 members, reported Kas Lasser, its President. Although the 1982 Club only began in November of '81, already it has recruited an excess of 152 members and gives every indication of being bigger and better than last year's club.

A new stadium, reduced ticket prices, an exciting team, a strong, active management are all of the ingredients for a successful season.

### Associated Press Top 20

1. Missouri
2. North Carolina
3. Virginia
4. DePaul
5. Texas
6. Iowa
7. Kentucky
8. Oregon St.
9. USF
10. Minnesota
11. Idaho
12. Arkansas
13. Alabama
14. Kansas St.
15. Tennessee
16. Tulsa
17. North Carolina St.
18. Wake Forest
19. Fresno St.
20. Villanova

### Portland Observer Top 20

1. N. Carolina
2. Virginia
3. Missouri
4. Iowa
5. DePaul
6. Minnesota
7. Oregon State
8. Kentucky
9. Tulsa
10. Georgetown
11. Idaho
12. Texas
13. Tennessee
14. Wichita State
15. Pepperdine
16. San Francisco
17. Villanova
18. Fresno State
19. Kansas State
20. Alabama



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