



*Soul-stirring speeches
at intermission?
—not for today's
tactician-coaches
who use grim skull
sessions to make
second-half history*

by ROBERT G. DEINDORFER

THE HALVES



LSU coach Paul Dietzel (right) plans strategy for Clemson Sugar Bowl game.

game, and the Bears won it, 26-6.

Anyone who suggests that football's half-time heroics are confined to the college game might consider the world champion Baltimore Colts' thriller with San Francisco last year. At the half, upstart San Francisco led, 27-7. Coach Weeb Ewbank chalked a message for his players on the blackboard: "We Need Four Touchdowns!" After illustrating a serious San Francisco defect on pass defense, the Colts went out and got the four touchdowns to win, 35-27.

While coaches generally emphasize particular plays and sequences at half time, they sometimes dream up an original, or at least a creative variation of an existing play, to exploit some defensive weakness. Red Blaik, who retired after leading Army through an undefeated season last year, was one of the master half-time opportunists.

Last season, Blaik varied a pass play between halves of the Rice game with score tied, 7-7. Late in the fourth quarter

All-American halfback Pete Dawkins ran the route Blaik had outlined, bringing the Rice safety man up by faking to a stop, then going beyond him. Running wide open, he took a long pass for the winning touchdown.

Half-time magic might be nothing more than another pair of shoes. Surely a change of shoes between halves made all the difference for the New York Giants in the classic pro championship in 1934. Trailing the Chicago Bears by a 13-3 count at the half, coach Steve Owen put gym shoes on his backfield men in the hope they'd get traction on an icy field. They did. The Giants went on to win, 30-13.

Under the circumstances, one of football's most durable myths is plainly a fraud. College and professional games beyond number are won between the halves, all right, but not because of the coach's pep talk. Modern high-scoring football is much too complicated for windy sentiment.

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