

GEORGE BEAHON
"In This Corner"



Super Seven is rushing up on us, and for the benefit of those who haven't yet made up their minds, an updated prediction is available here. Most of my clientele, (both of them) insist upon knowing my selection so they can "copper" the choice. They make a nice buck on the side by taking the opposite view.

To begin with, first thing to be considered is the price. The early line established by the wizards of odds placed the Washington Redskins in the roles of favorites, at the minimal figure of one point. The only price smaller would be half a point, and since this is a sudden death proposition, somebody must win. With no tie possible, you know where you can take a half a point.

The one point won't be eligible to take to the bank, either. All you can do with one point is salvage a tie, in event you took underdog Miami plus one, and Miami lost by one. If you take the Redskins, the point can't cost you, beyond switching a one-point win on the scoreboard to a Mexican standoff in your personal bet.

The site usually figures to be considered as about a 7-point factor in pro football. If the game were at Miami, the Dolphins would be favored by about three. At Washington, about the same; perhaps four for the Redskins. At Los Angeles, some might make a case for it being Miami weather, but Wash-

ington isn't all that bad — certainly not a frozen tundra like Minnesota or Green Bay. So the site is no factor.

There is a faction in Los Angeles which believes Southern California should have been given a wild card berth in the pro football playoffs. But coach John McKay says his players are amateurs. The guys he clobbers say John McKay lies. (But they don't say it in Los Angeles.)

Talent. The Over The Hill Gang malarkey is just that — malarkey. A few of the Redskins have a lot of mileage on them, but it sure isn't hurting Washington this season. Experience compensates for age. Experience translates into lack of mistakes.

Miami may be comparatively new to the elite of pro football, but it was Miami that played last year in Super Six. Teams which lose in their first Super Bowl efforts have a habit of winning next time out. Critics say Miami played an inferior schedule; that none of the teams it wiped out all season made the playoffs. There is a reason for this: Losing to Miami helps keep you out of the playoffs. And besides, Miami's early season schedule was as tough as any other team's. Jets, Minny, KC, all on the road.

Still on talent. Larry Brown (Washington) is something else. Better than Mercury Morris. But Morris has two other bread and butter guys to carry the ball, in Larry Csonka and Jim Kiick. Receivers and cornerbacks, as important as any other of the musclemen, are about equal.

Washington probably has assembled the finest overall group of special teams in the history of the modern game. Punt and kickoff coverage and return stats give the Redskins the first apparent edge.

Quarterbacks. Many veteran professional football coaches insist that quarterbacks are overrated. Washington could have the edge here, too, because you rarely see Bill Kilmer flopping on his face after unloading a pass. Miami's quarterback situation is cloudy. Earl Morrall brought them to

the party, but then a little bit rusty Bob Griese took over when Morrall couldn't find the combinations. The in-and-out again situation here contributes even more to Washington's advantage in the quarterbacking department.

Or does it? Wasn't Griese the player of the year the season before? And didn't he lead Miami to its first 4½ wins this season, before he was injured? And didn't Morrall start and win the last nine games of the regular season? Let's scratch that quarterback advantage.

This brings us to the bottom line — the coaching.

George Allen of Washington is a psalm singing dictator who has a history of winning at any cost.

"This man lies . . . he is an opportunist and a schemer . . . he will cheat . . . do anything to insure victory . . . he has no character whatsoever . . . a man thoroughly without principle." — George Halas, Chicago Bears, under testimony.

George Allen told President Nixon when to call the locker room and when not to. After he got into the Super Seven on Dec. 31, he elected to have dinner with Nixon the next day in the White House.

Don Shula of Miami already has been named coach of the year. By a landslide, and for the third time in five seasons.

When Shula won his 100th game in only 10 seasons, he received a wire: "The victory was convincing proof of your superior coaching ability." — President Richard Nixon.

Scratch the alleged quarterbacking edge for Washington; and concede — with approval from the White House — that both are super coaches.

That makes everything even, except the one-point spread by Vegas favoring Washington.

So take Miami, from both the heart and the head. Make it 20 to 17. And never forget one vital statistic — over the regular schedule, Miami finished three games ahead of the league. Now that's a statistic.

JOHN DOSER

Scholastic Notebook



"There's gonna have to be some real changes made before I'll send our kids into the Madison gym," Bishop Kearney High athletic director Marty LaFica said.

LaFica, former East Rochester three-sport letterman of the 1950s is still burning from the lack of action by Madison High regarding an incident at a Madison-BK basketball game, at BK, last month. A Madison player threw a chair onto the court, striking a Kearney player in the back, apparently reacting to a foul called against a BK player.

"The boy's number was 31, I saw him throw the chair, and both referees, in reports to me which I requested, verify that," LaFica said.

Madison's Walt Williams, in his first year of coaching varsity for the Wilson Parkers, has denied that one of his players threw a chair.

"No. 31 was put out of the game earlier because he punched a Kearney player. Throwing the chair was a vicious, unprovoked act," LaFica said.

The two teams are scheduled to meet Feb. 9, at Madison in the second game of a home-and-home series in the City-Catholic Basketball League. Madison won the first by a healthy margin.

LaFica is looking for Madison assurance that the Madison gym will be staffed with adequate supervision, police and faculty, to prevent any player or fan problems.

The decision to play at Madison is really up to Kearney principal Brother Tracy who has met with City School District physical education officials twice since the chair-throwing incident to try and come up with ways to prevent future incidents.

"THE MOST upsetting thing about this," LaFica explained, "is that I said what most Monroe

County coaches and athletic directors feel — but never say for print.

"They tell me off the record they want no part of playing city teams to avoid just these problems. It's a definite black and white thing and these other coaches, some right in the City-Catholic League, don't have the guts to say so. They don't have the guts to back me up.

"I have to believe that black parents are as concerned as white parents over the safety of their kids at a ballgame. I get accused by the papers (sports columnist Bruno Sniders) and Madison (athletic director Don Lander) of 'overreacting,' but if throwing chairs is normal procedure at Madison then I must be guilty of 'overreacting.'

"Someone should ask the city schools why they're playing their basketball games in the afternoon instead of at night. They've forced us to play some of our games in the afternoon. The next step will be to keep out spectators and the next step after that is 'no sport.'"

LaFica said he had four faculty members and an off-duty Irondequoit policeman at the Madison game, but said Madison fans would not listen to their pleas to return to the stands.

LaFica believes that both schools should have school officials accompany their teams in the stands no matter which is the home team.

LaFica also put the rap on the two junior varsity coaches for inciting fans. He said the preliminary game was poorly officiated and both coaches were jumping and screaming too much, priming the fans for the varsity game which followed.

Because of the troubles at the Madison game, the BK-Cardinal Mooney contest which followed on the day preceding Christmas vacation, was switched from evening to afternoon.

"We drew about half the crowd we might have had at night, but our principal thought it was the best thing to do because of the uncertainty of the fans," LaFica said.

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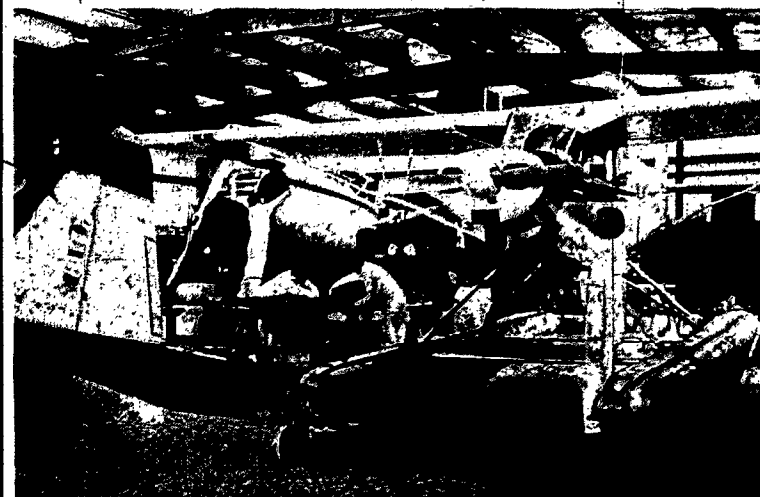
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