

NEW ORLEANS SAINTS / 1974

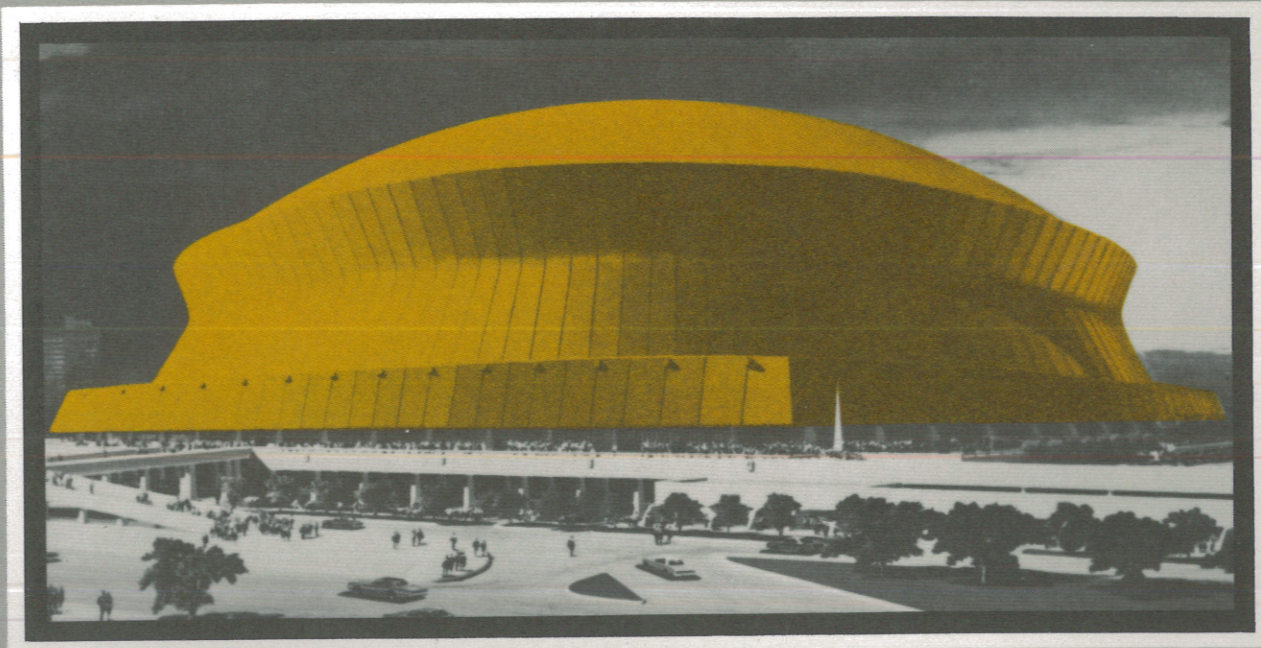
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The 1974 NEW ORLEANS SAINTS

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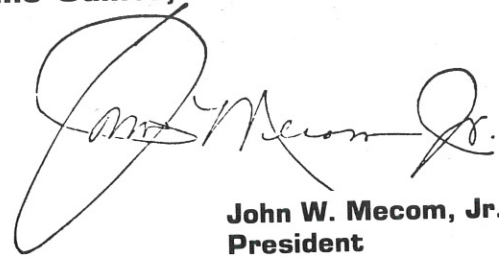
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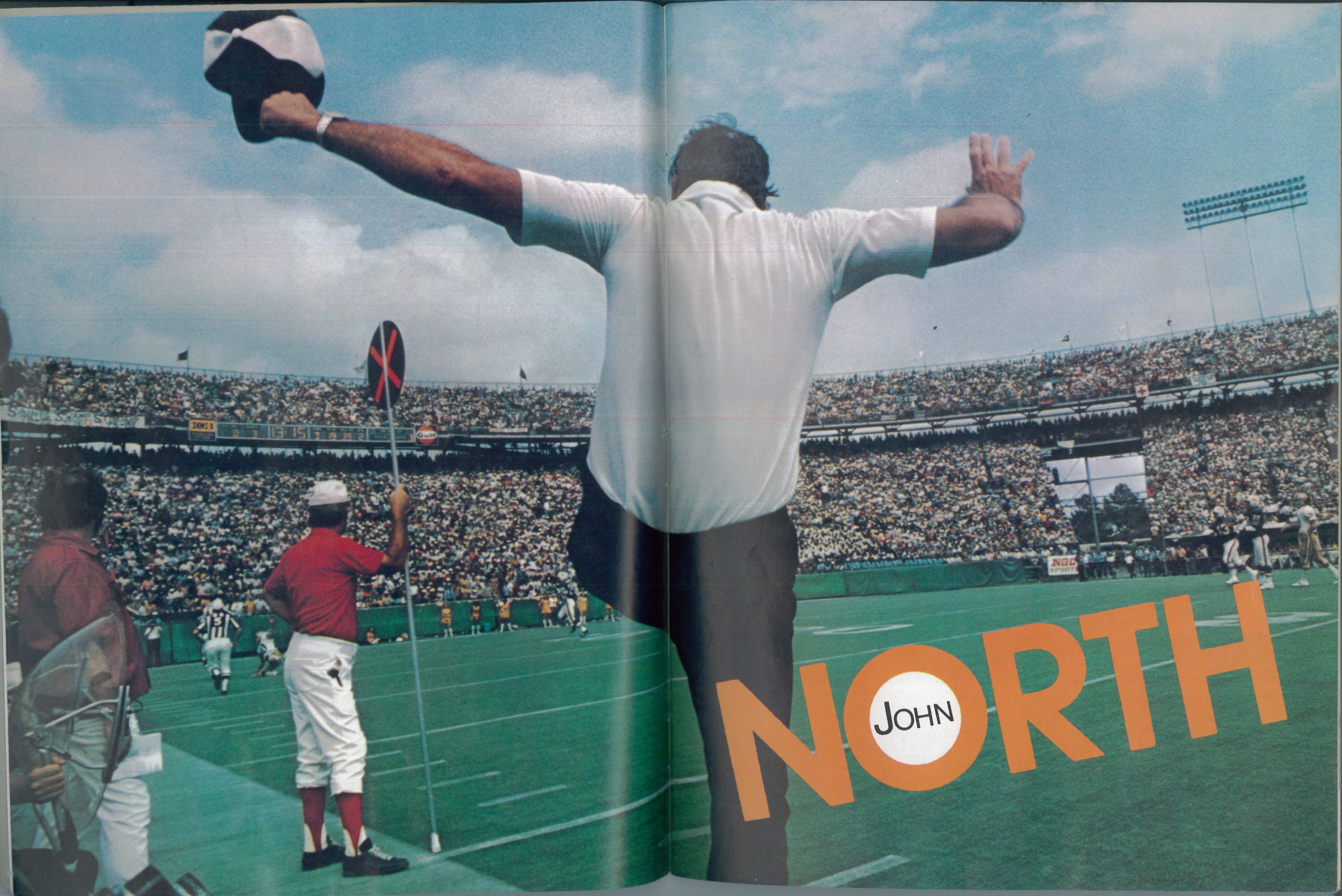
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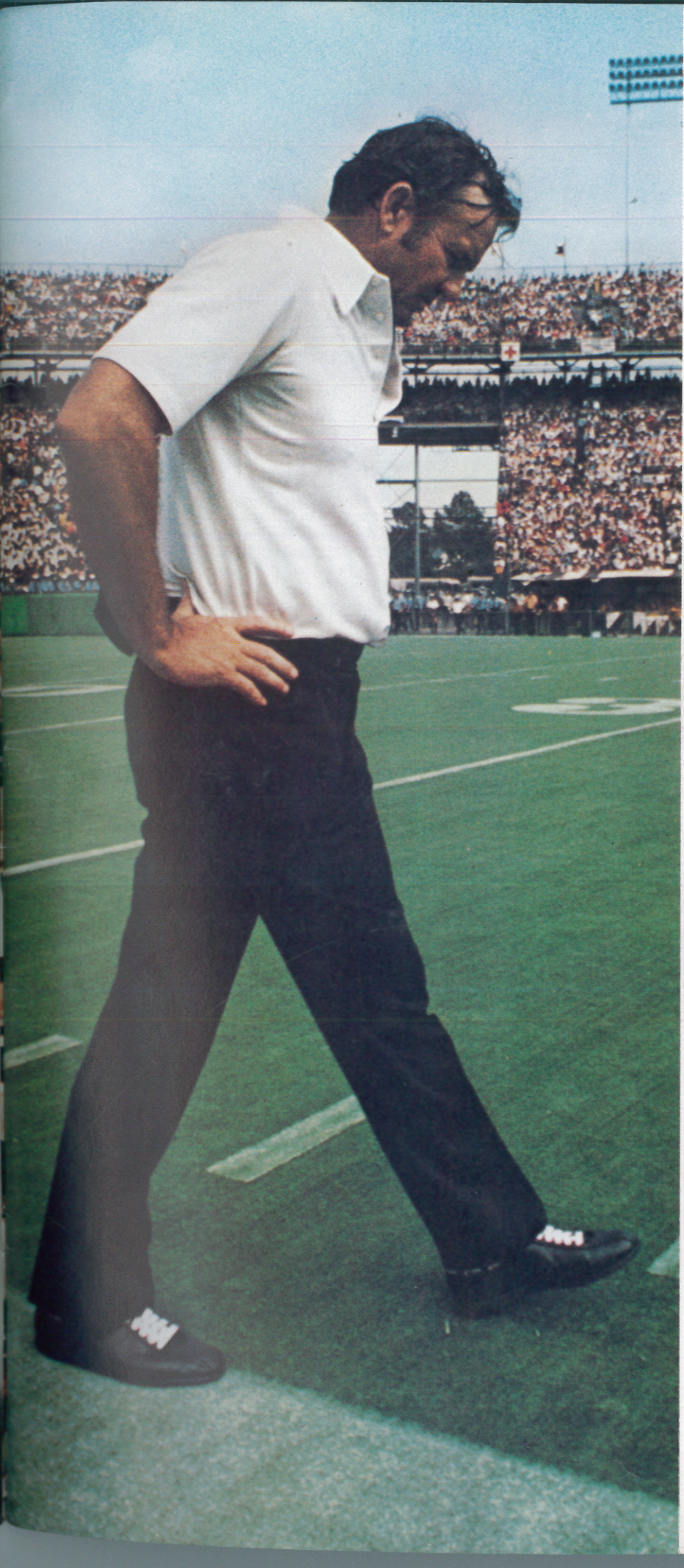
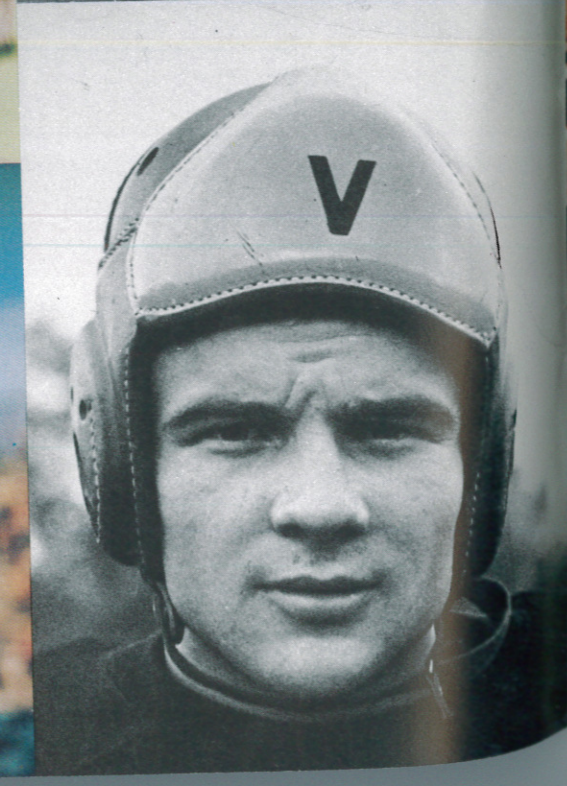
**John W. Mecom, Jr.
President
New Orleans Saints**





NORTH

JOHN



"Don't cut your throat."
 That was Blanton Collier's way of consoling John North the day after John North had lost 62-7 to Atlanta in his NFL coaching debut.

It was a favorite saying of Collier, a football coach who had looked more than one crisis in the eye, although nothing quite so hopeless as his onetime pupil, an "Untouchable," had suffered at the hands of the Falcons.

Under the circumstances, John North could have been excused for falling on his sword. Few games have been such a study in futility. The Saints played like a cellar-dweller in a playground league, making a Hall of Fame quarterback out of journeyman Dick Shiner who moved his team to 33 first downs.

In the dressing room, North spoke from his state of shock. "I don't blame any fan who walked out," he said and, for sure, many did leave Tulane Stadium before the Titanic had sunk completely. "We were terrible. These aren't high school players. These are pros getting paid to perform."

Then North added: "All you can do after something like this is find out who wants to play and regroup."

The two weeks following the Atlanta disaster probably say more for John North as a head coach than anything else. "He handled the situation—a tough situation—masterfully," says Bob Cummings, a defensive line coach North had brought in a few weeks earlier from a high school in Tennessee. "He ripped into 'em pretty good but he did it in his way. The man oozes with determination and pride. He appealed to their pride. He laid it all on the line. After he got through, I think all of the players realized he wasn't going to tolerate negative thinking, negative performance. Those who did would be gone."

The Atlanta debacle failed to shake North's confidence, a commodity he has in abundance. "I am convinced these people can beat someone," he said at the time. Did he really feel that way?

"Definitely. Everyone in every walk of life has bad days. I left home the next morning realizing there was only one thing to do: roll up your sleeves and go back to work."

North realized something else. He was getting his first shot in the NFL with a makeshift staff. When he took over from J.D. Roberts with two pre-season games left, he had to replace two assistants who left with Roberts. Dixie White, a scout, came in to coach the offensive line, and Bob Cummings, a classmate of North's at Vanderbilt, was brought in from high school to handle the defensive line.



White began by taking a seat in a player's chair and letting veterans like Jake Kupp and Del Williams fill him in on the Saints' blocking scheme. Cummings came in with some ideas of his own but with two strikes.

"You can imagine what some pros think of a guy going from high school to the NFL," says North. "Well Bob was under the gun right from the start. The players will test someone they're not sure of. But, if they think you know what you're talking about, they'll work harder. Bob Cummings knows what he's talking about."

For Cummings, at first, the transition was a little sticky. For example, he had to get out of the habit of calling his linemen "boys," easily explainable when you're coaching a 16-year-old one week, a 25-year-old the next.

"It's no wonder we looked like a Chinese Fire Drill at the start of the season," says North. "We were playing as three units—the line, the linebackers, the secondary. It was much the same way on offense. I figured it would take us four-to-five weeks to get things ironed out."

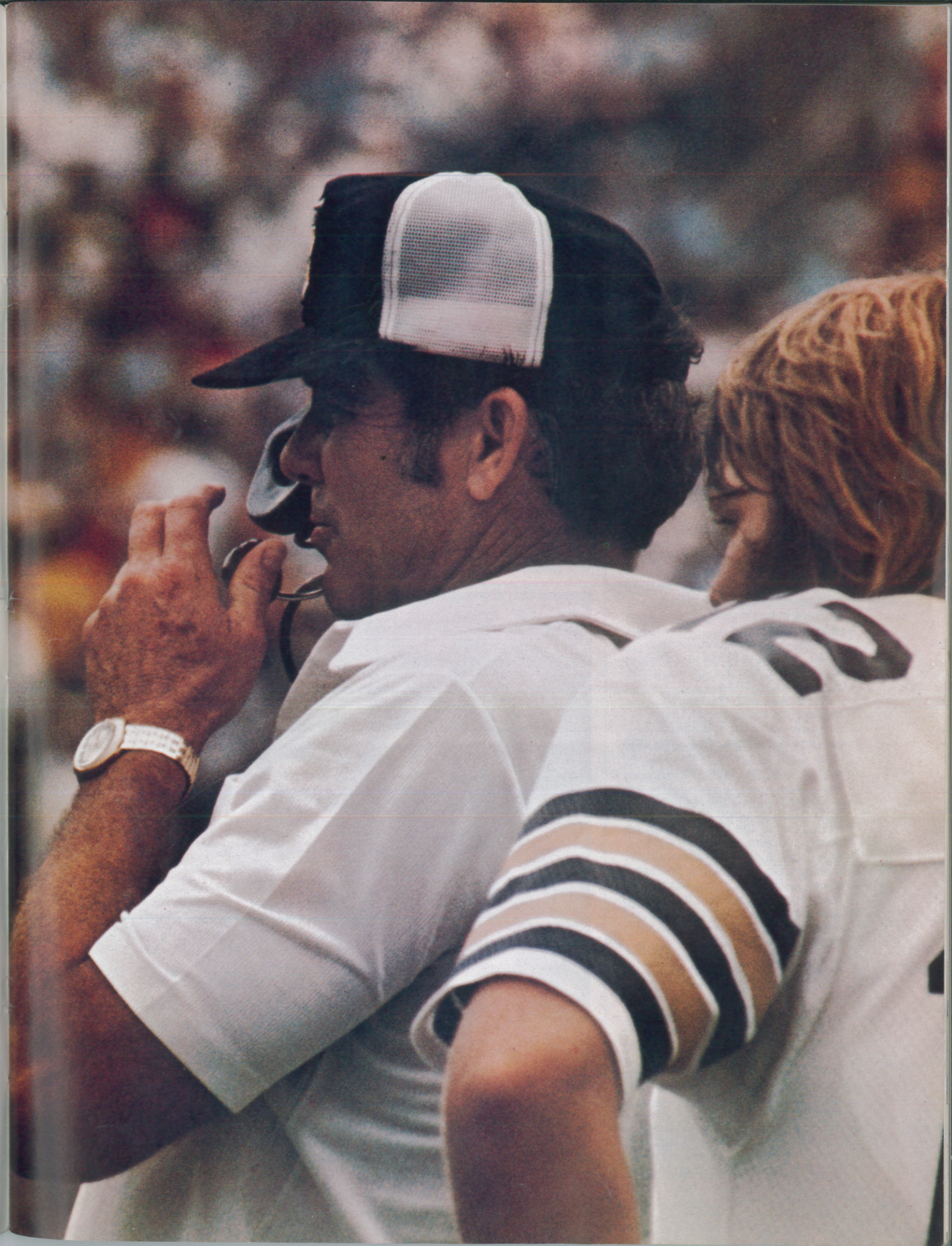
Looking back on those early weeks, North says he was still learning what might be described as "group therapy."

"It's a lot different handling an entire group, which the head man has to do, and handling just a few, which I did as an assistant. So I was picking it up as I went along. I guess I made mistakes. But I wasn't going to change my personality."

"I tried to get it across that, when I chewed someone out, it wasn't anything personal. I knew I had to get their asses moving. I'm an emotional guy and I was going to do it my way. A lot of players came to me and wanted to be traded when things were going bad and I had to tell them point blank, I was only going to make a trade when I felt it would help the club. Otherwise, I was going to kick some tails. I kept telling them 'don't tell me you can't win.'"

North softened his approach slightly following a 40-3 loss to the Cowboys, a game in which Saint futility was telecast coast-to-coast by Howard Cosell and company. "I didn't chew 'em out as much as I did after Atlanta," says North. "Actually, we had made some improvement. I told them to forget it. I told them to think about Baltimore."

Baltimore won. The Saints improved. Then—bingo—four victories in the next five weeks. "Who is this John North?" they began asking around the league.



John Puckett North is a 51-year-old bundle of emotion who gets rid of some of it by chewing on toothpicks. He likes scotch. He likes people. He's a willing mixer. And, says Bob Cummings, "he's a born leader."

"I'll never forget the game he played against the Tennessee freshmen in 1941," says Cummings. Every time Cummings, a center, looked up, North, a halfback, was carrying some Orange shirts with him. Vanderbilt scored a stunning 21-14 upset as North kicked three extra points and caught a pass for the winning touchdown.

Eighteen schools courted North who cut quite a path as a schoolboy athlete. He played two years at Du Pont High in Old Hickory, Tenn.—a Nashville suburb—and transferred to Castle Heights in Lebanon where he developed into one of the finest prep athletes Middle Tennessee ever produced. He was an automatic all-state and all-Southern selection his last two seasons, playing defensive end and wingback. Red Sanders, the Vandy coach, camped on the doorstep of the 6-1, 195-pounder who was also a stickout in basketball and set a record in the shot.

It was halfback John North in 1941, end John North in 1942, Marine John North in 1943, hero John North in 1944.

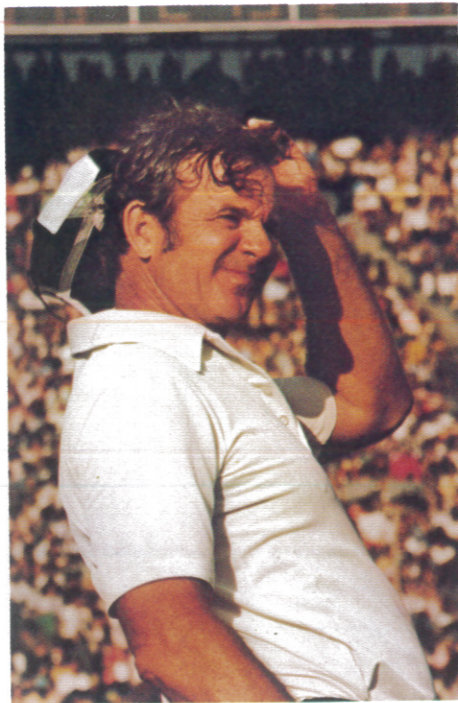
North was with the Fourth Marines on the island of Tinian when he was caught in machine-gun cross-fire that ripped into both legs. It left him with a hole the size of a coffee cup in his right leg.

Corporal North had survived the Marshalls campaign and had been through all of the fierce fighting on Saipan, coming out with nothing more than a nick on the arm from a sniper. On his first day on Tinian, it was a different story. North and his group were going in for cleanup operations and somehow two Japanese machine-gun nests hadn't been detected.

"We were in a sugar cane field," North recalled. "Nothing on the island but sugar cane and flies. The machine guns weren't 75 yards away when they opened up. In a spot like that a man has some funny thoughts."

"I knew I was going to get it. Bullets were hitting all around me. I just started pawing and digging to try to get my head in a hole. I managed to do that before they got me in the legs with dum-dums."

North had to crawl another 50 yards for first aid. Finally, he was transferred to a ship, then to a



hospital in California, finally to a Naval Hospital in Millington, Tenn.

"That's where I met him," says Dell North, the winsome blond who married John after a courtship of six months. It was fate. Dell McClure was accompanying a friend who was visiting her hospitalized fiancée when she saw "this handsome Marine."

"The thing I'll never forget is how hard John worked to rebuild his legs," says Dell North. "The muscle tissue in one leg was practically destroyed and the other one was in bad shape. But he never once gave up hope of returning to school and playing football."

He went from a cast, to crutches to a cane. And then on to becoming an all-Southeastern end with the Commodores in '46 and '47. North's 1946 comeback moved the *Nashville Banner* sports editor to comment: "The most phenomenal endurance I have known in any football player has carried John North to stardom. He's the best end I've seen in the South this year. Stamina like his is a gift. He's ready to go the first day of practice, and stays ready. He plays 25 minutes in a game, is relieved, and comes off the field not even blowing hard. And if you saw his shot-up legs, you would wonder how he manages to walk. Greater love has no person for the game of football."

North wound up his career in a vintage era that included Charley Conerly, Harry Gilmer, Y.A. Tittle. His coach Red Sanders felt he was "better than Barney Poole," explaining "he's one of the most valuable men to a team I've ever known." When North wasn't tackling someone, he was catching passes or running for yardage on end arounds.

Baltimore drafted him in 1948 and he found himself on the end of Tittle passes for three seasons. His observations on the pro game were offered after his rookie year: "You don't have to work as hard when you play football for money. Half the time we work without any pads and only rarely is there any pre-game contact work."

On Brooklyn's football Dodgers: "They used about every formation known to football. Playing the Dodgers got to be a joke. Sometimes a whole gang of guys would rush up to a play where only one or two was necessary. They would explain that pictures were being made and unless they were seen in the center of action, they might be fined."

On the quality of some players: "Anybody from Notre Dame or

Michigan could automatically join the squad. There were some fellows there who couldn't have made Vanderbilt's B team."

Pro football made North "feel like a rich man." He signed for a \$6,000 contract and a \$1,000 bonus. But the classic injury—a torn-up knee—cut him down in his third year and started him on the long coaching road, one which began in Tallassee (Ala.) High School.

Tallassee, Ala. was a milltown of some 12,000, 30 miles from Montgomery. Three years there, as "head coach of everything," was "some experience" according to Dell North.

"Our phone rang all the time," she recalls. "John coached football, basketball, baseball, softball, track. I don't think he ever worked any harder in his life. Parents called with problems. He was involved and he loved it."

From Tallassee Ala., North went to Cookeville, Tenn. where he served two years as a football assistant and head track coach. Another experience.

"We lived in the girls' dorm where I was the house mother," says Dell. "That made John the only man in the house. We lived on the bottom floor where our kitchen and living room were on one side of the hall, our bedroom on the other. I don't know how cozy you can call that."

North helped decorate for the senior prom and he is one of the few males to be on the other side of a panty raid.

One day the phone rang. It was Blanton Collier calling from Kentucky. "My first thought was he wanted me as a track coach," says North. "But he wanted me as a football assistant. I told him I'd think it over."

North took a week to decide. "It was a tough decision," says Dell. "He didn't know whether he wanted to get into major college coaching. He had gotten to enjoy the small-time atmosphere. And he enjoyed teaching accounting. At the time, he didn't know Blanton. He had been recommended by a friend John knew when he got his Masters at Peabody College in Nashville."

Although the head-coaching break did not come for another 18 years, it was a decision that helped shape John North's life.

"Moving ahead in coaching is so much being at the right spot at the right time," says John. "I guess I would have advanced quicker—I know I would—if I had gone straight to a major college after I quit

playing. But I enjoyed the years, and the associations, at Tallassee and at Tennessee Tech."

Landing under Collier's influence—from 1955 until Blanton was fired in 1961—was like going to one long coaching clinic.

"No one who ever coached under him," says North, "is embarrassed to talk football with anybody. No one knew more technique. He could talk to you for an hour on a little thing like the importance of eyes in football."

Why did Collier fail at Kentucky and go on to succeed in Cleveland where his Browns won the world championship? "I don't think you can say he failed at Kentucky. What has Kentucky done since he left? I do know he got the most out of his material."

And his coaches, too. The success of Collier's laboratory at Lexington is incredible. He produced five NFL head coaches—North, Don Shula, Howard Schnellenberger, Bill Arnsparger and Chuck Knox and a flock of assistants, including Bob Cummings of the Saints and Eral Allen of the Cowboys.

"When we got fired in '61," says North, "Bernie Shively, the AD, called the assistants in and said we could stick around and see if there would be an opening on the new staff. But he asked us not to hang around the athletic department."

"That's how we got the name 'Untouchables'—taken from the television series at the time. All of us out of a job would meet each morning at a little restaurant near the athletic department, talk football and decide what we wanted to do. Now we go back to Lexington every summer for a weekend of golf and football talk. Shula had already left the staff when we got fired so we voted him in as an honorary member of the 'Untouchables' when he came to the reunion two summers ago."

For a while, there was speculation that North, 39 at the time, might succeed Collier. At the time, an ex-Kentucky player, who had played under Bear Bryant, compared North to Bear, explaining: "He's a lot like the old man. He can get just as much out of the players. Mark my word, John North is going to be one of the great ones."

But Kentucky wasn't listening. The job went to Charley Bradshaw who put together a new staff. And North went South to LSU, as receiver coach on the staff of Charley McClendon.

"He enjoyed Baton Rouge," says

Dell North. "Our daughter, Marty, was 15 and our son, Johnny, was 12. They made quite a few friends. I remember the day I had the car and John wanted to play golf on the campus course. The only way he could get to the course was to use Marty's bike. So he started off, with his clubs slung over his shoulder, pedaling away. He drove right past Marty and some of her girl friends. He waved. And they laughed."

As receiver coach on a team that didn't put the ball in the air an awful lot, North found his three seasons at LSU a bit on the stifling side.

"Whenever they got a chance," he says, "Shula and Arnsperger talked up the pro game. Don went to Baltimore in '63 and Bill followed him a year later—after two seasons at Tulane. More and more, I began to get interested."

The chance came in '65 when Harry Gilmer, who had played against North in college, asked him to join his staff at Detroit. It turned out to be an eight-year stint with North surviving the dismissal of Gilmer, staying on to handle the receivers for Joe Schmidt.

The pro game was a tonic for North. Offense was always his bag, especially catching the football. But, when the Lions, first under Gilmer, then under Schmidt, failed to live up to expectations—that of the fans and the owner—John North was out again.

"Before the Saints called," he says, "I had a chance to go to a couple of teams. Washington was one. George Allen wanted me. But Washington didn't appeal to me."

New Orleans did, however, particularly since Marty, Mrs. Dudley Guglielmo, and John III, were both married and living in Baton Rouge.

"I'll never forget the day J.D. called," says Dell North. "I was in a Detroit beauty parlor when John came by to tell me the news. My hair was a mess and the lady told me: 'You can't go outside like that.' And I told her: 'My husband has seen me look a lot worse than this.' The idea of going to New Orleans appealed to me right away. It didn't take John too long to make up his mind."

"When I was at Detroit," says North, "I always had it in the back of my mind that I'd like to get to New Orleans. It had everything. It was a great city and a great football city. As it turned out, it was just one of those strokes of good fortune that J.D. called. Ken Shipp had left and he was looking for an offensive coach. I had no idea it would turn out the way it did."

It proved what North had said

all along about opportunity—when it knocks, you have to be in the right place. All of a sudden, there was the phone call from John Mecom, Jr. the evening of August 28 and North was a head coach in the NFL, the first time he was the overall boss since those busy days at Tallahassee High.

Dell North wasn't the least bit worried when her husband told her of Mecom's intentions.

"He has always welcomed responsibility," she says. "And he always seems to work best under pressure. He jumped at the opportunity."

One of North's first moves was to call Bob Cummings and offer him the defensive line job. And then there was Collier. Blanton, who scouts the SEC for the Cleveland Browns, flew to New Orleans for several days to discuss some of North's immediate, and long range, problems, the intangibles of going from an assistant to head man.

"There's no way a head coach can be as buddy-buddy as he was as an assistant," says North. "It's something I missed. A real important thing in any organization is constantly working against any inner conflict on your staff.

Offensive coaches can get to blaming defensive coaches for not holding up their end. The same thing can happen to your players. Then you've got two warring camps, one blaming the other. A head coach has to sit back and be impartial. He can't be taking up for favorites."

The manner in which North met his problems head-on, the way he got a disjointed, negative-thinking group of athletes to pull together is reflected in the Saints' about-face after their dismal beginning. "Losing is easy," says North. "Winning is tough as hell."

After the debacle at the hands of the Falcons, the defeat that rankled him most was the loss to San Diego. "They were not a good football team," he says. "At the time, I thought we had it going pretty good. It got to me a lot more than that 40-0 loss to the 49ers because, at least, the defense was doing a good job until it had to keep going back on the field.

"Believe me, the way we played in some games, I couldn't blame the press for getting on our ass. They're getting paid to do a job. I was hired to win games and, if I can't cut it, I don't expect to be around."

North was happy with the season's closing note, a 14-10 loss in Atlanta. "The most gratifying thing was the way we hung in there after trailing 0-14 at the half. It was the last game. A lot of the players were thinking about getting

home and forgetting about football for a while. It would have been easy to die. But we played the second half with enthusiasm. It's in games like this, more than in some victories, that you find out what kind of people you have. We had been a bad road team and we were carrying the fight to a team that had destroyed us, and doing it on their field."

He is expecting a carryover from that game. "For one thing," he says, "we should be a lot better organized. I'm real happy with the staff we have. I promise you one thing—it's going to do plenty of teaching."

This figures to be a critical season for John North. J.D. Roberts broke in with four victories and won two the next year. North equalled the franchise's seven-year best when he went 5-9. To better that figure, he'll have to do it against a tougher schedule. So the challenge is there.

John North takes an uncomplicated view of the game. He feels Blanton Collier helped give him the foundation and that he has all of the enthusiasm, and drive, any coach needs. He fully expects to transport his enthusiasm. "I don't like to be around unenthusiastic players or coaches," he says.

North works off his nervous energy during the season, and sometimes unwinds after a game, by, of all things, working in his yard. "He has always liked yard work and he enjoys refinishing furniture," says wife Dell. "It helps him get rid of tension."

North comes from solid, Tennessee-bred stock. His dad grew up on a farm—around corn, wheat and cotton. He left the farm to go to work for Standard Oil as a driller in Gilliam, La., where John was born. He later worked for Du Pont, where he retired at 65. For the last 20 years, John Puckett North, Sr., who will be 86 in June, has been selling real estate. His wife died last year at 76.

"Dad," he says, "never believed in sitting around."

Neither does John, Jr. He'll sit still for an occasional scotch. He enjoys socializing. And he enjoys people. His outgoing personality could be one of his stronger coaching attributes.

Sometimes it seems his runaway emotion might suggest a lack of inner-organization. But Dell North says her husband is a "real Gemini"—a dual personality. "A horoscope I read recently fits my husband perfectly," she says. "It said something about 'being determined to get where you're going... if you can't get a bus, you'll take a truck.' That's John."

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A Change Of Scenery: Saints Move Their Training Camp To Vero Beach, Fla.

What do football and baseball have in common?

Well, to at least two professional organizations from these sports, how about a training camp for starters!

The New Orleans Saints of the National Football league are shifting their 1974 training camp site to Vero Beach, Fla., and Dodgertown which, of course, is the spring training camp home of the Los Angeles Dodgers of the National Baseball League.

The reason for the move is simple: "We are moving to Florida strictly for a change of scenery," states Saints' Executive Vice-President Richard F. Gordon, Jr.

Part of the "scenery" Gordon referred to is Safari Pines, which encompasses both 9-hole and 18-hole golf courses, a swimming pool, tennis courts and a theatre which the Dodger players and personnel use in



Saints Meeting Area

their off hours.

More importantly, however, the facilities at Dodgertown are absolutely "top-drawer." Apart from the three practice fields and Holman Stadium, a new administration building welcomed the Dodgers this spring and will house the Saints this summer. The building includes a major league club house, a minor league club house, medical department, dining room and kitchen, main

lobby, canteen, recording studio, photo dark room, Western Union office, interview room, staff social room, press working room, trainers room, equipment room, staff social room, press working room, trainers room, equipment room and two laundry rooms.

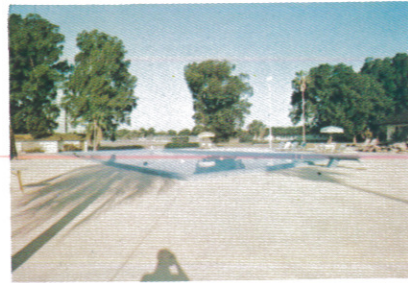
And, to add a little more class, all of the landscaping on the facility is produced by plants and flowers grown in the Dodgertown nursery.



The Dining Room.



A distance shot of the Residence Building.



The swimming pool.



The Press Room.

That's a long way from the Navy Station landscape of the late 1940's that was to become Dodgertown, thanks to Vero Beach businessman Bud Holman, who talked the Dodgers into the idea of turning the naval flying facility into a training camp in 1948.

Dodgertown is 738 miles east of New Orleans in Indian River County, Fla. Adjacent to the facility is the Vero Beach Municipal Airport which is served by at least one major airline—Eastern. A larger and more nearly full service airport is at Melbourne, only 33 miles

away and 135 miles South is Miami, home of the Dolphins whom the Saints play in the pre-season at the Orange Bowl. If top flight facilities are a big plus in the building of a winning football season, the New Orleans Saints have made a giant step in that direction.

Practicing In Style On David Drive



The \$78,000 addition to the Saints' practice facility was built in 1973.

A \$78,000 addition to the New Orleans Saints' practice facility in Jefferson Parish during 1973 is the first such improvement to the facility in the club's eight-year history.

When originally built in 1967, the building consisted of nine

offices, two player meeting rooms, a small weight room, equipment room, training room and dressing room with shower and sauna bath.

In 1969, a handball court was added in the rear of the main building and in 1971, a basketball

goal was added to the side of the handball court.

Included in the new addition are a reception area, four offices, a conference room and a fully equipped weight room. The reception area greets visitors and guests who turn left if visiting



In utilizing the weight room, players are required to warm up before starting on a weight program.



The Saints' weight room is furnished with brand new equipment, including an 11-man multiple Universal Hercules.

coaches or right if visiting scouts. The building was newly carpeted throughout and was repainted black and gold (Saint colors) from the original blue.

It should be noted that the \$78,000 figure includes building and carpeting only. The furnishings cost extra.

Housed in new offices are Head Coach John North and his secretary and Director of Player Personnel Bob Whitman and his secretary. There are also two offices available for the team scouts when not travelling; these offices are also used to store the vast amount of information gathered by the

scouts.

The conference room, in addition to being used for coaches' meetings and the like, is also the main room from which the Saints will conduct its draft each year.

In the rear of the original building and opposite the handball court stands the weight room. Modeled after the weight room at Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge, the Saints' structure measures 35x50 and is furnished with brand new equipment, including an 11-man multiple Universal Hercules.

Perhaps the key piece of equipment in the weight room, the Universal Hercules features

eleven different stations in one unit, including the bench press, military press, knee and leg exerciser, bicep curls, pull downs, two chin up stations, leg press, sit ups, dip bar and neck exerciser. Ideally, eleven players can use this unit at once and, while this may not be practical, several players can use it simultaneously with ease.

Other features include three abdominal boards, which are used for situps (the boards are stationary, bolted to the wall, with a padded board having optional settings and straps for the feet. The most difficult setting

They're great together.

**BURGER
KING**

**BURGER
KING**



A Saints coach helps one of the Saints' 1974 rookies get the hang of one of the machines.

would put a player almost on his head while the easier setting would be lower and closer to the floor), three York Deluxe Power Benches for bench presses, which develop the muscles of the shoulder girdle and upper body, and three Olympic Weight Sets (also called free weights), with the bar designed to support 550 pounds for specific exercises not done with the power bench sets.

Using the talents of Mr. Henry

Lessinger of Metairie, La., the Saints added four knee exercise tables, built especially for the club by Mr. Lessinger.

The tables serve a multi-purpose with adjustable settings allowing the player to strengthen thigh muscles with one setting and hamstrings with another setting.

Also available for the players are two power slides built by the Ash Weight Lifting Co., of Troy, Ala., and designed to strengthen and tone the explosion muscles,

girth and back muscles; a nautilus unit, which is used to strengthen the upper torso muscles; two stationary bicycles (for knee rehabilitation); a shoulder wheel (for shoulder rehabilitation following surgery); a knee and leg conditioner (to develop the rotary stability of the knee); an ankle exerciser (for rehabilitation of the ankle) and a two-man knee rehabilitation table, also built by Mr. Lessinger.

In utilizing the weight room, players are required to warm up sufficiently prior to starting on a weight program. To warm up, the players utilize the handball and racketball court, basketball goal and the football field. Therefore, the weight room brings into use the other fine facilities available to the Saints.

For those players living in the New Orleans area, Coach North has instituted a supervised program, starting in March of each year and continues the regular program right through training camp.

The construction on the addition took 10 workers 90 days to complete and represents the progress made by the New Orleans Saints, an ever expanding organization, since 1967.



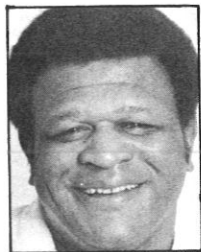
The Saints' 1974 rookies get acquainted with the David Drive practice facility.



John W. Mecom, Jr.



Henry Simoneaux



Bob Ledbetter



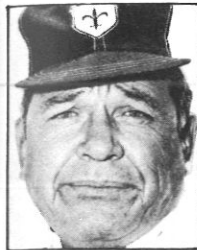
Dixie White



Brenda Speed



Sandy King



Ray Jenkins



Bud Whitehead



Liz Gilbert



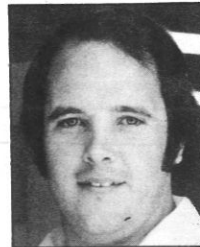
Joe Blaylock



Barra Birrcher



Vera Veal



Dan Simmons



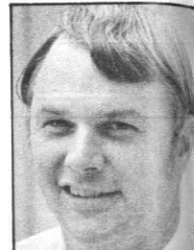
Pete Smyth



Sandy Stevens



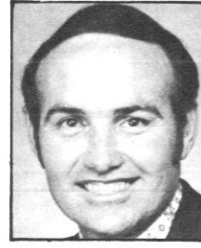
Fred Williams



Doug Shively



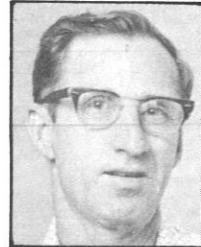
Lamar McHan



Eddie Jones



Harry Hulmes



Bob Daniels



Sherry Celestin



John North

Saints Behind The Scenes



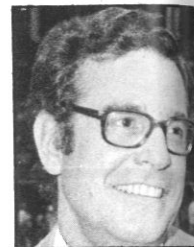
Bill Treuting



Gregory Webster



Bob Whitman



Dr. Charles Brown



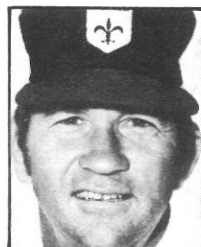
Dr. Richard Oster



Becky Hanson



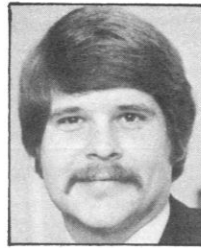
Ernie Hefferle



Hamp Cook



Brenda Becker



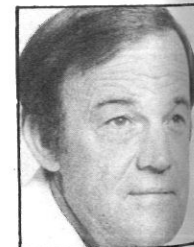
Bill Becknell



Larry Liddell



Doris Wyatt



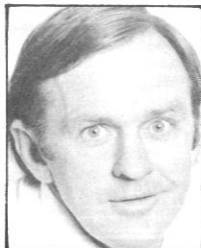
Bob Cummings



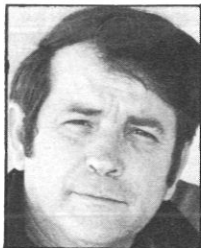
Karen Gunderson



Jim Hall



Jim Phillips



Erby Aucoin



Dr. Ken Saer



Ruth Barker



Willie Howard



Barbara Schoen



Wimp Hewgley



Karen Gunderson



Dick Gordon



Fran Albright



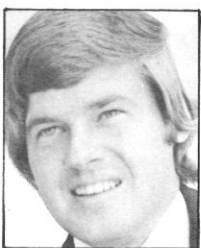
Dr. Ray Haddad



Mary Ann Thibodaux



Linda Abercrombie



Dean Kleinschmidt



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Miami to San Andros 136 Mi.
Nassau to San Andros 34 Mi.



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Atlanta Falcons

7-62

SEPT. 16 . . . DAY OF INFAMY

It began calmly enough, with the Saints and Falcons even at zero after the first quarter. Then, after 2:55 of the second quarter the visitors from Atlanta shoved across the first of their eight touchdowns of the contest. The count was 31-0 and 5:58 had elapsed in the third period when the Saints registered



their only TD of the day, via a five-yard pass from Archie Manning to Bill Butler. Unfortunately, Atlanta was only half-finished, as coach Norm Van Brocklin's Western Division contenders went on to ring up 31 more points and stash away an impressive 62-7 victory. Without a doubt it had been the darkest two hours and fifty-one minutes in the history of pro football in New Orleans.

Logging 32 first downs to the Saints' 11, rolling up a 496 to 184 advantage in offensive yardage, and intercepting six of New Orleans' 24 passes, while allowing only eight completions for a meager 35 yards, the soaring Falcons poured it on throughout the frustrating afternoon, firing passes on four of their last five offensive plays of the game, with one of the throws accounting for TD number seven. The Saints simply didn't have the answer this day.

Even as the opener approached, Saints' head coach John North, who'd been appointed only two weeks before, was shuffling personnel in an effort to bolster a squad that had followed up a 2-11-1 campaign in 1972 with losses in its first five pre-season outings in 1973. Not until Houston was nipped, 16-10, in the pre-season finale under North's direction were the Saints able to shake the stigma of defeat. If hopes for the NFL grind were buoyed by the win over the Oilers, they could have been dashed beyond salvation by the Atlanta blasting. It was here that North proved his mettle, putting the pieces back together, but it wasn't an overnight accomplishment. There were more troubles on the horizon—and the locker room continued to frequently resemble an airline terminal. After all, the Saints had never before been beaten as badly as 62-7.



Dallas Cowboys

3-40

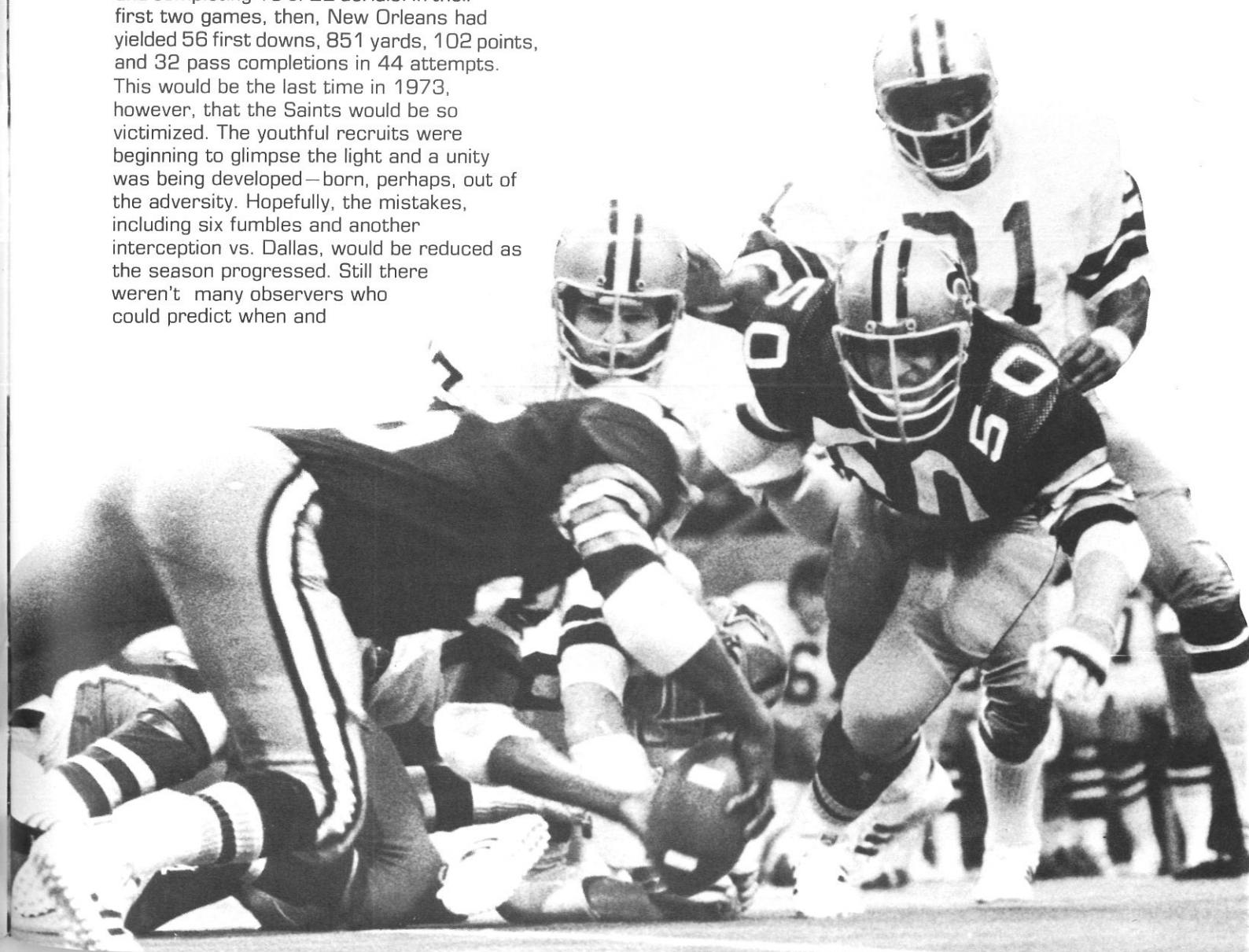
MONDAY NIGHT MISERY

In their second Monday night nationwide television appearance in as many years the Saints displayed some early improvement before ultimately bowing to the Cowboys in Texas Stadium, 40-3. The Saints fell behind, 12-0 in the opening quarter but stormed back to notch a field goal and miss two others during an encouraging second period to trail by only 12-3 at halftime. That, however, concluded the Saints' scoring for the evening and the Cowboys pounded across 21 points in the third quarter to nail down the decision.

Once again the opposition scorched the Saints' young and struggling defense, piling up 24 first downs and 355 offensive yards and completing 15 of 22 aeriels. In their first two games, then, New Orleans had yielded 56 first downs, 851 yards, 102 points, and 32 pass completions in 44 attempts. This would be the last time in 1973, however, that the Saints would be so victimized. The youthful recruits were beginning to glimpse the light and a unity was being developed—born, perhaps, out of the adversity. Hopefully, the mistakes, including six fumbles and another interception vs. Dallas, would be reduced as the season progressed. Still there weren't many observers who could predict when and

where the Saints would achieve their initial triumph in league competition.

Before another game would be played North would part with wide receiver Danny Abramowicz, a hero of the New Orleans fans since he reported as a 17th round draft choice in 1967, as the shake-up continued. In Dallas both linebacker Wayne Colman and defensive tackle Derland Moore returned to action for the Saints after being idle for six games with knee injuries. Though not accounting for many points, the Saints were making some headway with a ground attack that featured Bill Butler—the only holdover among the six running backs from 1972—and Jess Phillips, a September acquisition from Cincinnati.



HEARTBREAK IN BALTIMORE

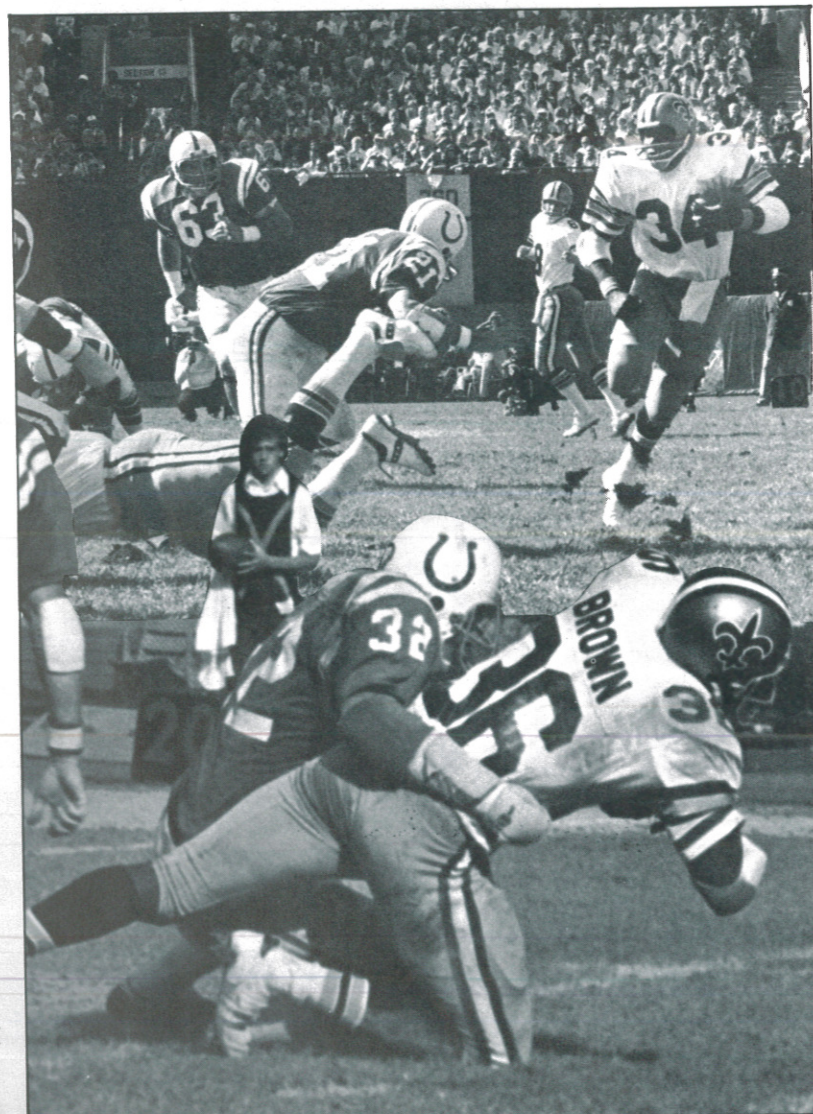
If the Saints were ever going to start making their move they really could not afford to delay much longer than game number three—against a Baltimore team that was still getting itself untangled with a rookie quarterback, Bert Jones, directing the offense.

In their first two possessions the Colts churned 68 yards and 34 yards to a 14-0 lead, but that concluded their scoring as the Saints gave up yardage but no more points while dropping a 14-10 decision. As a matter of fact, the visitors from Louisiana established a team mark by intercepting



four passes in the second quarter. The Colts would put the ball in the air only two more times in the second half—both incomplete—as the Saints' defense seemingly found the combination it had been seeking. Through eleven consecutive periods, including the last three in Baltimore, the Saints would permit only two touchdowns in a startling reversal of form.

Later in the season the Saints would think back to the battle in Baltimore and regret not being able to salvage a victory. Quarterback Archie Manning clicked on 18 of 33 throws for 250 yards, including a 33-yard TD strike to wide receiver Bob Newland, but what had been a promising ground game was stifled with only 62 yards on 24 carries by a Baltimore defense that was geared to do just that—stop the run. The Saints, however, demonstrated their character at Memorial Stadium, surging from their own 31-yard line late in the fourth quarter to a near-first down on the Baltimore 25. During the drive they had to overcome a pair of 15-yard penalties but they made up all of the yardage except for the one vital foot that would have produced a first down inside the Colts' 25. Blue-shirted linebacker Ted Hendricks dumped Phillips on a fourth down shot with only a foot needed. It was a disheartening wind-up to a gallant comeback effort.

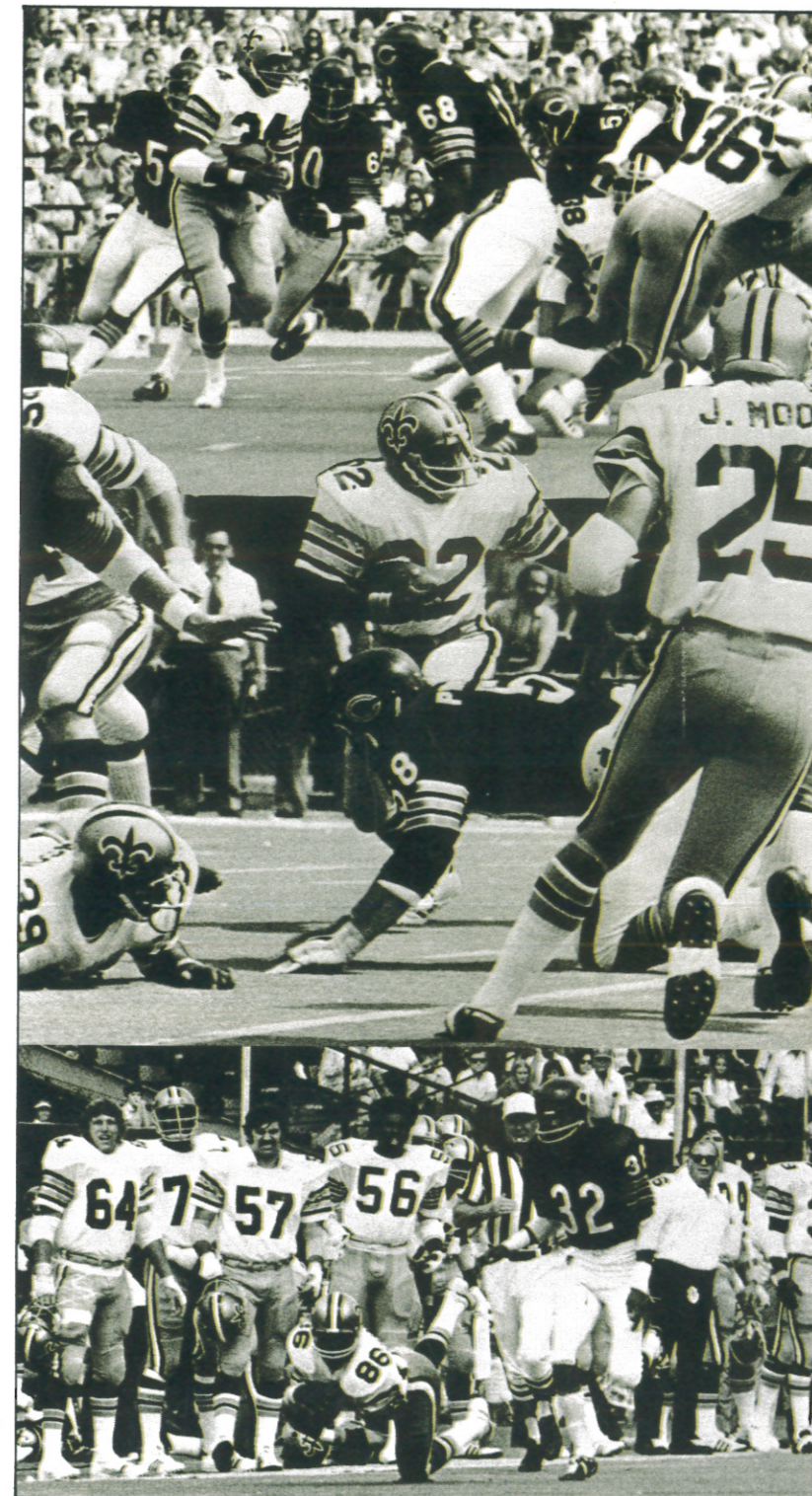


VICTORY IN NEW ORLEANS

An improved attack that struck just often enough and a stalwart defense that kept its goal line uncrossed until the game's final minute produced an encouraging 21-16 success for the Saints as they returned to Tulane Stadium after two weeks on the road. The victims were the Chicago Bears and they would have difficulty getting themselves untracked for the remainder of the season, although the previous week they'd routed the strong Broncos in Denver.

It was unfortunate only that the smallest home crowd in the Saints' seven year history, 56,561, turned out to witness the "arrival" of coach North's forces. They did make a lot of noise, however, and the Saints were suddenly aware of the benefit of playing on their home grounds. Unlike their losses, the Saints kept their mistakes to a minimum—one lost fumble—and maintained the lead all the way, commencing with a four-yard scoring jaunt by Manning in the opening quarter. Archie also ran in the clincher from four yards out in the last period after rookie Howard Stevens had skirted in from the two in the third quarter. It was, incidentally, the only game in which the Saints would reach the enemy end zone as many as three times in 1973.

While the Saints outrushed their foes, 163-74, for the determining edge—with Phillips netting a game-high 86 yards via 18 hauls, in addition to snaring four passes for 38 more—it remained for two weird fumbles to steal the spotlight. With a first down on the Chicago one-yard line and a 14-3 advantage, Manning tried to sneak for another Saints score on the fourth period's first play. The ball popped loose from the pile, however, and was finally tracked down by Bears' linebacker Bob Pifferini on his 33-yard line. The Grizzlies then proceeded to invade New Orleans territory and reduced their deficit to 14-6 on Mirro Roder's 40-yard field goal. Better prepared for their next miscue, Henry Matthews plucked Stevens' bobble out of the air and artfully dashed 55 yards to Chicago's nine yard line to set up the tally that padded the Saints' bulge to 21-9. Now, after the disastrous 0-3 getaway there was at least hope for the future.



Detroit Lions

20-13



MOVING THE BALL AND DEFEATING DETROIT

Still on familiar (poly) turf, the Saints proved to their loyal people that the conquest of Chicago was no freak happening when they jolted Detroit, 20-13, on the season's fifth Sunday. It was the finest offensive performance yet for North's valiant troops as they registered 21 first downs and gained 334 yards, 171 of it on the ground. Phillips was prominent again, accounting for 72 yards on 19 carries, but was outgunned by



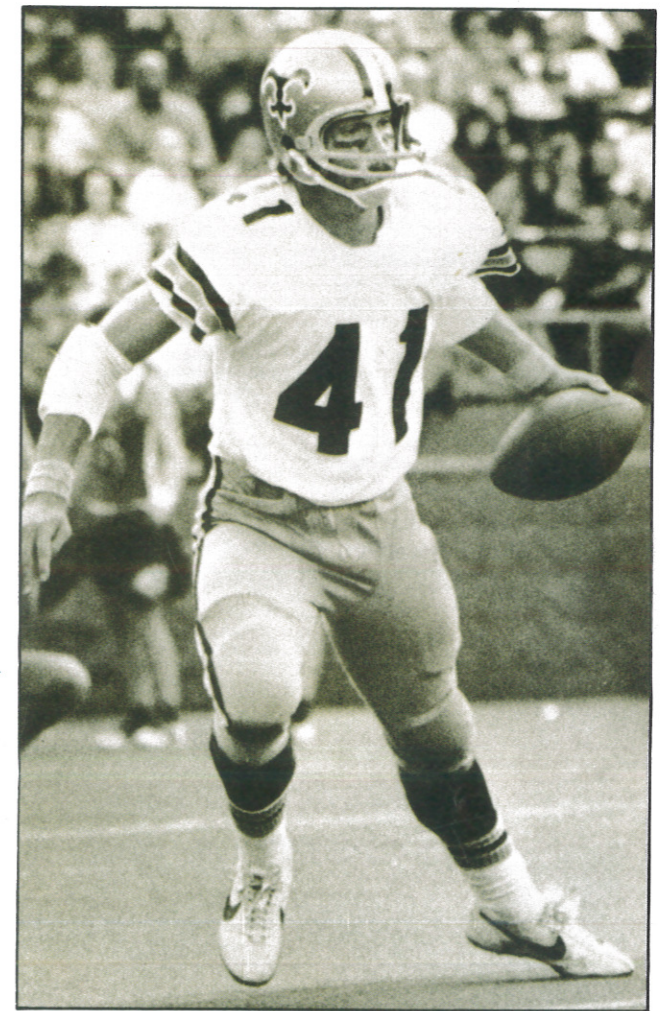
Butler's 91 yards via only 15 trips. Archie's arm was again used sparingly, as he fired only 15 times, hitting on nine for 172 yards.

Always the underdog, the Saints had to struggle from behind to win this one on Butler's one-yard jaunt with a mere 39 seconds left in the game. The TD was particularly noteworthy because it came two downs after an 11-yard Happy Feller field goal—for an apparent 16-13 lead—was rejected in favor of a first down on the Lions' two-yard line, by virtue of a roughing-the-kicker penalty on Feller. Coach North had literally taken the winning three points off the scoreboard in order to take a shot at the possible seven. Stevens had zipped a yard to pay-dirt with 4:10 gone in the final quarter to thrust the Saints into a 13-10 lead. Detroit's only six-pointer—the second to be yielded by the Saints in their two straight triumphs—resulted from a 33-yard Greg Landry-to-Earl McCullouch aerial late in the third period.

At this point the feeling prevailed that this scrapping New Orleans outfit could enter the arena with any opponent. The new pieces that North had collected were now fitting into the machinery. The bench, however, would be tested in ensuing weeks as injuries would chop down tight end Bob Brown, linebacker Willie Hall and safetyman Jerry Moore. The trio would be missed but the replacements would maintain the quality. And the unpredictable Saints would suffer additional disappointments before the '73 campaign was wrapped up.

SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS

0-40



A CATASTROPHE IN CANDLESTICK

With two straight wins behind them the Saints soared into San Francisco with hopes high that the trend would not only continue but gain momentum in an area where even the most ineffective New Orleans teams had been somewhat successful. Thus the 40-0 trouncing administered the Saints by the 49ers marked the visitors' first loss in the "City by the Bay" since 1967, with the last three efforts producing a victory and a pair of deadlocks. This, however, was the Saints' initial appearance in Candlestick Park after laboring previously in Kezar Stadium. Regardless of the location, the Redshirts of Dick Nolan began pouring it on in the second quarter and never let up.

The key to the 49ers' success was a stifling defense that choked off the Saints with a mere two first downs—one via rushing and one through a penalty. Offensively, the New Orleans unit netted a total of 82 yards, with a minus 15 in the air. All were club records for inefficiency. There was no choice but for observers to believe that the Saints had slipped back into the dangerously deep rut that had characterized their opening two losses of 1973.

If the offensive power failure wasn't bad enough, the Saints suffered further indignities when their former ace receiver, Danny Abramowicz, not only caught four passes for 101 yards, but set up his team's first score with a 54-yard reception, then snared a 23-yard throw for the TD that vaulted the Prospectors in front to stay, 7-0, in the second quarter. In the course of the rout the 49ers, led by a relief quarterback named John Brodie—who came on for Steve Spurrier when the latter couldn't produce a first quarter score—piled up 424 yards, but they just might have committed a tactical error when they faked a punt in the game's dying seconds and threw twice from two yards out in a futile attempt to add to their total. The gesture would be remembered when the rivals clashed in a December return match in New Orleans.

Washington Redskins 19-3

SAINTS SCALE THE HEIGHTS

If September 16, 1973 was the bleakest day in the history of pro football in New Orleans, then October 28, 1973 had to mark one of the very highest peaks yet attained by the often-struggling New Orleans club. It was on the latter afternoon, of course, that the fired-up Saints rebounded solidly from their shattering setback in San Francisco to whip the Washington Redskins, 19-3, in Tulane Stadium. The defending NFC champions never had a look-in, so convincing was the Saints' superiority on this particular day. Too, the win sort of climaxed the comeback of John North's battlers from those two leadoff disasters.

In only the second game ever in which they'd checked the opposition without a touchdown, the Saints rode the crest of a superb defensive effort. Throttled with a total offense of 179 yards, the Redskins could manage only 24 yards via 18 rushing plays and they failed to register a single first down on the ground. The 'Skins went to the air 37 times but completed only 19 throws, with two intercepted—and on five occasions their

quarterback was unceremoniously dropped for deficits amounting to 31 yards. It was fitting, therefore, that the game's key play should be provided by the New Orleans defense, after a newly-inserted Sonny Jurgensen had relieved Bill Kilmer at quarterback early in the third quarter and driven the Redskins from their 20 yard line to a first down on the Saints' 21. At this vital point Saints' cornerback Ernie Jackson made a diving interception of a Jurgy aerial on his own 13 and the victors were never again threatened.

En route to their triumph the Saints cut loose only 17 passes—hitting on seven for only 62 yards—but they cracked the Washington defensive wall for 203 yards on 52 carries, with Jess Phillips picking up a game-leading 85 yards and Archie Manning adding 60. It was truly a brilliant team performance—with a very important sidelight being four (of six) field goals booted by newcomer Bill McClard, from distances of 35, 43, 30 and 37 yards. He'd been signed as a free agent that very week and did his job very well. No one letdown.



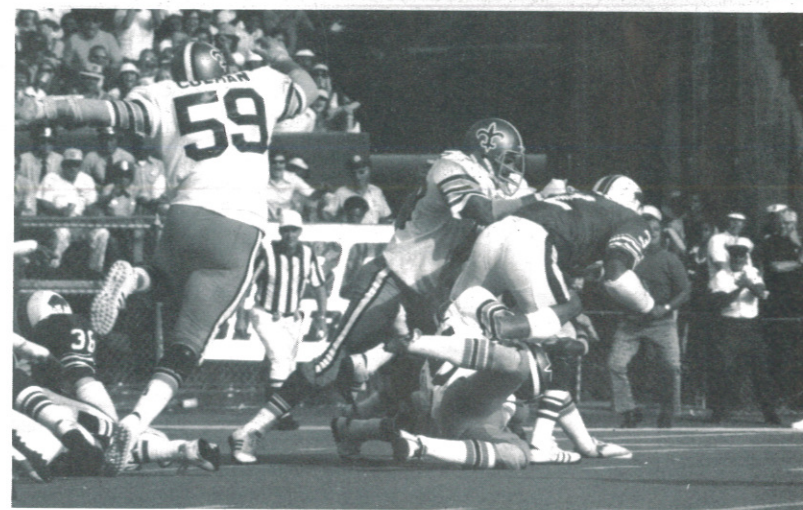
Buffalo Bills 13-0

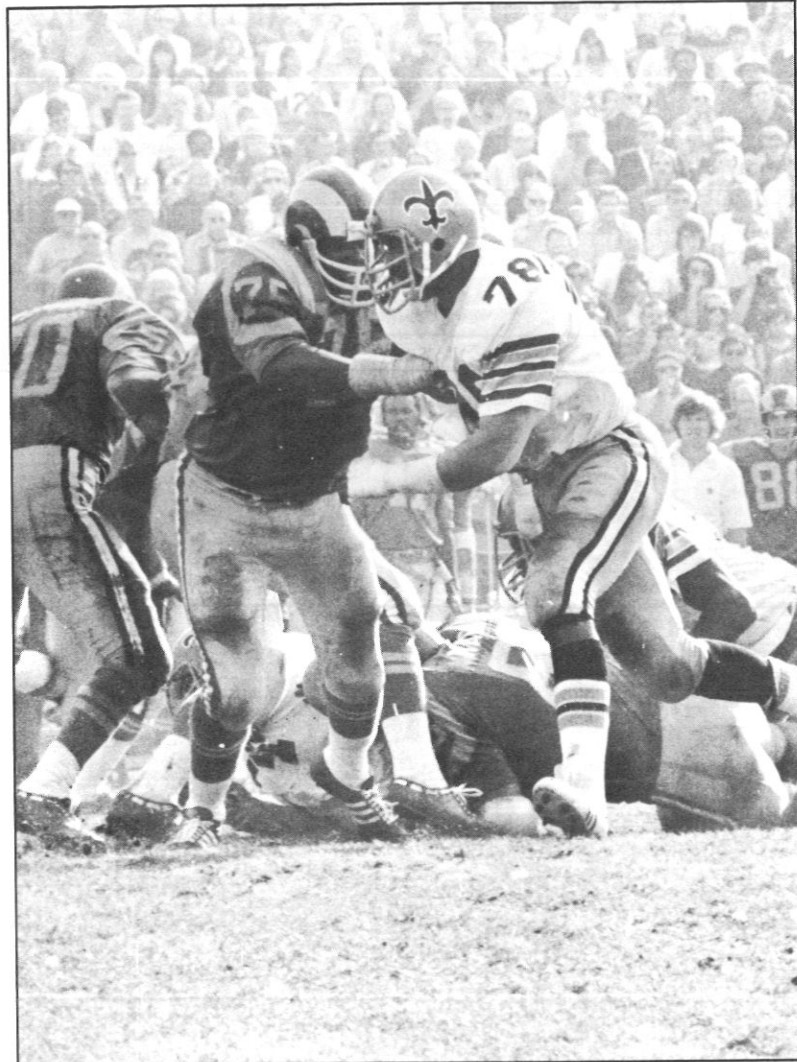
IT'S DEE-FENSE AGAIN!

There was a common belief before this game—and quite possibly before every game in which Buffalo is involved—that in order to get the best of the Bills it would be necessary to at least limit the activities of super back O.J. Simpson. The largest pro crowd in New Orleans for 1973, 74,770, turned out to see if the Saints were equal to this unenviable assignment.

Responding splendidly to the challenge, the New Orleans defense shut down the magnificent Simpson—who was to establish a pro record by rushing for over 2,000 yards for the season—allowing him a mere 79 yards for his 20 carries. It was one of only two 1973 contests in which he failed to gain 100 or more yards on the ground. With O.J. contained, the Saints remained stalwart against the Buffalo air game, harassing rookie quarterback Joe Ferguson into completing only nine of 19 throws for 87 yards. The number two running team in the NFL just couldn't get going and settled for ten first downs while cashing in on two of 12 third down opportunities.

While Bill McClard continued his effective placekicking, with field goals of 42 and 24 yards, and recently-claimed tight end John Beasley pulled down six timely Manning missiles for 47 critical yards, the key play for the Saints was again credited to the defensive unit. Trailing by the ultimate final score of 13-0, the Bills put the ball in play on the second play of the fourth period from the Saints' eleven yard line. It was fourth and one. The handoff, to no one's surprise, went to Simpson and he attempted to crack back over his right side. He was swarmed over by Saints, led by linebacker Jim Merlo and defensive backs Jerry Moore and Ernie Jackson. It was O.J.'s last carry as the remainder of the Bills' offensive efforts were devoted to passing—and hoping—in vain. The shutout was the first for the Saints in their seven pro campaigns.





MORE GRIEF IN L.A. COLISEUM

Coming off two straight victories against first class opposition — and still very much in the race for the Western Division title or a wild card playoff berth with a best-ever 4-4 record — the Saints had reason to expect that they just might be able to produce their very first triumph in their fifth appearance in the Los Angeles Coliseum. Unfortunately, they were matched against a Rams team that was to breeze to a 12-2 finish and capture Western honors. It was, as a matter of fact, the most talented team to represent Los Angeles in the NFL in quite a few years. The stinging 29-7 defeat dealt them by the Rams proved to be difficult for the young and promising Saints to shake as they would be forced to endure three more weeks without success before finally breaking through the



gloom.

Even in the Coliseum, however, the upstart Saints broke on top, with Manning connecting with Jubilee Dunbar for a 65-yard TD strike on the initial play of the second quarter. The damage count might have been greater at the time if the Saints hadn't committed two of their five fumbles for the afternoon deep in Rams' territory in the opening quarter. The bobbles nullified some heads-up defensive work by the invaders. Once behind, though, the Californians became a different outfit and put the New Orleans entry on the defensive to stay. Coach Chuck Knox's impressive warriors rolled up 424 yards — 221 passing and 212 rushing — and reeled off 78 plays to the Saints' 44, adding 122 more yards via six punt returns. Their most potent ground force was halfback Lawrence McCutcheon, who churned out 115 yards and averaged 5.5 yards per carry. This brilliant second-year pro would be hammering at the Saints again in a return match two weeks hence.

This loss seemed to have a significant effect upon the Saints, perhaps because the strong and experienced Rams were so overwhelming in delivering the knockout blow. There was really no reason to believe that anyone could handle this L.A. squad, let alone a still-on-the-rise Saints unit.



STALLED IN SAN DIEGO

In their second go under interim head coach Ron Waller, the Chargers utilized a wide variety of formations but capitalized on a key turnover and a weird all-the-way punt return to emerge with a 17-14 conquest in San Diego Stadium. This was a contest that the Saints figured to win going into it — and even during much of the action it seemed like it would just be a matter of time before the visitors caught up with and overhauled San Diego's forces. It turned out to be the Chargers' second and last victory of 1973. For the frustrated Saints it was just another California calamity and just another game they'd played on the road without a win. The string would be extended by two before the campaign closed.

This was a struggle in which the Saints held a 22-14 edge in first downs, a 341-288 advantage in total offensive yardage and ran 14 more plays, 74-60. But the Chargers did batter the New Orleans defense for 186 ground yards and averaged 5.3 yards per rush. In the air, however, San Diego could click on only nine of 24 tosses and suffered an interception. It was, incidentally, an aerial theft by San Diego's Bob Howard that cemented the triumph early in the final period. There were, in fact, two plays in a row that sealed the Saints' doom. Confronted with a second-and-one situation on his own 32 yard line, after beginning a march on his own one, quarterback Manning was buried for an eleven-yard loss by Chargers' tackle Ron East — a play that changed the game's complexion. With third-and-twelve, then, Archie had his sideline shot picked off by Bob Howard and San Diego was in business on the New Orleans nine-yard line. A defensive holding penalty aided the home team in recording the touchdown that jacked the count to an insurmountable 17-7. The winners' first six-pointer came on an all-the-way 84-yard punt return by Ron Smith, the direct result of the Saints' special unit mistakenly believing that Smith had called for a fair catch then permitting him to slip out of their clutches.

A New Orleans bright spot was provided by tight end Beasley, who snared 12 passes — to equal a team record — for 127 yards and a score. There was little else on a depressing day.

Los Angeles Rams

13-24

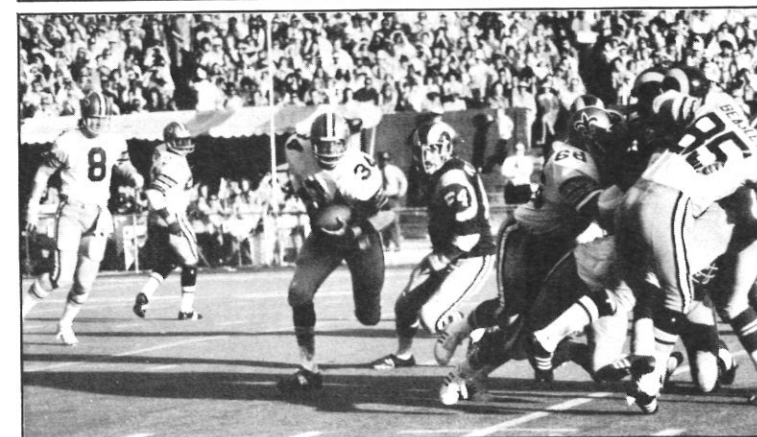
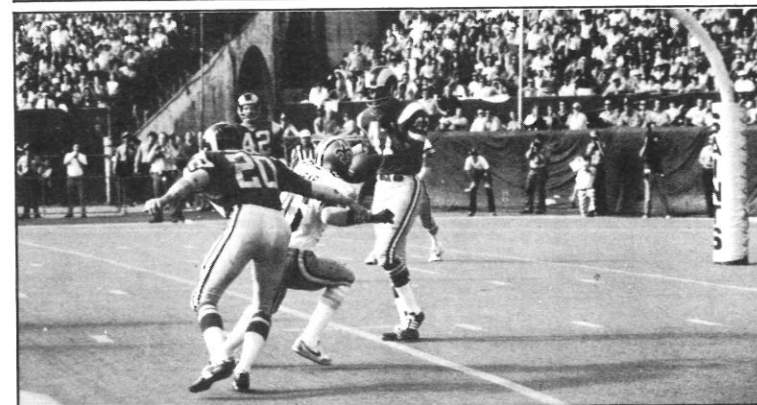
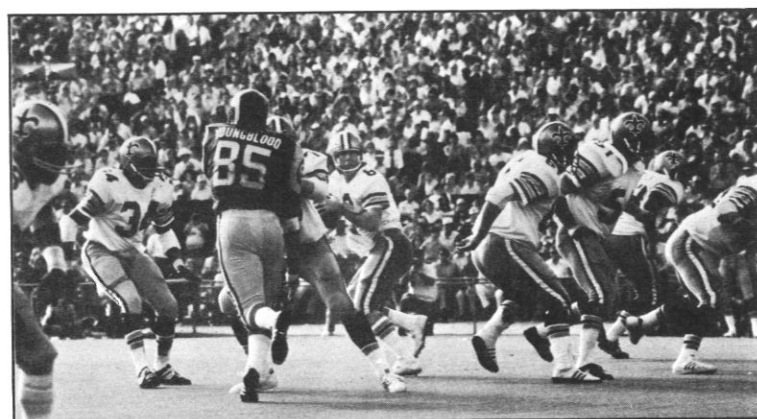
IMPROVEMENT NOT QUITE ENOUGH VS. RAMS

Back in Tulane Stadium, where they had spun off four straight victories, the Saints valiantly attempted to regain the winning touch at the expense of the rampaging Rams. As in the Coliseum engagement two weeks ago, the Saints forged in front early, by 7-3 in the second quarter when Manning pitched perfectly to Bob Newland for 27 yards and a score for a 7-3 lead. Indeed, the Saints nursed a 13-10 bulge into the final 2:30 of the third quarter when a John Hadl-to-Bob Klein four-yard TD flip put the Rams ahead for keeps in a 24-13 triumph.

The Rams were positively awesome at times in this tussle, reeling off 83 plays to the Saints' 57, and setting anti-Saints records with 31 first downs, 55 rushing attempts for 340 yards and 21 first downs on the ground. They netted a total of 450 offensive yards. Still, the Saints hung in until the finish, even driving to the L.A. ten-yard line during the fourth quarter in an unsuccessful attempt to regain the lead that had once been theirs.

Although Joe Profit was able to shake loose for his most productive day of the season, 90 yards on 13 hauls from scrimmage, the Saints were jammed up most of the way by the Rams' rugged defense. The Californians were especially effective on third down, shutting out their victims on each of their ten efforts to move the sticks on that particular down. The Saints didn't enhance their chances

by losing two of their three fumbles—the two miscues directly resulting in ten Los Angeles points. That man McCutcheon was at it again for the Rams, darting for 152 yards, while averaging 7.6 yards per carry—giving him a two-game output of 267 ground yards vs. New Orleans. After this performance there was hardly any other way the Saints could feel—the Rams had to be the most impressive of their 1973 opponents.



Green Bay
Packers 10-30

San Francisco
49ers 16-10

FOUR IN A ROW!

The Saints returned to the scene of their last road victory, 29-21 over Green Bay at Milwaukee County Stadium on November 28, 1971, in search of the missing formula for "achieving a win away from Tulane Stadium." They certainly didn't locate that very elusive quality on this trip, as the Packers, absorbing heavy abuse themselves from their media and fans due to their own disappointing showing throughout 1973, put together one of their better efforts of the fall and crushed the Saints, 30-10. It was just one of those games in which absolutely nothing went right for the visitors.

It was a particularly nightmarish affair for the Saints' signal-callers, Archie Manning and Bobby Scott. They had a total of four passes stolen and two of them were run in for scores. Trailing 3-0 in the second quarter and with a second-and-eight facing him on the Green Bay 42-yard line, Archie zipped a pass out to Joe Profit. It was instead picked off by Packers' safetyman Al Matthews, who wasted no time streaking 58 yards into the end zone for 10-0. At the start of the third session the Packers' Jim Carter blocked a 25-yard field goal attempt by Bill McClard just prior to Manning's 29-yard TD connection with Jubilee Dunbar. That reduced the deficit to 13-10 but the Saints' offense was finished for the day. Green Bay's killing blow was furnished late in that same period by quarterback Jerry Tagge, who dashed 41 yards to tally on a third-and-one call. As if this weren't enough misery for one afternoon, Archie's first flip of the final quarter was intercepted by Carter and he bolted 42 yards for the game's last touchdown. Scotty then came on and concluded the day's activities, getting a snappy warm-up for much more service the following two weeks.

As was the case with most all of their setbacks, the Saints had again been victimized by their own errors—in this case the four interceptions exceeded the devastation caused by the lone fumble and the blocked field goal. When the opposition tabs its three touchdowns via two interception returns and long run by the quarterback it's a cinch that things could be going better for your football team.

THAT SWEET FIFTH VICTORY

Instead of coming back home to die, the Saints responded gloriously to their fans' vocal entreaties and slipped past San Francisco at Tulane Stadium, 16-10. In the process they claimed a Western Division third place deadlock with the team that had whipped them so badly on the West Coast earlier in the season. Three more McClard field goals contributed significantly to the success as the Saints led throughout.

With Joe Reed, who'd mopped up the October slaughter in Candlestick, relieving Steve Spurrier at quarterback, the 49ers surged to the Saints' 48-yard line with a first down at the two-minute warning. Four successive passes, however, netted only six yards and the Saints took over to ice their fifth triumph—and tie a team high in that category. Despite the disappointments of recent Sundays they'd come a long way from 62-7, 40-3 and 40-0... and avenging that last one was especially pleasing.

It's quite possible that the most meaningful conclusion to be drawn from this conflict was the indication that Bobby Scott might indeed develop into a full-fledged NFL quarterback. The taxi-squad veteran was rushed into combat early in the second quarter after Manning injured his throwing arm. Directing the Saints' 69-play attack the rest of the way, Scotty displayed the rifle arm everyone knew he had and a poise under pressure that no one could really have been sure about. Although he completed only eight of 19 tosses for 118 yards, he handled the offense skillfully and maintained ball control through the critical moments.

Actually, it was placekicker McClard who again supplied the needed foot—hitting the mark on three of five swings of the leg.

The Saints' lone six-pointer was supplied by a Manning-to-Dunbar bomb of 37 yards in the opening six minutes of action. After that the going got a bit stickier, but the defense asserted itself and they never let visitors get up off the ground. On his return to his former battlegrounds, ex-Saint Danny Abramowicz was handcuffed most of the afternoon but he did manage to extend to 90 the number of consecutive NFL games in which he'd caught at least one pass. His lone reception on this day came on a seven-yard flip into the flat.

Atlanta Falcons

10-14

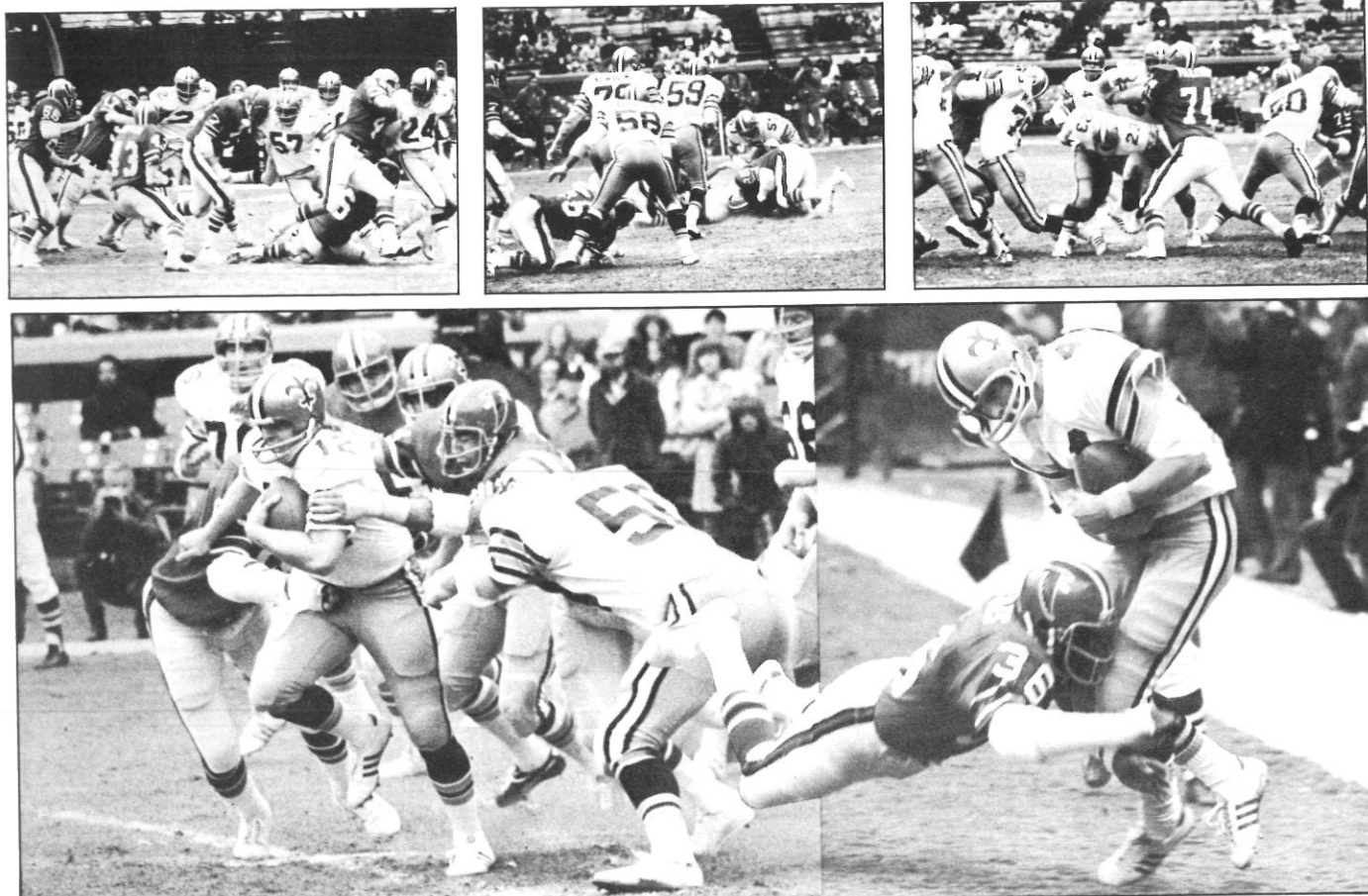
IT ENDETH AS IT BEGAN

It was unfortunate, but not unexpected, that the Saints' 1973 campaign closed with a loss to Atlanta—just as it had started. There was one major difference, however. And as they say in France, "Viva le difference." This was a hard-bitten, grudgingly conceded 14-10 struggle in which the Saints demonstrated their new-found resoluteness. Sad to relate, though, it was Atlanta's ninth straight win over the New Orleans team—and retribution must await another autumn.

Just as they had done in the September engagement, the Falcons assumed command immediately, vaulting to a 14-0 halftime advantage and limiting the visitors to four first downs and a total net of 54 yards on offense. After all, coach Norm Van Brocklin's charges were still in the running for a playoff berth, despite having dropped their last two contests at home to underdog rivals. The Saints seemed on the brink of collapse—about to drown in their own frustration. It almost

happened, but not quite. They called upon their courage and character and lashed back vigorously in the last 30 minutes of the 1973 season. While their defense blanked the team that had mauled them for 62 points in the opener and left them for dead, the Saints' offense, operating all the way under relief quarterback Bobby Scott, struck for 10 points in the third quarter and carried the fight to the Falcons throughout the season's final 15 minutes. Only a couple of dropped passes—one in the end zone—prevented the scrappy Scott from directing his mates to yet another upset triumph.

As it was, the Saints wound up on an encouraging note, with an improving and youthful defense and an offense that was still somewhat unsettled—with perhaps a few more vital parts being essential to putting more points on the scoreboard. There was sound leadership and an increasing feeling that they could—after all their tribulations—stay in there tough with any foe and win their share of the games.



Louisiana Superdome



A man who has been to the moon and back admits it awakens a feeling of "awe" within himself.

To the man who has helped build professional football into a vast business empire it stimulates his pride just to have been "some part" of its rise.

One of baseball's most

foresighted leaders simply calls it "a visionary" move.

In this particular case the "It" is the Louisiana Superdome, in terms of diameter the world's most expansive building, and in terms of expression possibly one of the world's most "quotable" buildings.

As the Superdome has sprouted into the New Orleans skyline at the corner of Poydras and Claiborne like a giant, golden mushroom it has been different things to different people. From the beginning, the stadium concept and \$163,313,315 price tag have staggered the imagination.



The Louisiana Superdome built in downtown New Orleans is the largest enclosed stadium-arena in the world. The dome roof measures 680 feet across and 273 feet high.

When completed the Superdome will arch its way 273 feet into the city's skyline. No other building on planet earth spans the Superdome's 680-foot diameter. It will climb 27 stories high and promises not only to be the world's largest room, but also it promises to pamper its patrons in comforts never before experienced in a building of its purpose.

What does all of this mean to the paying customer, the person who ultimately makes or breaks any entertainment venture? How will the dome benefit him? Will the added comfort take any of the sport out of being a spectator? Will it add any?

New Orleans Saints Vice-President Dick Gordon is one of many people involved in the Superdome and how it will effect the Saints, from the working office staff and the players to the spectators and concessionaires.

Gordon is a former astronaut and command module pilot for Apollo XII. He is a man not easily moved into overstatements. He is, by the nature of his training, a realist.

Because of this, Gordon's enthusiasm for the Superdome is somewhat disarming at first. "I envision that the Superdome will take its place as the greatest sports arena in the world," Gordon says flatly. "Honestly, I'm somewhat awed by it all . . . the vastness of the structure is just overwhelming."

As one of America's astronauts, Gordon is not new to the world of giant-sized proportions, yet the immenseness of such a sports and convention facility is, in his words, "startling". "I've had the opportunity to see some large buildings in my time, including the VAB (Vertical Assembly Building) at Cape Kennedy which can hold several Saturns erected. The startling thing about the dome as a building," Gordon explains, "is it seems even larger than originally imagined."

"I'm anxiously awaiting our move. The very thought of participating in the use of that building really excites me. I honestly don't think

the people fully realize what the dome is going to mean to Louisiana and New Orleans."

Gordon's enthusiasm is not uncommon. National Football League Commissioner Pete Rozelle has seen the Superdome at several stages during its construction. Yet, on his last tour—the first in which the roof was near completion—he said "I was so terribly impressed with the size of the structure when I passed the Superdome coming in from the airport. It was something to see against the skyline of the city. It made me very proud that football played some part in seeing that such a tremendous structure is being erected."

A few days after Rozelle viewed the dome, Frank Cashen, general manager of baseball's Baltimore Orioles got his first glimpse of the nearly enclosed building and remarked "it's a visionary structure . . . ten years ahead of its time."

"It all took careful planning," dome Executive Director Ben Levy is quick to point out. "But, now we will be able to house most events that are held for people. You might say we will have the largest people room in the history of mankind . . ."

The Superdome is obviously more than just a stadium with a roof. Although the Saints, Tulane football, local college basketball and eventually professional baseball and basketball will occupy a good portion of its occupancy dates, the dome can handle anything from "conventions to its own medical clinic," Levy adds. Besides the large central area, the building will actually house a medical clinic, restaurants, cocktail lounges, shops and office space. Parking for 5,000 cars will be available in two, three-level garages. Every element of the dome from parking to eating was carefully planned.

Perhaps the most unique characteristic of the Superdome will be its giant screen TV system which will be equipped to provide spectators with instant replays or closed circuit telecasts of special events. Suspended from the Superdome ceiling, directly over

the playing field will be a giant six-sided gondola. Each side of the gondola will actually be a 26 by 22 foot color TV screen, a system designed by Eidophor Corporation of Switzerland and unequalled anywhere else in the world.

So, you might ask, what does this mean to the average sports fan?

"Anytime a professional sports franchise becomes involved in a venture such as this, we, of course, become aware and interested in the more mundane things the average person doesn't even think about during construction," Gordon said when the question was delivered. "We've gotten into such things as vehicle arrival and egress . . . pedestrian arrival and egress . . . crowd flow . . . food availability. A lot of thought has gone into this building and the dome will be unique in all of the extras it will afford."

The Superdome has been planned to give the spectator every possible convenience from the time he approaches the stadium until he leaves. His traffic routes have been considered to alleviate time-consuming and patience-draining waits before and after the game. Once he has arrived at the dome, he'll be bathed in comforts few spectators have known. If everything works in accordance with plan, the Superdome will serve as an entertainment oasis right in the heart of the city.

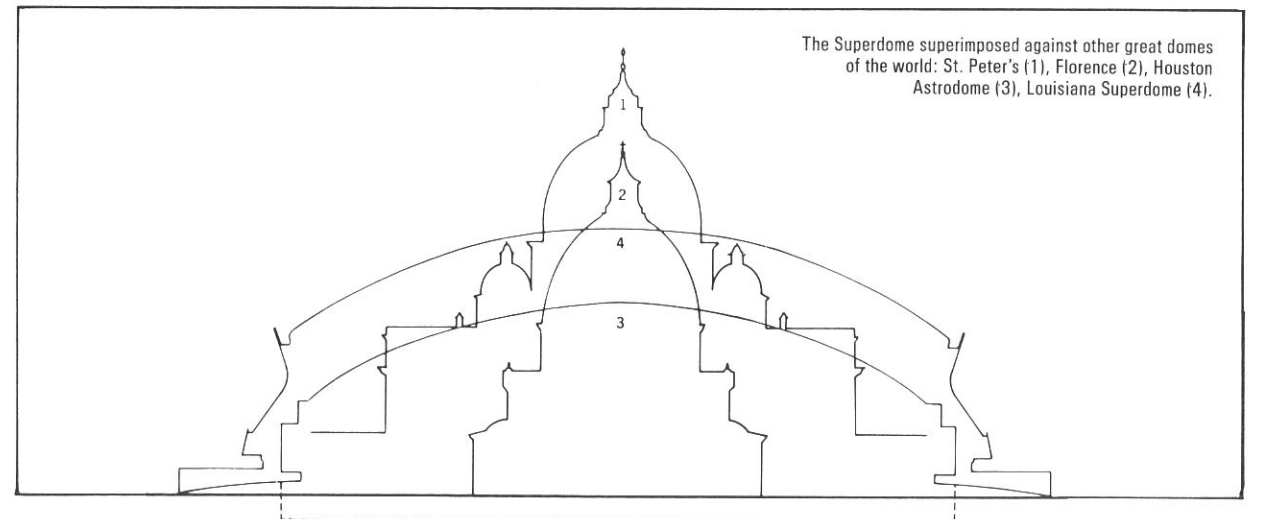
As one Superdome advertisement recently promised "it was designed for the spectator: his arrival, his stay, his viewing, seating and convenience, the air he breathes, the sound he hears, his thirst, hunger . . . his contact with the game, his physical contact with the building, his peace of mind as to his movement, parking safety and easy exit."

Mayor Moon Landrieu eventually foresees a day when the dome will be the center of a downtown area that will "become again a place for recreation and fun, a place of beauty as well."

Which brings us to the obvious. Can the sudden influx of all these fun-seekers be handled by the existing traffic arteries? This is one



An aerial view of the Superdome shows its proximity to downtown New Orleans.



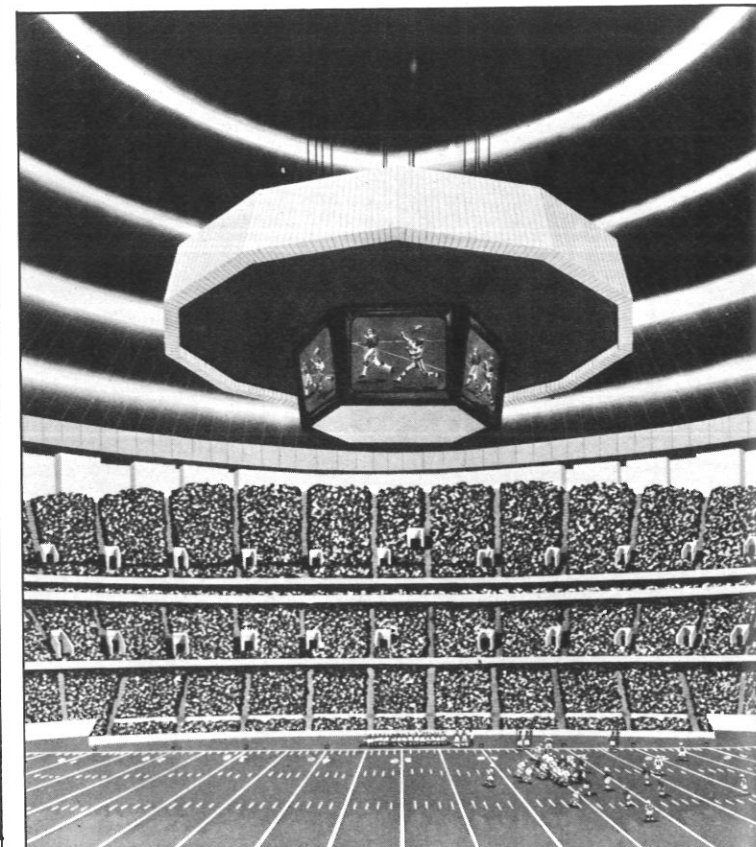
The Superdome superimposed against other great domes of the world: St. Peter's (1), Florence (2), Houston Astrodome (3), Louisiana Superdome (4).



The Superdome in progress. The seats are theatre style, the roof encloses the building, and the floor below is concrete, covered with removable turf.



The upper levels of seats rest on concrete decking at the Superdome while ground level stands roll in and out for different sports.



The interior of the Louisiana Superdome as visualized by a commercial artist. The six-sided Superscreen gives the spectator the same features as home television.

question that has hung ominously over the Superdome since the downtown site was chosen over suburban locations.

City traffic engineer John F. Exnicios doesn't envision any major difficulties because "of the accessibility of the downtown area." He further explains "it is a matter of timing the traffic flow and this will largely take care of itself. Downtown traffic peaks only during a couple of hours each weekday and streets and expressways are generally under-used during the rest of the time."

Gordon has given considerable thought to how the arteries leading to the Superdome will shuttle a crowd of 80,000 to and from a day's sport. He is optimistic but still retains some reservations.

"To begin with, the downtown location is one of the personality facets that makes the Superdome unique," Gordon offered. "I use the Astrodome in Houston as an example because I'm familiar with it, but when it was constructed it was, for all essential purposes, out in the boonies . . . Arrowhead stadium in Kansas City was the same way. In both cases the roads leading to the stadium were not finished until the last moment and there were problems.

"Now, while we in New Orleans will be avoiding the road construction problem I'm sure it will take a tremendous learning process for our fans to adjust to circulating to and from the stadium. To think all will move smoothly at first is being a bit naive, but everyone will learn just as they always have. Just as they adjusted to the considerable problems inherent at Tulane."

Obviously the Superdome's 5,000 car parking capacity will not accommodate the average Saints crowd of 70,000 or so. But, as Gordon points out, it was never intended to do so.

"Certainly the overall concept of 5,000 parking spaces does not satisfy our needs," Gordon said. "But that is not an overall picture. Keep in mind that on Sunday, or for that matter most non-business hours, there is a large availability of other parking outlets within proximity of the Dome. What the

Superdome has done in actuality is add 5,000 parking spaces to the downtown area."

While Gordon is concerned with the overall operation of the Superdome in relationship to football, he is particularly interested in what will happen to the paying customer once inside the stadium. Will his personality as a spectator change?

"One of the most interesting aspects of the whole concept will be to see what transitions the fans will make within themselves . . . their habits . . . their game manners," Gordon said thoughtfully.

"Suddenly they are going to find themselves in a completely different atmosphere from anything they've ever been involved with, and, frankly, I'm quite curious as to how they will react.

"From my own experiences in the Astrodome, the fans seem to have a tendency to sit on their hands in a theatrical atmosphere such as that. They will be surrounded with those added comforts and will be in a completely strange environment.

"For one thing it won't be the confined openness you have in a bowl stadium like Tulane. In the Superdome you won't be able to see all 80,000 fans like you can in Tulane. There will be a difference in proximity to the field, elevation, comfort . . . it will be a whole new experience as far as the physical surroundings are concerned."

Where does all this pampering lead an individual accustomed to the cramped, wooden seats of an often hot and muggy Tulane stadium whose only diversions are hot beer and cold hamburgers?

"Without explanation it is reasonably easy to predict the average fan's entire approach to what is done before and after the game will change once inside the Superdome," Gordon predicted. "There will be an availability of countless other facilities that happen to be in the same building.

"It isn't difficult to see people engaging in lunches before the game or dinners following the game. I can't imagine that there would be any problem in arranging for the second game (West Coast game) of a televised doubleheader being piped into the Superdome

when the situation warrants such.

"All these things are natural questions that will come up in the future. There is always a certain evolutionary process involved in settling into something so new in concept.

"At present Seattle is building a domed stadium but there's a distinct difference between ours and the one in Seattle. The one there is a single purpose sports facility. The Superdome is a much more complex animal. When I think of the complexity of the building and the versatility of its usage I have to feel pretty good about its future and our future as a tenant."

Because the Superdome does represent a new concept in versatility, a building supposedly able to house a basketball crowd of 14,000 and then capable of entertaining a football gathering of 80,101 or a show or convention crowd of 97,000 equally within its own element and comfort, seating is of major importance. The Superdome was designed with five basic configurations, according to the shape of the necessary playing field or event to be held. The number of seats will be dependent upon the kind of event being staged.

The flexibility of the seating is made possible by the use of movable stands, some of which will be mounted on rails and actually motored into place. It is the movable stands that make the seating a fluctuating reality. In addition to keeping the spectator closer to his game or event, this flexibility hopefully will aid in filling the booking dates.

While the Superdome's outer dimensions are circular, the stands at field level present the illusion of a square and circle. Thus, the name "squircle" used by the architects. This also benefits the seating arrangement and is one of the major reasons Gordon says "I don't think there will be a bad seat in the house . . . not even in the corner of the end zones."

One of the biggest controversies over the stadium has been the one concerning the steepness at which the seating is pitched. It was originally estimated that with

typical wooden seats, such as those in Tulane, as many as 95,000 seats could have been put in the Superdome. But, because theatre-type seating was selected, cutting down capacity, it was possible to increase the pitch to 34°. This puts the spectator closer to the field and improves his "sight lines."

"I'm delighted with the seating arrangement for football," Gordon points out. "On our preliminary tours we didn't find a bad seat. The people in the upper tier may have to take some time in adjusting to the elevation but once they are strapped into their seats I think they won't have any problems." He laughs, then adds, "In all honesty, I think once the newness wears off, the fans will love it."

For football, two basic arrangements will be available. The smaller will seat 71,827 and will have a capacity of 74,966. The larger, or bowl configuration, will seat 75,795 and will have a capacity of 80,101.

In the bowl configuration, the movable stands will be retracted from the area used in the regular configuration. This will provide extra seats in the corners of the stands with a viewing area of the field. While there will be some loss of proximity to the sidelines when the stands are retracted in the bowl arrangement, it will add more seats.

"We are not sure which we will use yet," Saints' ticket manager Henry Simoneaux explained. "The smaller arrangement offers a slightly better view to some but it could possibly deny others admittance into an important game. It is one of the things we haven't decided on yet."

Whichever the Saints choose they will stick with it for at least the duration of a season, avoiding the problems involved in moving seats already numbered on tickets. A seat in a certain section in one arrangement would not be in the same place in the other.

Gordon is confident "that regardless of where a season ticket holder or weekly customer ends up in the Superdome, his seat will be excellent."

"Granted it'll be no easy task for us or the fans when it comes time to make the transitions from one stadium to the other, but in the long run everybody will be better off."

"Even when you get into something as basic as ticket structure and pricing we run into complications with the Superdome," Gordon continued. "The ideal, of course, would be a one price arrangement where all the seats could be priced the same. But in looking at the dome's configurations I'm not sure we can do this. The tiering seems to lend itself to a price structure."

"Actually, the manner in which we approach a price structuring is backwards from what you might expect. We determine the gross dollars that would make a reasonable target number for a sold out stadium and work back from there. In other words, we find out how much we feel we should take in for a sellout and price the tickets from there. It involves the number of seats available and the subsequent price of those seats to achieve a desired economical goal. It gets to a point where you start playing games . . . juggling seats 50 cents here or 50 cents there."

One of the interworkings of the National Football League is the complicated revenue sharing system the league survives on, whereby teams depend on revenues from road games as well as some league business ventures.

"We must remain cognizant of our role in revenue sharing with the league," Gordon continued. "At present we have the lowest ticket price structure in the league and we still have to be aware of the fact that we don't want to overprice our market. I don't mean to imply that the ticket structure in New Orleans, once we move into the Superdome should be the highest in the league or even in the middle."

"But, because of the overhead we might be facing in the Superdome, there might have to be changes." He emphasized the "might" on both counts. "It's just

a basic thought for right now. We have to find a common ground that we can live with, the league can live with and, most importantly, our fans can live with."

When the move does take place for the 1975 season, season ticket holders will be allowed to select their new seat locations. The team will not designate who goes where. Instead, season ticket holders will be called in by order of seniority and present seat location.

"To make the transition from one stadium to the other flow as freely as humanly possible we designed a computer program to allow us to make the move and give the people a comparable seating arrangement to what they have now at Tulane," ticket manager Simoneaux said.

"Taking the sidelines first and working within a certain yardage area and going by the number of years an individual has been a season ticket holder, they will be given a priority number and appointment date and time to be here. At that time they will be allowed to pick their new seats for the Superdome."

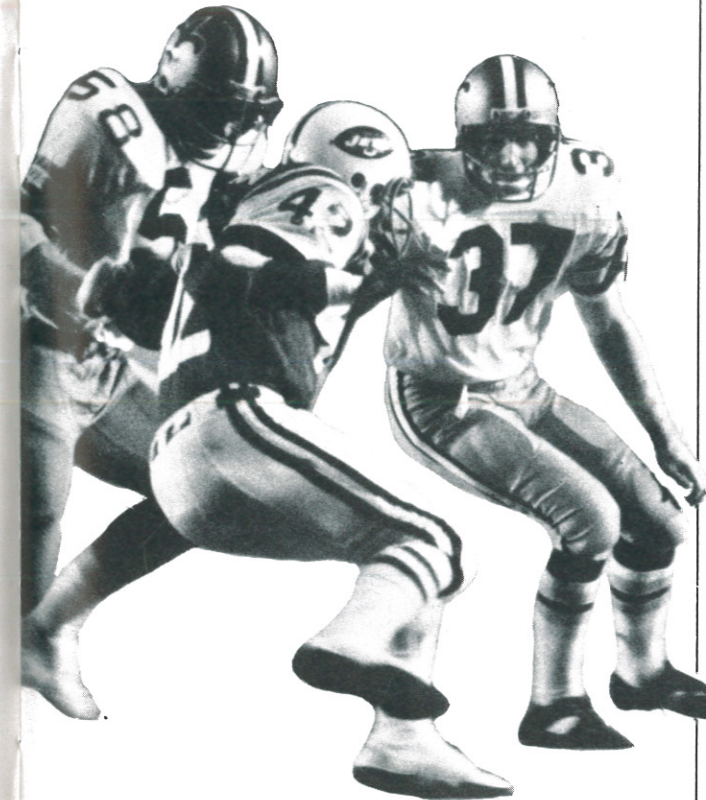
"We consulted with Philadelphia, Buffalo, Kansas City, Dallas and San Francisco on how they made their transitions and they all agreed that it would be easier on everyone if the fans were allowed to choose. It is the closest thing to an ideal solution available."

There may not be an ideal solution to the ticket transferral, but Gordon is hopeful the stadium will serve as an ideal setting for the NFL.

"To be brutally frank, it's another stadium for the NFL and it just happens to be the stadium in the country. I'm anxiously awaiting our move."

"The thought of participating in the use of the building genuinely excites me. I honestly don't think the people of New Orleans and Louisiana fully realize what the dome is going to mean to the city and state. Just look at what's happening around the dome now. Tourism is our number two industry at present but it wouldn't surprise me if it strongly rivaled the port when the dome is in operation . . . it is a fantastic building."

A Matter Of Believing



The lights on the Tulane Stadium scoreboard told the story and 75,000 persons believed . . . oh, how they believed.

On the left edge of the boards, the Saints were credited with 13 points; on the right edge of the boards, the Buffalo Bills showed a big, fat zero. That in itself was supposed to be beyond belief but when 75,000 New Orleans Saints fans cram their way into that storied old stadium who really knows what to believe?

Why just the week before, the Washington Redskins strode arrogantly into town, well astride the NFC's Eastern Division and in full belief of all the Super Bowl talk that was so preoccupying the Nation's Capital. Late that Sunday afternoon, while more than 66,000 Saints fans were homeward bound with feet hardly touching the ground George Allen stood impatiently in the visitor's locker room at the stadium, snappishly answering questions on how his team — three touchdown favorites — could have been so convincingly thrashed 19-3 by the Saints.

He couldn't believe . . . no, in fact, he really didn't want to believe but it was there for all to see. And as the week went on, there wasn't a person extant in New Orleans who didn't believe and who wasn't content to savor the heady aroma. Forget that a man named Orenthal James Simpson was coming to town with the Buffalo Bills on Sunday . . . Let's have another one for 19-3 over the Redskins. And while we're at it, let's have still another because O.J. Simpson is going to get his too . . .

And indeed he was. The best running back the National Football League had presented since Jim Brown ripped and slid; glided and romped for the Cleveland Browns a decade ago, O.J. Simpson had been getting his all that afternoon as little by little the Saints strengthened their precarious hold on this game.

Ah, but here now was the real moment of truth. Because, while

those blinking scoreboards showed the Saints leading 13-0, they also showed that the game was in the fourth quarter, that Buffalo was on New Orleans 11-yard line, that it was fourth down and only one yard needed for a first down. A touchdown would put the Bills back in the game and with O.J. Simpson running lose, who knew what might happen.

No one had to guess what would happen next . . . everyone knew it . . . the Bills as they hunched down in their huddle or moved expectantly along the sideline by their bench . . . the Saints' defense as it waited just a few yards from its end zone . . . and those 75,000 persons who screamed defiance as the teams made ready for that one, decisive scrimmage.

It would be O.J. Simpson carrying the ball so why did Buffalo even bother to huddle? And it was . . . with Reggie McKenzie the strong rookie guard who had become Simpson's personal bodyguard in every game, trying to wedge out an opening as he collided with the Saints' defense. Behind him came O.J. with that beautifully deceptive running style — gliding, searching, ready to turn on the afterburners that somehow were built into his legs at birth.

He looked straight ahead, saw nothing but white jerseys and looked further to his right to see more white jerseys. And as his eyes narrowed and his brow furrowed in disbelief, he suddenly was crushed to earth by Jim Merlo, Billy Newsome and Ernie Jackson who seemed to fall from the highest rafter in that stadium. Somewhere under that small mountain of humanity the blue-jerseyed No. 32 lay stretched, the ball resting a yard further back from where he had started this ill-fated foray.

In that one instant, completely forgotten was the scene seven weeks before when more than 66,000 fans sat first disbelieving, then embarrassed and finally brutally angry as the Saints were pounded into a 62-7



loss by the Atlanta Falcons; and the scene the following Monday night when those fans and the entire nation watched the second half of a game against Dallas become a nightmare in a 40-3 loss.

Suddenly in one play out of the thousand or so that occur in a football season the New Orleans Saints had risen like the ancient Phoenix and soared to glorious heights.

"From that point in the season, we became a mature team, something all of us had been waiting for ever since we arrived to play in New Orleans," running back Bill Butler remembers.

Though the team would win just one more game out of the remaining six in 1973, there remains a firm conviction that the years of searching . . . experimenting . . . changing . . . adding and subtracting . . . that all of that uncertainty that had marked seven seasons in the National Football League was something in the past. When the Saints finished their home schedule by upsetting the desperate San Francisco 49ers, there was little doubt.

When they went to Atlanta and lost a bitterly fought game on the season's last Sunday, the resolve to never again suffer through 62-7 losses never was more firm and that resolve remained cemented as each player walked into the Florida training site this summer. There was no apology for the past; indeed there was a forthright look at the present and the future.

"We are no longer an expansion team, not after seven years in the NFL," vice-president Harry Hulmes said. "Maybe we hid behind that excuse for our shortcomings too long. We see Cincinnati come into the NFL a year after us and that team already has been to the AFC playoffs twice. Miami started the year before we did, has been to three Super Bowls, won two and now is called the best team in the NFL."

"That is the level we want to attain and it is time we took serious aim in achieving it."

A 5-9 record—only the second time the team had achieved such a plateau—isn't a bad place to begin. Everyone, from Hulmes to coach John North and his staff, to the players are convinced that the transition from perennial loser to perpetual winner is firmly within their grasp.

Throughout the winter there was plenty of time to sit and reflect what had gone wrong in the past and what should go right now and in the future.

No longer should they have to suffer from these so-called growing pains that afflict every new team because no longer can they be considered a new team.

Heaven knows there were more than enough growing pains in the form of rosters being turned over again and again; of players coming and going hardly before they finished thumbing through the team's playbook. There is a definite flavor of youth and vigor in the Saints football picture and now it must be given a chance to flex its muscles and begin to mature.

What must evolve, the principals agree, is a maturity that will help them win games they are supposed to win; carry them to victory in games they are supposed to lose; and add the lethal touch that distinguishes the quality teams in the NFL from the rest.

"We need a chance to prove we can do it," quarterback Archie Manning says. "We've struggled for two or three years and we should be past that phase of the game now. We need to settle down, be left alone and begin to grow and develop like Miami did, and like Minnesota and Dallas did. That is the degree of excellence we've got to reach and if those teams did it, then we can do it also."

The march upward begins with Manning who now starts his fourth NFL season and should, the experts say, be just a step away from reaching the plateau known as "established pro quarterback." It takes five seasons, these experts claim, to take full command of a team so Archie should be just about there.

But is he? Is the team? Not yet; but the ingredients to perfect that formula are present to a large degree. Consider that when the 1973 season ended, only eleven players on the roster had been with the team for three years—and ten of those were starters. After that the numbers game boggles the mind . . . figures like 29 trades in 1973 involving 17 New Orleans players and a dozen who came to play in at least one game . . . or that North himself added 14 players after becoming head coach two weeks before the season started, seven via trade, three from the waiver lists and four free agents . . . or that he wound up using 58 different players during last season and of that number, just 21 appeared in all 14 games and a dozen of those 21 started every game.

Everyone agrees that is about as far as constructive change

can be carried. In the future, North says, there will be changes only when the definite aspect of quality is involved, and then there will be the added element of success being achieved from every such maneuver.

"Nothing ever is guaranteed but we have to settle down and begin to develop the good, young players now with the Saints," North says. "A year ago, we found the players who can and will play for us. Those young men were tested early and they were tested late. But when it might have been easy to say, 'Forget it,' somehow they got closer together and molded themselves into a team. We want to take advantage of the good that came from the adversity of 1973."

Manning knows the feeling because he was part of it. As it should, his attitude typifies what the Saints' players feel their future can be.

"After the first three games of the season, we really came on," he recalled. "We had four wins by the eighth game of the season and we were playing our most consistent type of football. No one can say, 'I wonder what it would be like to play consistently,' because we have seen it."

"The next step—and all of us have talked about it at one time or another—is to go out and strive to do that for a full season. I imagine there's nothing like walking off the field after having beaten a team 28-3 but before we can do that, we've got to learn how to play a team evenly, then to get ahead and stay ahead. We played eight or nine games in that fashion last year but it won't count until we can do it for 14 games."

He cited the 21-16 victory over the Bears a year ago as an example of what still is to be achieved if New Orleans is to consider itself a contending team.

"We knew, even though we had lost our first three games, we could beat the Bears," Archie said, "but when we got into the game we really didn't know how to put a team away. Heck, we never had been in a position to go out and take command of a game at the start, finish a team off and come away with what you could consider an easy victory. So we flubbed around against Chicago until we finally won."

Running back Bill Butler also knows the feeling.

"I call it the killer instinct," he says, "and so do some of the players. We'll sit around and hash over a win and say what we should have done to get it in the bag earlier, or how we missed



this chance or that chance but when it comes to doing it, we still don't know how.

"Once we get the knack, we'll have come a long way."

Good teams have it . . . even against other good teams. Example: Miami in the Super Bowl against the Vikings last January. The Dolphins were up 7-0 the first time they had the ball, got it back after Minnesota failed to gain a first down, and drove for a second touchdown and a 14-0 lead even before the first quarter had ended. The game, for all intent and purpose, was over . . . the Vikings admitted it later and so did the Dolphins.

All of this comes under the heading of maturity and that encompasses more than growing older—as a person or as a team. A year ago the Saints made some strides in achieving the feat . . . rebounding after three opening losses to win four of their next five games.

"It should have been five-for-five," Butler insists. "We knocked off the Bears and Lions, then went out to San Francisco and got bombed 40-0 by the 49ers. We should never have been beaten that badly, if we should have been beaten at all. Maybe we thought after two straight wins that we were better than we really were but if that was the case, then it was a case of immaturity."

"I can sense the difference between being confident and being sure and it is the ability to put the two together that makes a team really successful."

So that is what the Saints basically are striving to achieve. But while the goal still is elusive, just how far away are they from achieving it? And has all the shuffling of the past three years really achieved anything? Further still, must the Saints look forward to even more of the same—and the players as a group sincerely hope the answer is a resounding, "No!"—before the term winner can be correctly applied?

"Well," says North, "my idea still is to pick up a player if he is better than the one I now have at the position. I'm here to make the Saints a winning team and if I have a chance to get a player who will help achieve that end, then I have to do it."

"However, I sincerely hope there won't be the wholesale changes that we had last year. All of that should be behind us now. I feel we've come a long way since then."

That is the philosophy of most NFL coaches regardless of their team's status. The Vikings, for instance, didn't think themselves too strong to pluck wide receiver

Carroll Dale off the waiver wire at the start of the 1973 season though he was 34 years old and considered of no value by Green Bay. And Dale wound up being a starter in the Super Bowl.

Don Shula in Miami is another example of not being tied to the personnel at hand in that he forged his offensive line via the free agent, waiver and trade route.

"Talent in the NFL is at a different level now than in years past," North says. "If we get a player who looks as if he might be some help to us but maybe he falls short in one area, I'm not going to discard him. I'm going to say to my coaches, 'Okay, we have to help that man learn.'"

"That is what our approach will be with the players we now have. We have to help them, by teaching, to become better football players. When I filled out my coaching staff this winter, I made it a point to try and pick men who I thought were good teachers. That is the name of the coaching game in the NFL now."

North is not a coach who becomes so enraptured with his players that he fails to distinguish who is making use of the talent and who is not. There were no popularity contests in training camp and none were scheduled through the season.

"I don't want to get so close to a player that I can't evaluate him," North says. "We're here to build a winning team, not to be the neatest guy you've ever known. Any judgments on personnel will be made on the basis of performance only."

"That's what we attempted to do a year ago," he added. "At first it was tough because the players didn't really know me or what to expect from me and I didn't know them or what to expect from them. But as the season went on, we all came together and got to know each other pretty well."

"When things went badly I told them about it—I'm no con artist, never have been and am not about to start now—and when they did good things I let them know I was pleased, too. That's how we established our talent quotients on this team, with everyone pulling together. I think the group that finished with us showed what we had accomplished by the way we played our last two games. It would have been easy for guys to pack their bags and say, 'The season's over. See you next year.' No one did that."

Once he gets the personnel situation to a normal pace, then the blocks upon which the Saints future championships will rest

can begin being placed. Perhaps first among the ensuing problems will be the one of not being able to win on the road (the team has won just six games and tied four on the road in seven seasons). It boggles North's mind and it has come to boggle the minds of some of his players, all of whom are sure that no matter where the football field, they can go out and win.

"I'd honestly say that we play about 110 per cent on the road," North says, "and about 150 per cent at home. In New Orleans that crowd really picks you up even after you make a mistake."

"But we've got to learn to survive without them behind us."

Butler made it a prime requisite of the team to become a contender, a step both he and his coach feel is not far away. Neither has a ready explanation for the victory drought away from home but like any losing game it is brought on by mistakes.

"Don't ask me why," Butler says, "because I've asked myself the question over-and-over. Sometimes I've put it down to us being not used to each other and to be a consistent winner away from home, every guy must have confidence in each other. Other times I'm really bugged for an answer and that's when it really gets discouraging."

"Maybe it's gotten so that some of the players, at least in the two years I've been with the team, start to feel subconsciously, 'Oh-oh, here we are away from home so we're going to lose again.' I don't feel that way because I never expect to lose when I step on the field and I really mean that."

Look at the Saints' record after they had achieved a 4-4 mark in 1973 and the problem focuses a little sharper. Four of the last six games were away from home and they lost all four. North ticked them off.

"We had just beaten Washington and Buffalo back-to-back and we went to Los Angeles, held a 7-3 lead with four minutes to play in the first half and went off the field trailing 17-7," he recounted. "Why? Because of two critical mistakes and Los Angeles becomes the better team that day and we lose 29-7."

"Then we went to San Diego—and I honestly thought we could beat that team—and it was a nightmare, I mean a real nightmare. We gave that game away . . . we didn't play well . . . we made tons of mistakes. We just showed our youth in how we played but we never gave up."

"The next week at home against the Rams, we played as

well as we could play and were down only 13-10 in the third quarter before they wore us down. I thought we were on the road back but we go to Green Bay, the Packers grab off a couple of big interceptions in the first half and we just never were in that game. Again, I felt going into the game that we were better than the Packers and should have won."

The Saints next beat the 49ers and then finished in Atlanta, losing 14-10 in a game the Falcons had to win because of a chance to reach the playoffs as the NFC's "wild card" team.

"Look at how we played the first game against Atlanta (62-7 loss) and how we played the last one and you saw how far we came as a team. That is where the hope for the future lays, in the intensity with which we played no matter what the situation and what we achieved from each effort," North said.

What will be achieved from similar efforts in the future will depend a great deal on Manning and how his development continues. Who says? Archie Manning.

"I've got to continue to improve and mix all the things I've learned so far, putting them together in the right blend," the young Mississippian says. "It's up to me to provide the guidance on the field for a balanced attack . . . to call a good game. It must be a matter of consistency with say, not more than one or two sub-par games a season at the very most. There isn't a quarterback in the NFL who plays 14 great games every season but the great quarterbacks are the ones who play the fewest mediocre games."

To Manning, that encompasses the tangibles such as executing a successful play on third-and-long or providing the intangible when he senses his team is beginning to sag. All of this is accomplished from experience and this element has been a sometimes harsh teacher over his first three NFL seasons. He is a better play selector and a better passer than the Archie Manning who was the second player selected in the 1971 draft, and as he looks back over those three seasons, he can see the progress.

Take a game in his rookie season against the Bears. Shortly before the end of the first half, with Chicago ahead, Manning sees what he believes to be a prevent defense as he tries to get some quick points. With a three-man rush to

contend with, he twice is sacked for losses and the second time comes up steaming.

"I really let those offensive linemen have it—and they were older than I and took it pretty good," he remembers. "What's the matter, can't five of you block three of them?" I yelled but it wasn't until later that I discovered that the Bears were blitzing off that alignment—something that never occurred to me.

"It almost seemed unfair to me at the time that they would even do something like that because I certainly wasn't prepared for it. But now I'm aware of the possibility of something like this happening any time I face a prevent defense and I know what to do if it does happen."

That is experience . . . but then so were many of the things that happened during his first three years. He came out of Mississippi having run a college-type of offense and acknowledges that he knew nothing of the pro-type offense.

That was his rookie year. In Year No. 2, the Saints seemed always to be playing catch-up so he was forced to throw the ball 448 times (compared to just 177 as a rookie) "and I got a real education in the passing game. I didn't miss one center snap.

"Last season represented the best brand of football I played yet," he continued. "The running game went and I got a good feel of what it was like to really utilize a game plan. We won some games and this time with only a minimum amount of passing. It was my first opportunity to really use a game plan, to know when to run, when to throw."

That too is progress and it is something that North is looking for every one of his players to achieve—regardless of the man's position. If a player can look back and see that he is a better player at the end of the season than he was at the beginning—and have that conclusion ratified by the coaches—then he will know the Saints are moving upward.

It even was progress last year when, in the final minute of the 20-13 victory over Detroit, Happy Feller kicked a field goal with the ball on the Lions four yard line that broke a 13-13 tie at the time. But Detroit was penalized and North decided to give up the three points and go for a touchdown from the two-yard line.

"I was yelling in his ear about a theory that says never take the winning points off the board," Manning recalls with a laugh. "I think he finally told me to shut up

and get back in the game and get the touchdown."

"We really got ourselves together with that victory," North recalls. "We had a lot of people coming and going but we began to solidify as a unit. It was an all-out effort and it taught us something. That was the key—this team learned something and made it work to its benefit."

Chalk up another to experience and add a big vote of confidence for North from his players. When they talk of surviving their past to live again for another day, they point to their rookie coach as having much to do with resurrecting their fortunes. And their hopes are that he will continue to lead them upward.

"Hopefully, we have people who will stay and play," Manning says and his hope is echoed by defensive back Tom Myers. Give North a couple more good players on offense, more depth on defense, and add the right amount of stability that comes from working as units and the future bodes only good things, they say.

"I think the worst is behind us," Myers, the third-year defensive back from Syracuse, says. "I see this team getting better and better. A year ago we got a new coach two weeks before the season began and then we were understaffed with assistant coaches. Our early practice sessions were disrupted by the rainy season so that we wound up having to work at night.

"There were too many distractions—we became unsure of our own positions and the coaches, and really didn't relax as a team and come together until after losing those first three games."

Thus it seems that everyone seems to feel the Saints did indeed come together a year ago—be it after the first three games or after beating Detroit or after beating Buffalo or finally after that last game of the season. But they did come together and the seeming disruptions that marked most of their history seemed to have ended.

All of this simply underscored the objectives North laid out for his team when it opened training camp this year:

"We're not losers but we haven't won here either. And we must. It will be tough as hell but I don't want you walking down the street in New Orleans and have people say, 'There go the losers.'"

There has not been a murmur of disagreement.



The 1974 NEW ORLEANS SAINTS



51

DIDION, JOHN, 6-4, 250, Center, 6th Year,
Oregon State

Born: October 24, 1947 at Woodland, Calif.

Joined Saints: Waivers
(from Washington), 1970

38

BUTLER, BILL, 6-0, 218, Running
Back, 3rd Year, Kansas State
Born: August 12, 1950 at Leaksville,
North Carolina
Joined Saints: Draft Choice No. 5, 1972

BUTLER'S PROFESSIONAL RECORD

RUSHING

Year	Att.	Yds.	Avg.	TD	Long
1972	54	233	4.3	0	27
1973	87	348	4.0	1	19
TOTALS	141	581	4.1	1	27

RECEIVING

YEAR	Rec.	Yds.	Avg.	TD	Long
1972	25	226	9.0	2	21
1973	19	125	6.6	2	16
TOTALS	44	351	8.0	4	21



86

DUNBAR, JUBILEE, 6-0, 196, Wide Receiver,
2nd Year, Southern
Born: May 17, 1949 in New Orleans, La.
Joined Saints: Trade with San Francisco, 1973



63

BAUMGARTNER, STEVE, 6-7, 248, Defensive End,
2nd Year, Purdue
Born: March 26, 1951 in Chicago, Illinois
Joined Saints: Draft Choice No. 2A, 1973



58

FEDERSPIEL, JOE, 6-1, 225,
Middle Linebacker, 3rd Year,
Kentucky
Born: May 6, 1950 at Louisville,
Kentucky
Joined Saints: Draft Choice No.
4a, 1972

30

JACKSON, ERNIE, 5-10, 173,
Cornerback, 3rd Year, Duke
Born: April 11, 1950 at Hopkins,
South Carolina
Joined Saints: Draft Choice
No. 7, 1972

**JACKSON'S PROFESSIONAL RECORD
INTERCEPTIONS**

Year	No.	Yds.	Avg.	TD
1972	3	41	13.7	0
1973	3	40	13.3	0
TOTALS	6	81	13.5	0



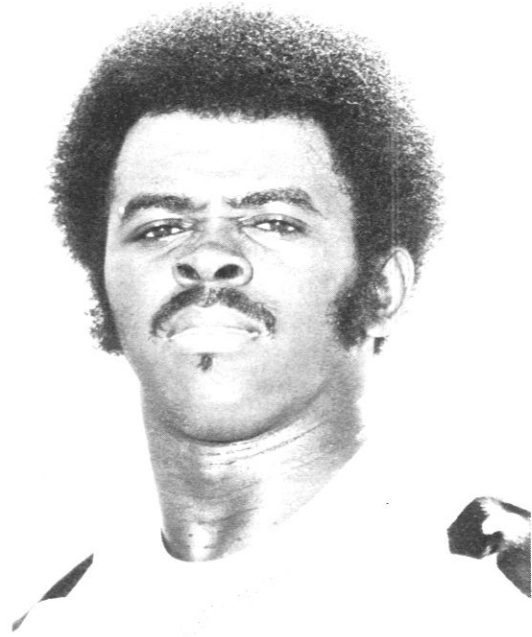
83

GARRETT, LEN, 6-3, 230, Tight End,
4th Year, New Mexico Highlands
Born: April 12, 1944 in Silsbee, Texas
Joined Saints: Trade with Green Bay, 1973

**GARRETT'S PROFESSIONAL RECORD
RECEIVING**

Year	No.	Yds.	Avg.	TD
*1971	0	0	0	0
*1972	4	66	16.5	0
1973	2	30	15.0	0
TOTALS	6	96	16.0	0

*with Green Bay Packers



8

MANNING, ARCHIE, 6-3, 210, Quarterback,
4th Year, Mississippi
Born: May 19, 1949 at Cleveland, Miss.
Joined Saints: Draft Choice No. 1, 1971

MANNING'S PROFESSIONAL RECORD

PASSING

Year	Att.	Comp.	TD	Yds.	Pct.	Int.
1971	177	86	6	1164	.486	9
1972	448	230	18	2781	.513	21
1973	267	140	10	1642	.524	12
TOTALS	892	456	34	5587	.511	42

RUSHING

Yr.	No.	Yds.	Avg.	TD
1971	35	172	5.2	4
1972	63	351	5.6	2
1973	63	293	4.7	2
Totals	159	816	5.3	8

11

LEE, BIVIAN, 6-3, 200, Cornerback, 4th
Year, Prairie View
Born: August 3, 1948 at Austin, Tex.
Joined Saints: Draft Choice No. 3, 1971

**LEE'S PROFESSIONAL RECORD
INTERCEPTIONS**

Year	No.	Yds.	Avg.	TD
1971	0	0	0.0	0
1972	4	65	16.3	0
1973	3	23	7.7	0
TOTALS	7	88	12.6	0



77

JOHNSON, CARL, 6-3, 241, Offensive Tackle-
Guard, 3rd Year, Nebraska
Born: December 26, 1949 at Phoenix, Ari-
zona
Joined Saints: Draft Choice No. 5a, 1972

19

McCLARD, BILL, 5-10, 202, Placekicker, 3rd Year, Arkansas
Born: October 15, 1949 in Purcell, Oklahoma
Joined Saints: Free Agent, 1973

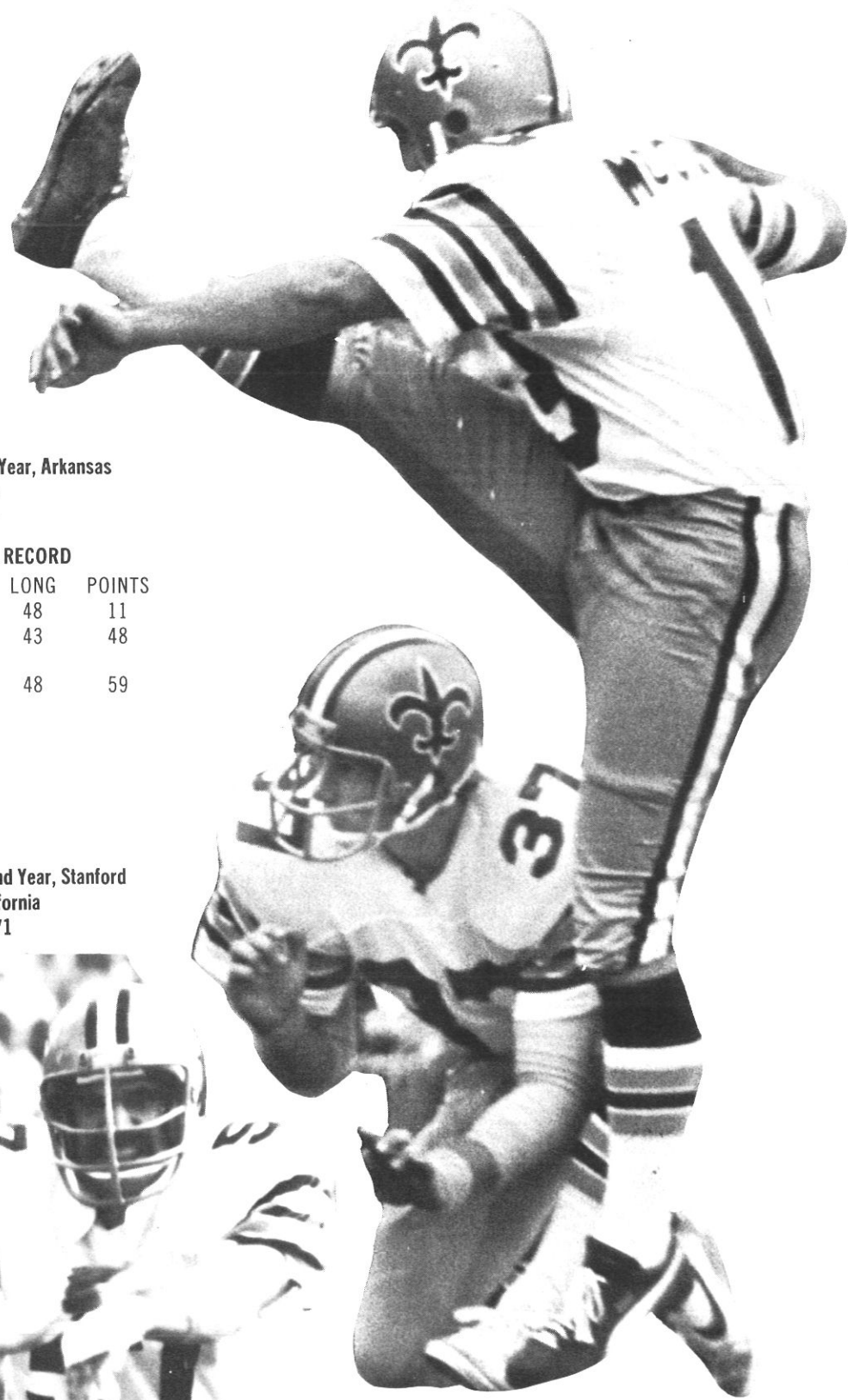
McCLARD'S PROFESSIONAL RECORD

YEAR	XPM	XPA	FGM	FGA	LONG	POINTS
*1972	2	2	3	6	48	11
1973	9	9	13	24	43	48

TOTALS 11 11 16 30 48 59
(*with San Diego Chargers)

57

MERLO, JIM, 6-1, 225, Linebacker, 2nd Year, Stanford
Born: October 3, 1951 in Sanger, California
Joined Saints: Draft Choice No. 4, 1971

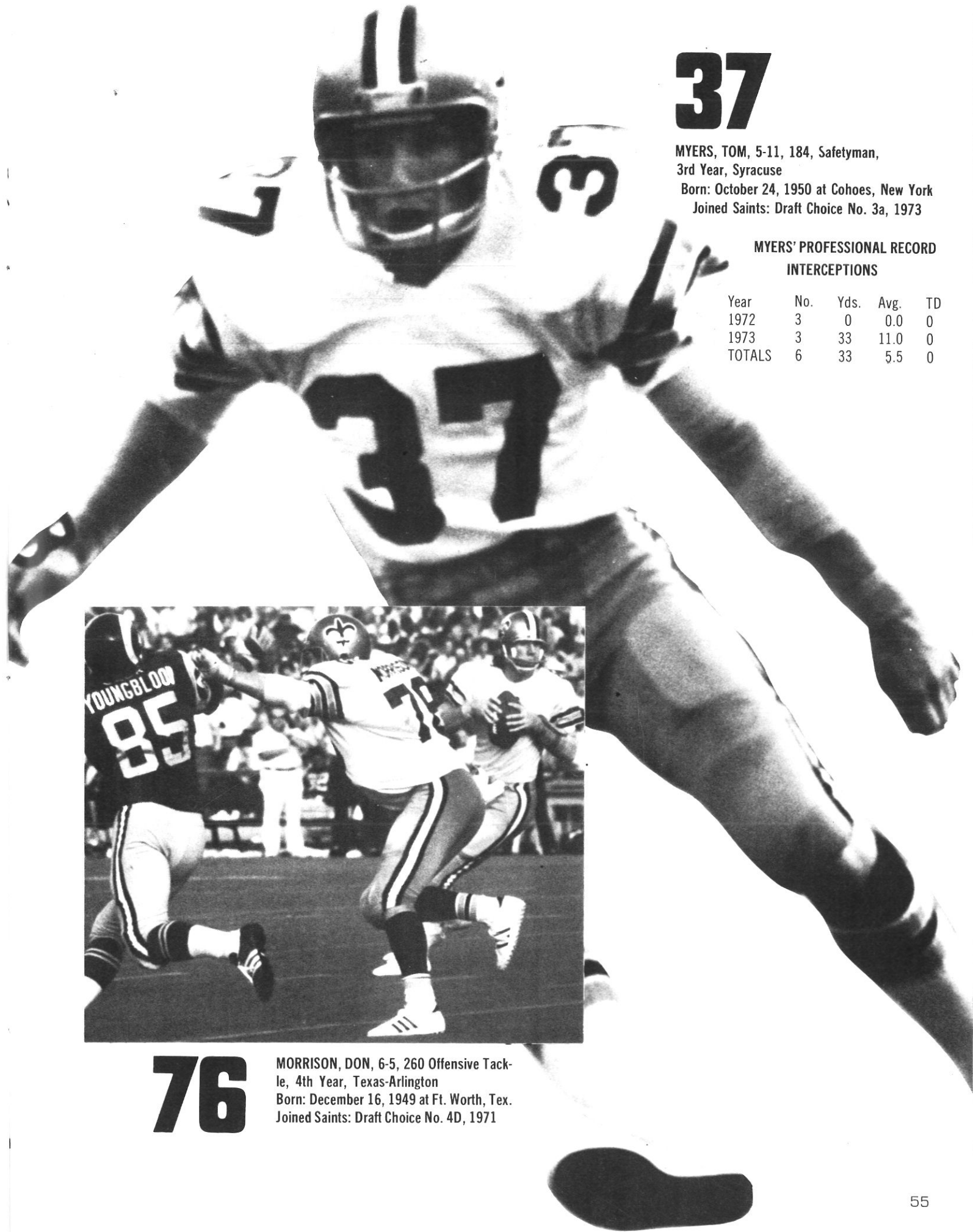


37

MYERS, TOM, 5-11, 184, Safetyman,
3rd Year, Syracuse
Born: October 24, 1950 at Cohoes, New York
Joined Saints: Draft Choice No. 3a, 1973

MYERS' PROFESSIONAL RECORD INTERCEPTIONS

Year	No.	Yds.	Avg.	TD
1972	3	0	0.0	0
1973	3	33	11.0	0
TOTALS	6	33	5.5	0



76

MORRISON, DON, 6-5, 260 Offensive Tackle,
4th Year, Texas-Arlington
Born: December 16, 1949 at Ft. Worth, Tex.
Joined Saints: Draft Choice No. 4D, 1971



61

WILLIAMS, DELANO R. (DEL),
6-2, 245. Guard, 8th Year,
Florida State
Born: November 9, 1945
at Live Oak, Fla.
Joined Saints: Draft Choice
No. 3b, 1967



18

HOLLAS, HUGO, 6-1, 190, Defensive Back, 4th Year, Rice
Born: November 30, 1945 at Schulenburg, Tex.
Joined Saints: Free Agent, 1970

HOLLAS' PROFESSIONAL RECORD
INTERCEPTIONS

Year	No.	Yds.	Avg.	TD
1970	5	79	15.8	0
1971	5	56	11.2	0
1972	1	14	14.0	0
1973	--	--	--	--
TOTALS	11	149	13.5	0



56

HALL, WILLIE, 6-2, 217, Linebacker, 3rd Year, U.S.C.
Born: September 29, 1949 at Montrose, Georgia.
Joined Saints: Draft Choice No. 2, 1972

85

BEASLEY, JOHN, 6-3, 228, Tight End, 7th Year, California
Born: April 6, 1946 in Pasadena, Calif.
Joined Saints: Waivers (from Minnesota), 1973

BEASLEY'S PROFESSIONAL RECORD
RECEIVING

Yr.	Rec.	Yds.	Avg.	LG	TD
+ 1967	13	120	9.2	16	4
+ 1968	23	289	12.5	20	0
+ 1969	33	361	10.9	32	4
+ 1970	17	237	13.9	40	2
* 1971	--	--	--	--	--
+ 1972	28	232	8.3	18	1
1973	31	280	9.0	15	1
Totals	145	1519	10.5	40	12

*Injured
+ with Minnesota Vikings



36

BROWN, BOB, 6-3, 225, Tight End, 6th Year, Alcorn A&M
Born: January 1, 1943 at Pace, Mississippi
Joined Saints: Trade with Minnesota, 1972

BROWN'S PROFESSIONAL RECORD
RECEIVING

Year	No.	Yds.	Avg.	TD
1970	--	--	--	--
*1971	8	167	20.8	0
1972	11	175	15.9	1
1973	11	132	12.0	0
TOTALS	30	474	15.8	1

* with Minnesota Vikings



59

COLMAN, WAYNE C., 6-1, 220, Linebacker, 7th Year, Temple
 Born: April 13, 1946 at Ventnor, N.J.
 Joined Saints: Waivers (from Philadelphia), 1969

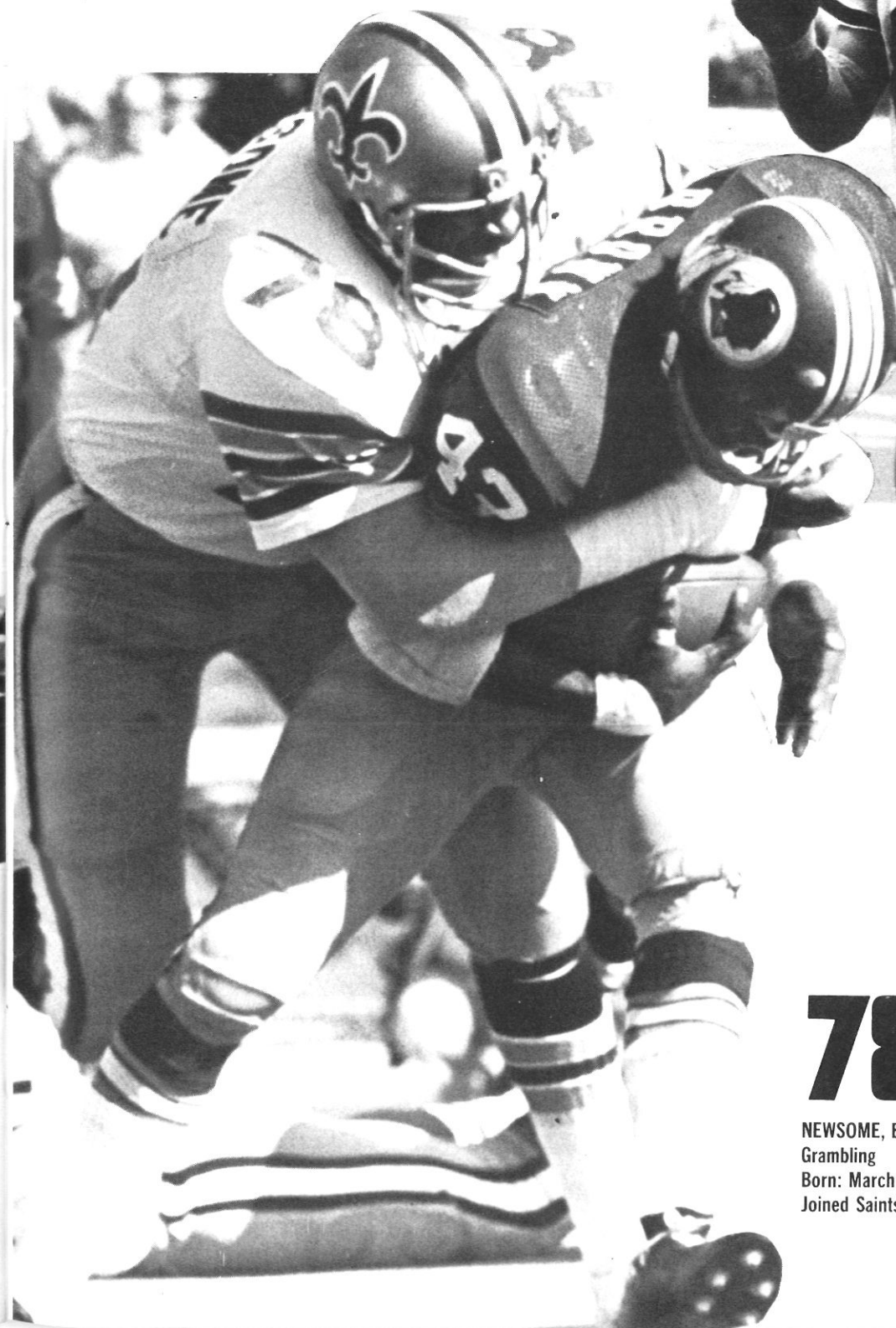
74

MOORE, DERLAND, 6-4, 260, Defensive Tackle, 2nd Year, Oklahoma
 Born: October 7, 1951 in Malden, Missouri
 Joined Saints: Draft Choice No. 2, 1973



41

NEWLAND, BOB, 6-2, 190, Wide Receiver, 4th Year, Oregon
 Born: October 27, 1948 at Medford, Ore.
 Joined Saints: Draft Choice No. 7B, 1971

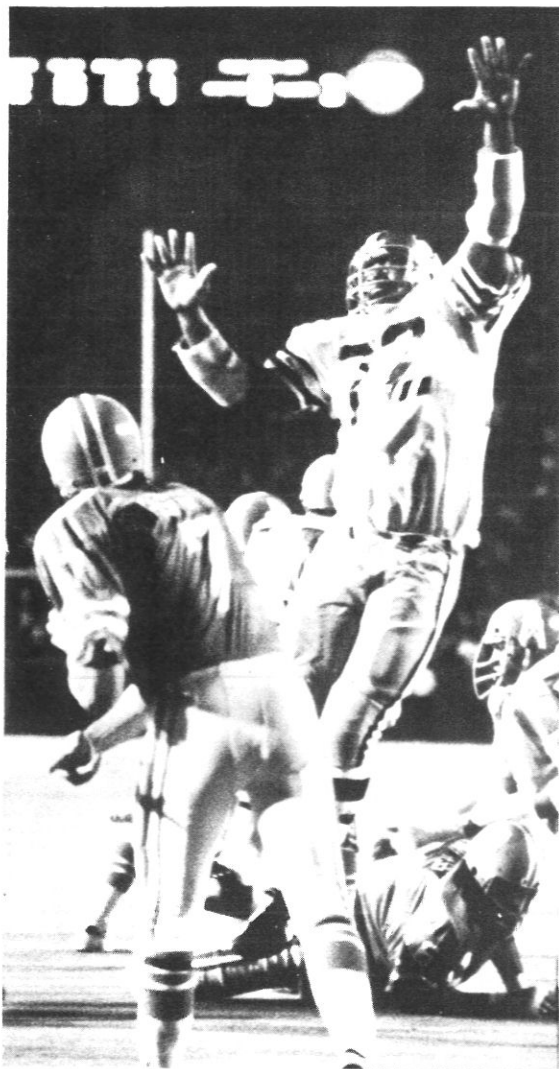


**NEWLAND'S PROFESSIONAL RECORD
 RECEIVING**

Year	No.	Yds.	Avg.	TD
1971	21	319	15.2	0
1972	47	579	12.3	2
1973	29	489	16.9	4
TOTALS	97	1387	14.3	6

78

NEWSOME, BILLY, 6-5, 250, Defensive End, 5th Year, Grambling
 Born: March 2, 1948 at Jacksonville, Texas
 Joined Saints: Trade with Baltimore, 1973



72

OWENS, JOE, 6-3, 245, Defensive End, 5th Year, Alcorn A&M
 Born: November 8, 1946 at Columbia, Miss.
 Joined Saints: Waivers from San Diego, 1971



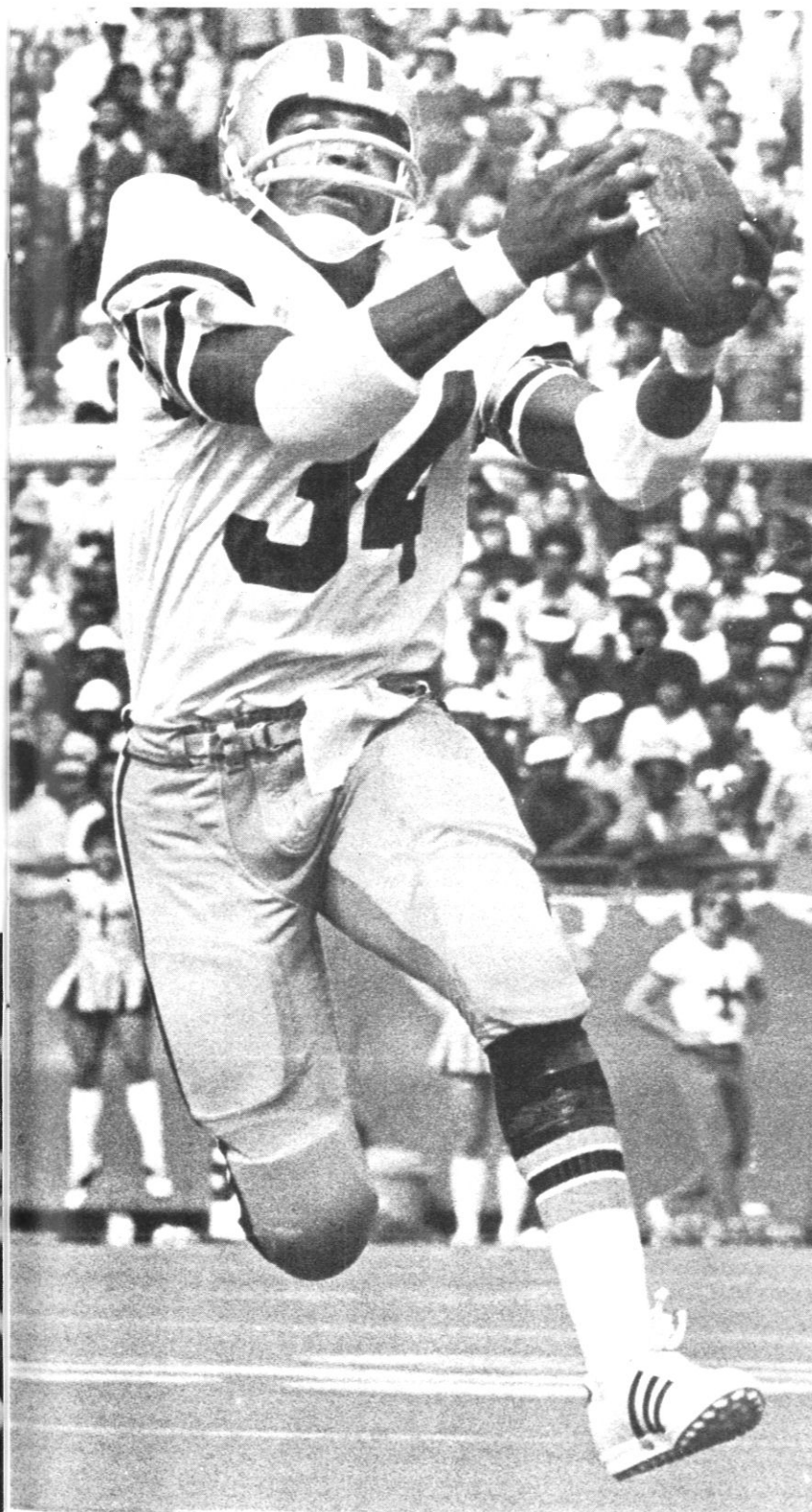
10

O'NEAL, STEVE, 6-3, 185, Punter, 6th Year, Texas A&M
 Born: February 4, 1946 at Hearne, Texas
 Joined Saints: Trade with New York Jets, 1973

O'NEAL'S PROFESSIONAL RECORD PUNTING

Year	No.	Yds.	Avg.	Lg.	Blkd.
*1969	59	2393	40.3	98	0
*1970	73	2425	40.1	64	1
*1971	78	3026	38.8	58	0
*1972	51	2006	39.3	57	1
1973	81	3375	41.7	71	0
TOTALS	342	13725	40.1	98	2

*with New York Jets



34

PHILLIPS, JESS, 6-1, 210, Running Back, 7th Year, Michigan State
 Born: February 28, 1947 in Beaumont, Texas
 Joined Saints: Trade with Cincinnati Bengals, 1973

PHILLIPS' PROFESSIONAL RECORD RUSHING RECEIVING

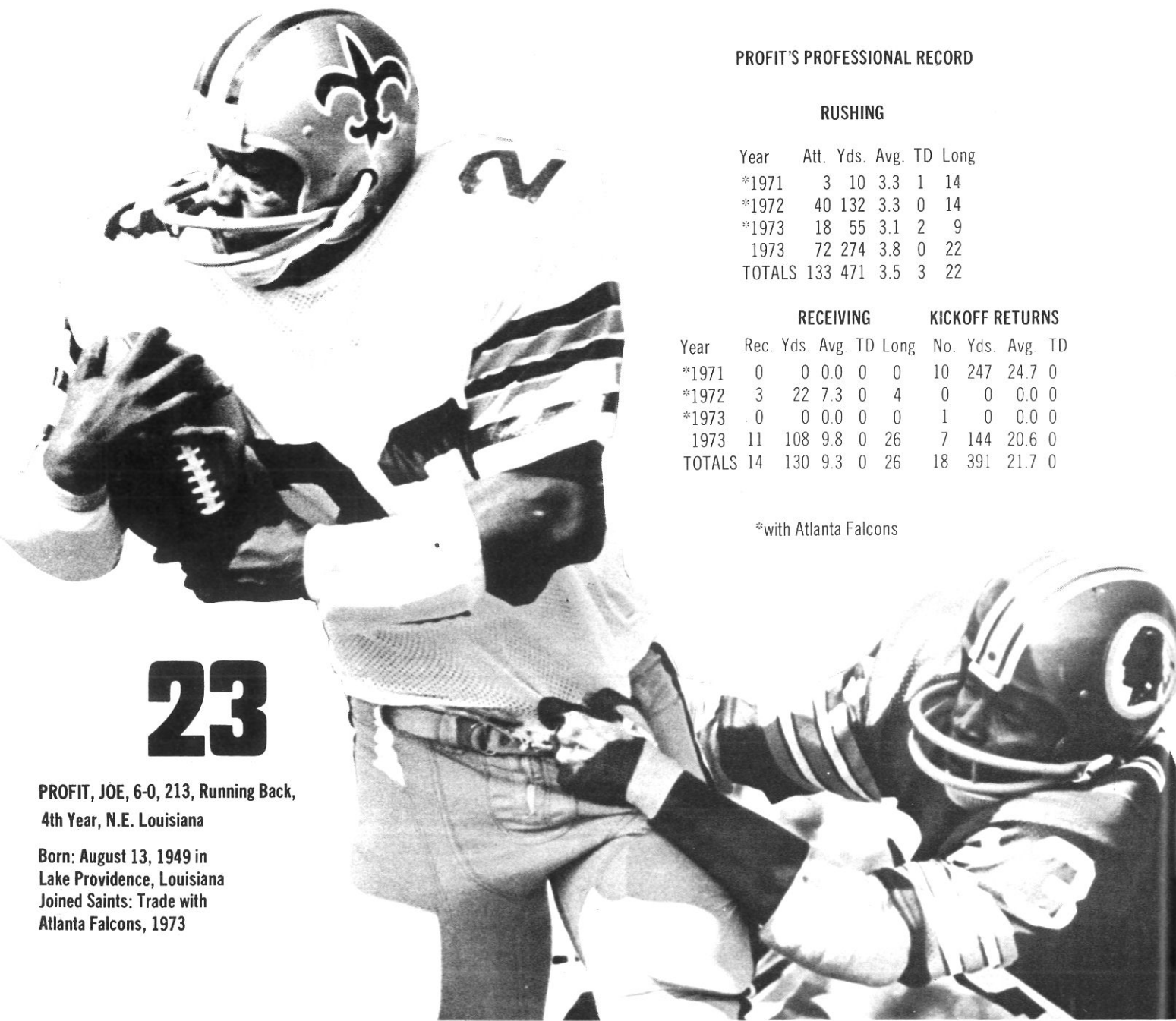
Year	Att.	Yds.	Avg.	TD	No.	Yds.	Avg.	TD
*1968	1	7	7.0	0	0	0	0.0	0
*1969	118	578	4.9	3	13	128	9.8	0
*1970	163	648	4.0	4	31	124	4.0	1
*1971	94	420	4.5	0	22	125	5.1	1
*1972	48	207	4.3	1	10	50	5.0	0
1973	198	663	3.3	0	22	169	7.7	0
TOTALS	622	2523	4.1	8	98	596	6.1	2

*with Cincinnati Bengals



82

POLLARD, BOB, 6-3, 255, Defensive Tackle, 4th Year, Weber State
 Born: December 30, 1948 at Beaumont, Tex.
 Joined Saints: Draft Choice No. 11, 1971



23

PROFIT, JOE, 6-0, 213, Running Back, 4th Year, N.E. Louisiana

Born: August 13, 1949 in Lake Providence, Louisiana
 Joined Saints: Trade with Atlanta Falcons, 1973

PROFIT'S PROFESSIONAL RECORD

RUSHING

Year	Att.	Yds.	Avg.	TD	Long
*1971	3	10	3.3	1	14
*1972	40	132	3.3	0	14
*1973	18	55	3.1	2	9
1973	72	274	3.8	0	22
TOTALS	133	471	3.5	3	22

RECEIVING

Year	Rec.	Yds.	Avg.	TD	Long	No.	Yds.	Avg.	TD
*1971	0	0	0.0	0	0	10	247	24.7	0
*1972	3	22	7.3	0	4	0	0	0.0	0
*1973	0	0	0.0	0	0	1	0	0.0	0
1973	11	108	9.8	0	26	7	144	20.6	0
TOTALS	14	130	9.3	0	26	18	391	21.7	0

KICKOFF RETURNS

*with Atlanta Falcons



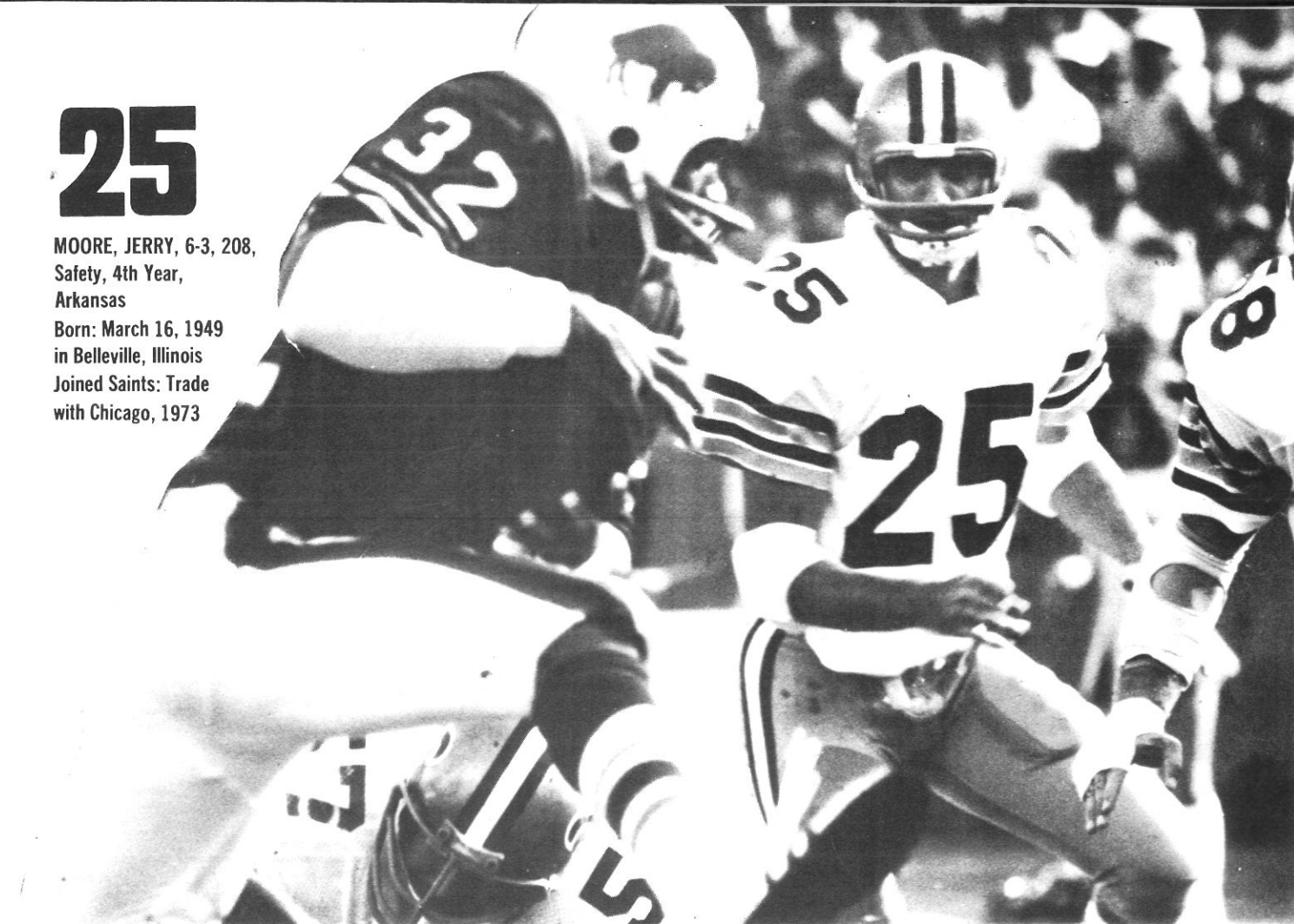
75

PRICE, ELEX, 6-3, 260, Defensive Tackle, 2nd Year, Alcorn A&M
 Born: August 11, 1950 in Yazoo City, Mississippi
 Joined Saints: Free Agent, 1973

25

MOORE, JERRY, 6-3, 208, Safety, 4th Year, Arkansas

Born: March 16, 1949 in Belleville, Illinois
 Joined Saints: Trade with Chicago, 1973



12

SCOTT, BOBBY, 6-1, 201, Quarterback, 2nd Year, Tennessee

Born: April 2, 1949 at Chattanooga, Tennessee
 Joined Saints: Draft Choice No. 14, 1971





22

STEVENS, HOWARD, 5-5, 165, Running Back, 2nd Year, Louisville
Born: February 9, 1950 in Harrisonburg, Virginia
Joined Saints: Draft Choice No. 16, 1973



66

SMITH, ROYCE, 6-3, 250, Guard, 3rd Year, Georgia
Born: June 17, 1949 in Savannah, Georgia
Joined Saints: Draft Choice No. 1, 1972

The Special

Teams In Action





Running, tackling, blocking, kicking—the Special Team does it all. The Saints salute the Special Team for its all-out effort and contribution to the team.





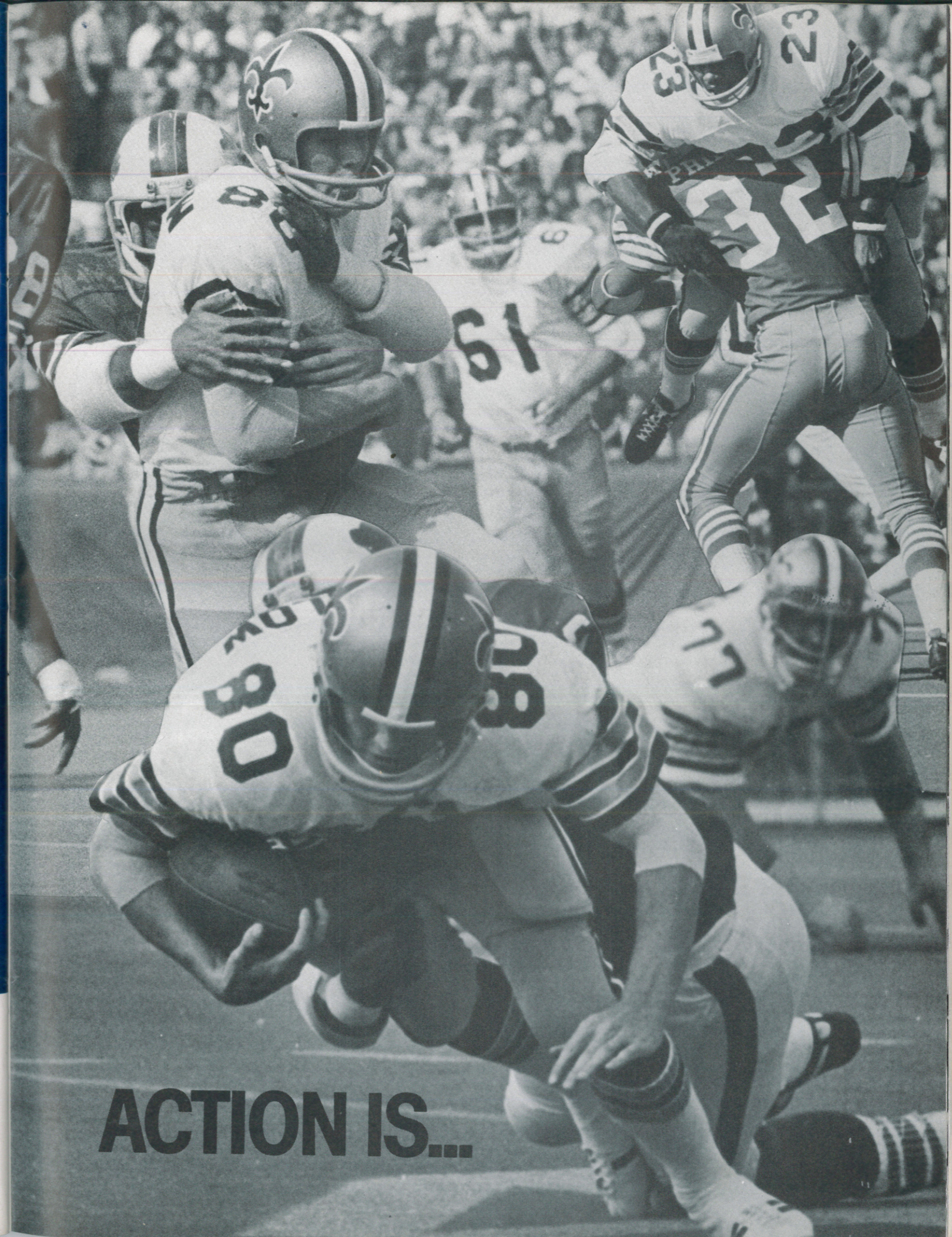
Pass play coming up!

Bryan's game plan for you and your family calls for lots of pass plays—the round-the-dinner-table kind, marked by top quality meat products, man-sized flavor, and appetite satisfaction that's always on target.

Take it from Archie—Bryan's a line to rely on! Look for Bryan bacon... wieners... new Pampered Pork sausage... luncheon meats... canned hams.

Bryan

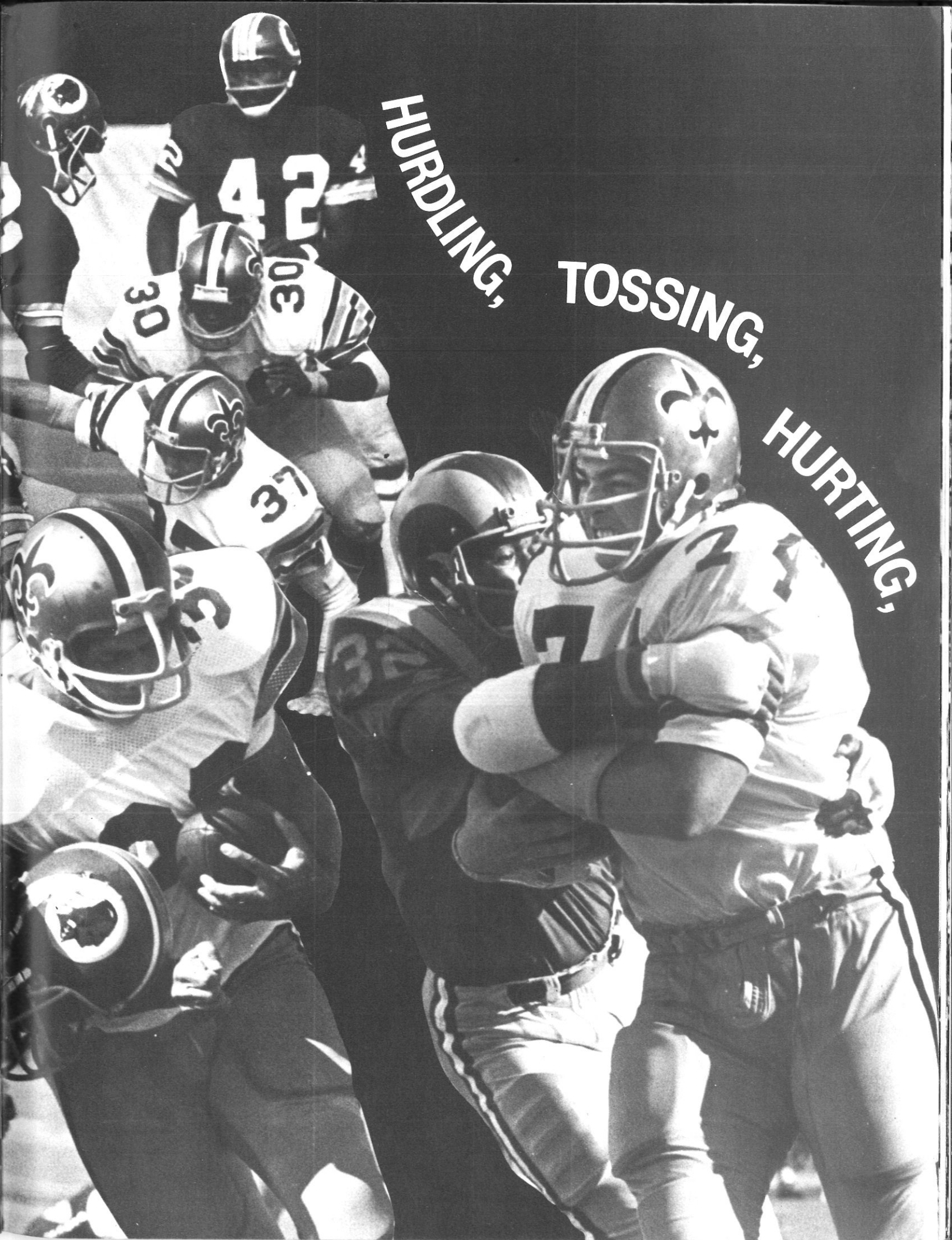
 Bryan Packing Company, West Point, Mississippi 39773
A CONSOLIDATED FOODS COMPANY • RESPONSIVE TO CONSUMER NEEDS



ACTION IS...



RUNNING, FEIGNING, FAKING



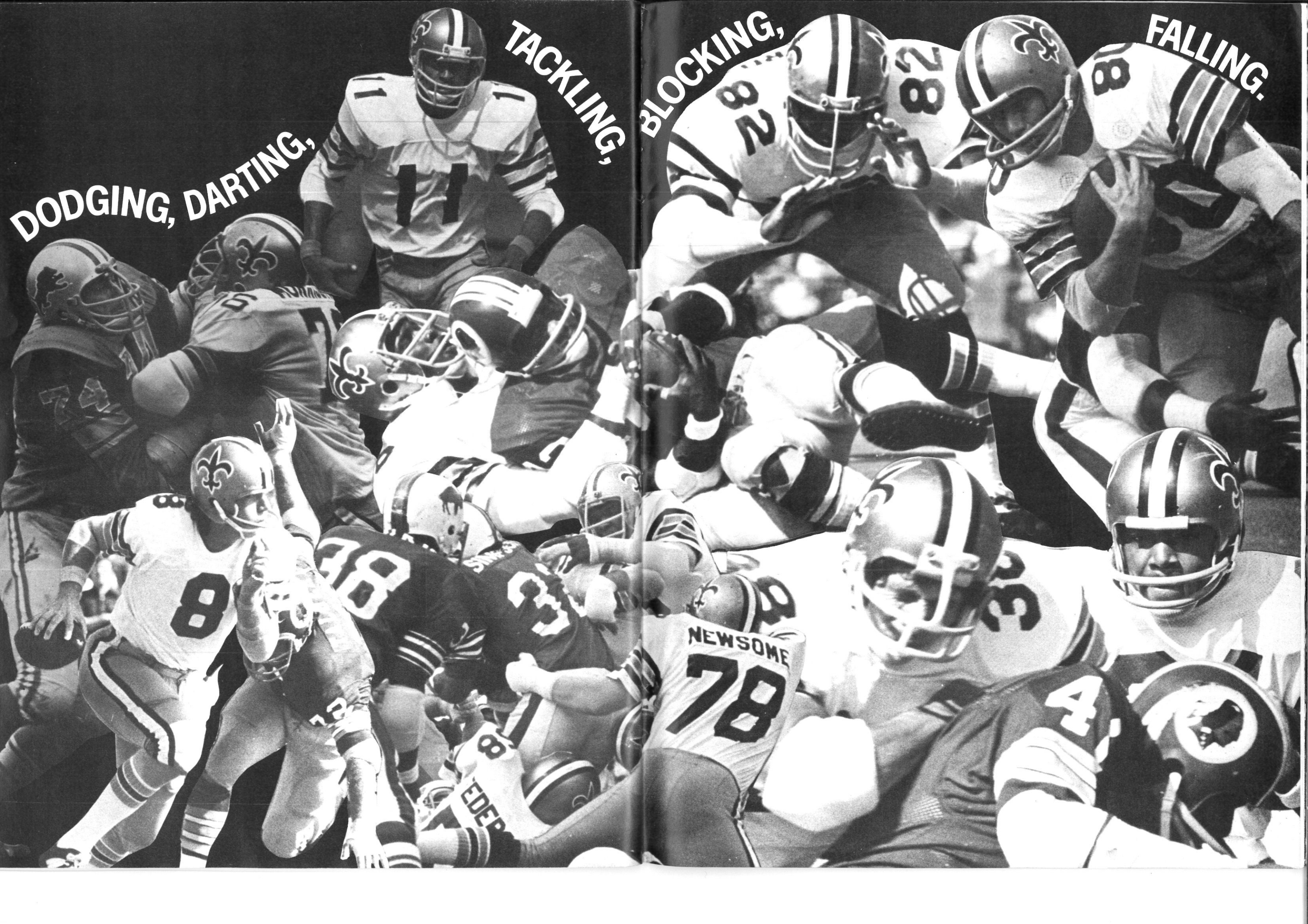
HURDLING, TOSSING, HURTING

DODGING, DARTING,

TACKLING,

BLOCKING,

FALLING.



There's More To The

On July 9, 1961, the first camping session of the Louisiana Lions Crippled Children's Camp in Leesville, La., opened, staging two two-week sessions, with 57 campers attending the first session.

In 1973, 420 campers attended during the five two-week sessions now staged, bringing the total of crippled children attending the camp to 3,950 since 1961.

The camp, located six miles north of Leesville on Highway 171, consists of 107 acres of rolling piney woodlands and is governed by the Louisiana Lions League and its Board of Directors who come from Lions in each of the Louisiana District of Lions International.

In 1969, John W. Mecom, Jr., owner and president of the New Orleans Saints, pledged one pre-season game each year to be played for the benefit of the Louisiana Lions Crippled Children's Camp. The first year the Pittsburgh Steelers provided the opposition and in succeeding years the Saints have kept that pledge with games against the New York Jets (twice), Kansas City Chiefs and the Buffalo Bills.

These benefit games have accounted for approximately \$500,000 for the Leesville facility.

Since 1969, Mr. Mecom has worked closely with the Lions of Louisiana to insure the success of the Lions benefit game. Because of his efforts and generosity toward the Lions Crippled Children's Camp and other Lions programs, Mr. Mecom was awarded the first Louisiana Lions' "Humanitarian of the Year" Award in 1973.

The Louisiana Lions Crippled Children's Camp had its beginning in 1952 when Lion R.R.L. Ward was appointed chairman of club activities for children by Lion

President Phil Bridendall of the Lake Charles, La., club. With committee member Lion P.D. Johnston, Ward and Bridendall worked with the Calcasieu School Board and provided a classroom with a ramp at the Hamilton High School, the first classroom for the handicapped in the area.

Seeking some meaningful summer activity for their group from the Hamilton school class, the committee approached the Boy Scout council and asked for a special session at Camp Edgewood, but were turned down because the camp was established solely for scouts.

In the summer of 1953, a new scout troop enjoyed a session at Camp Edgewood. The entire class of handicapped students at Hamilton High had formed their own troop with Norman Duett as scoutmaster.

An evaluation of this camping experience led to a determination by Lions Ward and Johnston to work for a Louisiana Lions Camp for Crippled Children.

After almost four years of research and planning, a resolution was adopted by the 1957 state Lions convention and on Dec. 6, 1957, at approximately 5 p.m., in the office of the clerk of the court of Calcasieu Parish, La., the Articles of Incorporation of Louisiana Lions League for Crippled Children, Inc., was signed and witnessed.

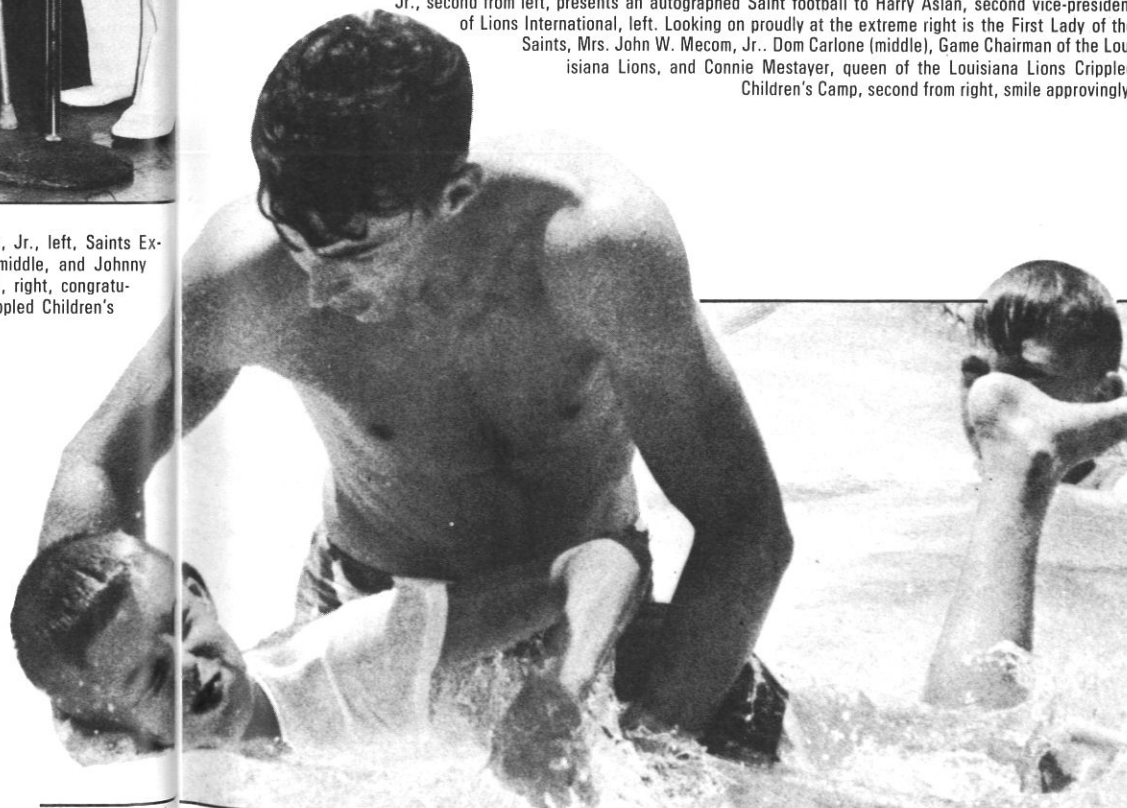
From 1958-1960, the Lions Club held its crippled children's camp at Camp Windywood near Pollock, La., hosting 274 crippled campers.

During this time, the board of directors was searching for a permanent site for the crippled children's camp and a total of 78 possible locations were visited by the board. The Leesville Lions Club offered 100 acres of land with frontage on Vernon Lake



After accepting the Lions Clubs' "Humanitarian of the Year" Award in 1973, Saints' President John W. Mecom, Jr., second from left, presents an autographed Saint football to Harry Aslan, second vice-president of Lions International, left. Looking on proudly at the extreme right is the First Lady of the Saints, Mrs. John W. Mecom, Jr., Dom Carlone (middle), Game Chairman of the Louisiana Lions, and Connie Mestayer, queen of the Louisiana Lions Crippled Children's Camp, second from right, smile approvingly.

New Orleans Saints President John W. Mecom, Jr., left, Saints Executive Vice-President Richard F. Gordon, Jr., middle, and Johnny Balbo, First Vice-President of Lions International, right, congratulate the 1972 Queen of the Louisiana Lions Crippled Children's Camp.



One of the many competent counselors at the Lions Crippled Children's Camp instructs the handicapped campers in the 60-foot swimming pool at the camp. The children have fun while learning!

Saints Than Just Football...

(which was not yet completed). The board accepted the offer and on May 13, 1959, a deed to the land was executed and presented to the board at its regular meeting in Monroe on May 22, 1959.

In 1962, the multipurpose main building was completed; in 1964-65 the chapel was built and the boat landing and dock were completed. The lake filled up during the winter of 1965-66, making it possible to have a fishing program in the summer of 1966.

Since Mr. Mecom's pledge in 1969, the Lions have been able to build dormitories, buy additional land and make general improvements on facilities already existing, including the purchasing of many new bunk beds to house the ever increasing number of campers utilizing the camp.

In addition to the chapel, multipurpose building, dormitories and lake, the camp boasts a dining hall, arts and crafts pavillion, a 60-foot T-shaped swimming pool and a camp corral. There is also a canteen, deep water well, required utilities and sewerage system, storage buildings, a Nature Lore building, a wash house, pump house, archery building and a caretaker's residence.

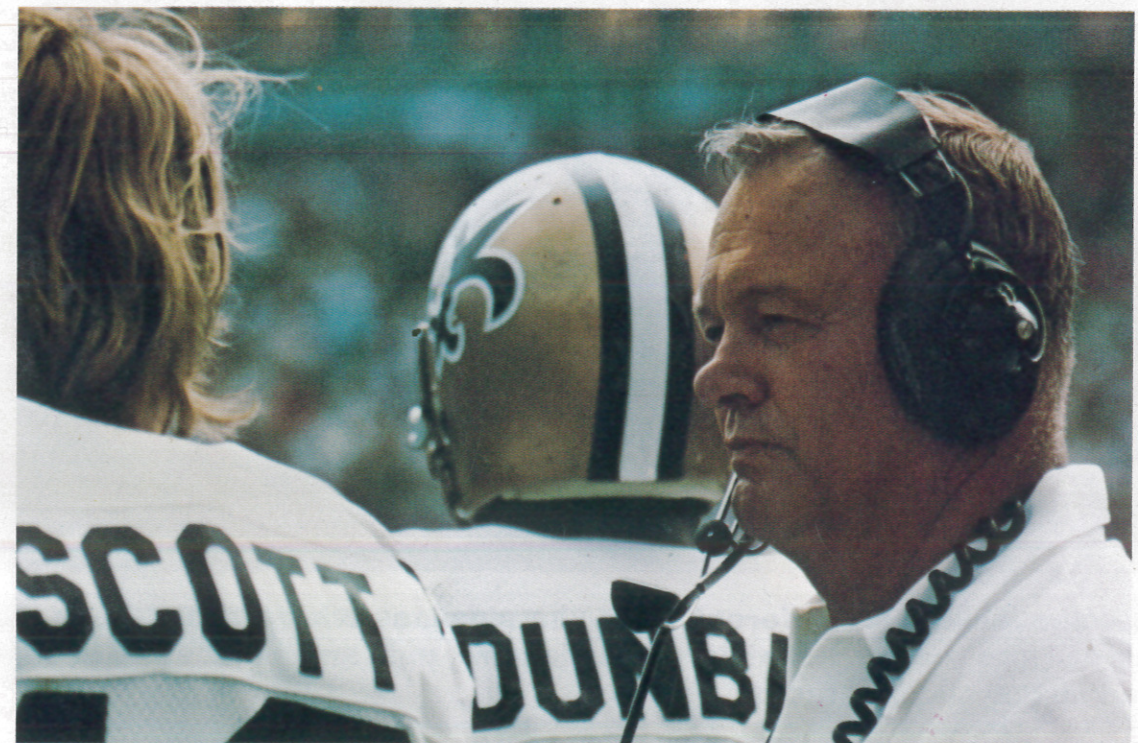
The camp offers eight major activities: (1) archery, (2) swimming, (3) horseback riding, (4) arts and crafts, (5) nature lore, (6) gun safety, (7) fishing and (8) all sports. In addition to these major activities, 20 more forms of fun and relaxation are presented each two week session.

In some areas of the country the Lions and the Saints are NFL opponents, but the Louisiana Lions and the Saints are cooperating with each other to benefit the crippled children of Louisiana.

Sidelining

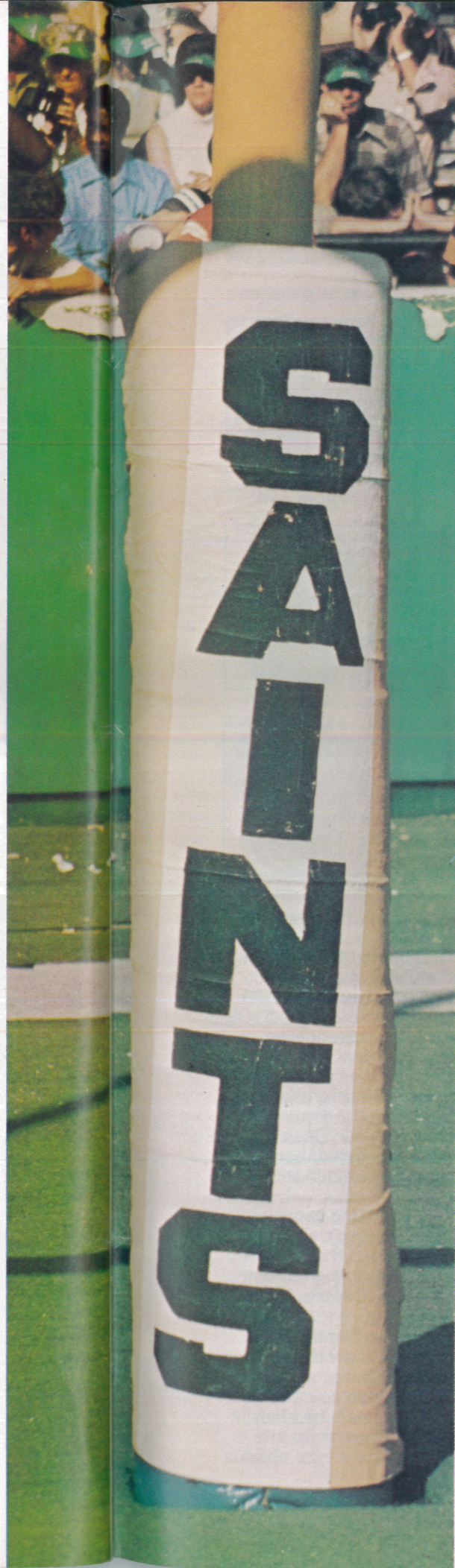
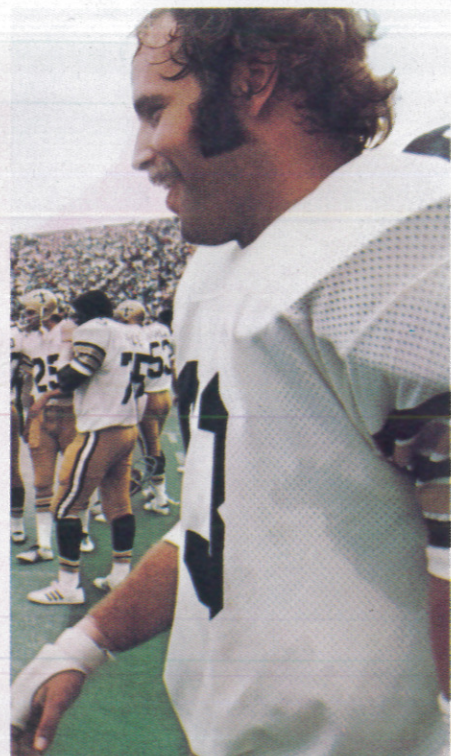


The Saints

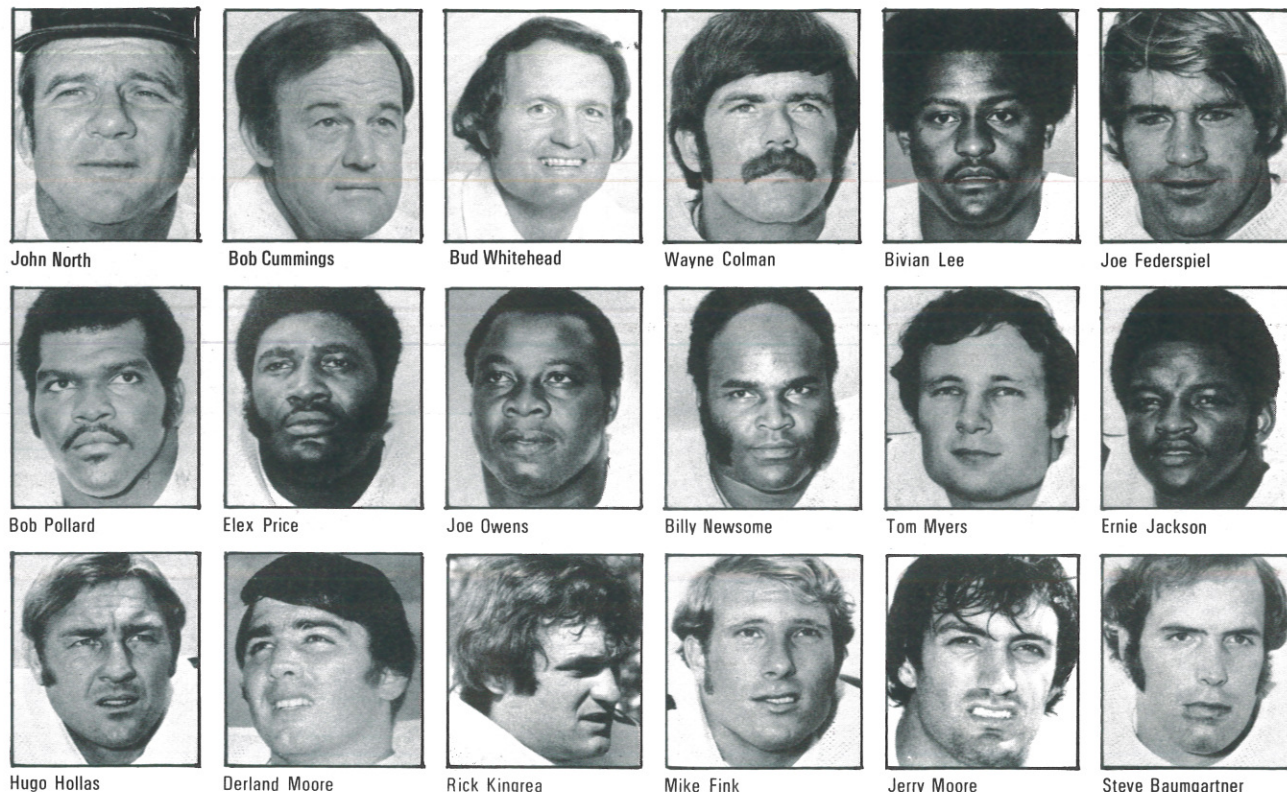




The game looks a lot different from the sidelines where the players wait their call into the game. Exhilaration, despair, pain and exhaustion are mirrored in the players' faces.



"SOMETHING'S GOTTA BE



John North Bob Cummings Bud Whitehead Wayne Colman Bivian Lee Joe Federspiel
 Bob Pollard Elex Price Joe Owens Billy Newsome Tom Myers Ernie Jackson
 Hugo Hollas Derland Moore Rick Kingrea Mike Fink Jerry Moore Steve Baumgartner

On Sunday, September 7, 1941, the Japanese Empire launched their surprise attack on Pearl Harbor. President Franklin D. Roosevelt labeled the incident as a "day that would live in infamy."
 On Sunday, September 16, 1973, the Atlanta Falcons swooped in and bombed the New Orleans Saints. Veterans of Pearl Harbor said they could empathize with New Orleans.
 One obvious difference in comparing the two attacks is that the Americans on Oahu didn't expect the Japanese, whereas the Saints knew months in advance when to expect Atlanta.
 The surviving Saints moved their camp to Dallas for a second engagement a week later. But alas, they suffered another smashing defeat, and one observer recalled the

Shakespearean admonition that "the valiant die but once," and something seemed wrong! For instance: against Atlanta, the Saints cooperated with ten turnovers. The Cowboys easily completed 15 of 22 passes and averaged six yards forward every time they snapped the ball. Enough instances!
 With scores of 62-7 and 40-3 to start the season, New Orleans' most loyal fans were swapping season tickets for bus tokens. The players were in shock!!
 After the Atlanta game free safety Tommy Myers sat in uniform in front of his locker half an hour after the game. Tommy just stared into space and didn't move. At 177 pounds, he had been in on so many tackles his head was fuzzy and eyes vacant. Myers didn't recognize his wife when

he arrived home that evening!! After the Dallas game, he almost quit. In two games the Saints had been outscored 102 to 10 and had surrendered six touchdown passes!
 Game three was closer, but still no cigar. Baltimore jumped in front 14-0 in the first quarter and trainer Dean Kleinschmidt ordered more stretchers and oxygen to the field!
 But . . . something happened! The defense didn't allow another point and the offense rolled to a season high of ten points! Final, Baltimore 14, New Orleans 10.
 However, the Saints and coaching staff knew they should have **won** the game, so no moral victory was counted.
 Instead, the team had hardly settled in their seats for the flight home when it was obvious

DONE"

that Head Coach John North had his ears laid back.
 He told his assistants, "Something's gotta be done." And with that statement, a plan of reconstruction was born. The only thing wrong with the Saints up to this point had been offense, defense, special teams, injuries and morale.
 The rehabilitation job on the defense fell to three men: Bud Whitehead, defensive secondary coach, Marv Matuzak, linebacker coach, and Bob Cummings, defensive line coach.
 Whitehead and Matuzak were holdovers from J.D. Roberts' regime. But Cummings had been summoned from his high school coaching job in Henderson, Kentucky. He took the place of Coach Jim Champion who, along with offensive line coach Jim Royer, elected to follow Roberts to the pay window when J.D. was cashiered by owner John Mecom following the fourth loss of the exhibition season. North was promoted in nocturnal ceremonies to take Roberts' place.
 The rebuilding job was made more difficult because a lot of the pieces were missing or broken. Injuries had wiped out safeties Hugo Hollas and Doug Wyatt, along with defensive tackle Ron Billingsley. Starting linebacker Wayne Coleman was out until the third game and starting defensive end Joe Owens had missed four exhibition games. So, the front four was made up of Bob Pollard, rookie free agent Elex Price, and draftee Derland Moore at tackles. Owens had Steve Baumgartner, a rookie, to help out while newcomer Billy Newsome held down the other end.
 Coach Whitehead had John Fuller, acquired in an off-season trade, and Jerry Moore,

brought in from Chicago, ninety four hours before the season started. And, of course, second year toughie Tom Myers. Bivian Lee and Ernie Jackson were headed for good seasons at corner. Mike Fink, a rookie from the "show me" state of Missouri, showed enough to catch on and help where needed.
 Coach Whitehead recalls those first three losses and even today his face reveals the pain: "The players weren't the only ones in shock! We were forced to use combinations of players who hardly had time to get acquainted. But I talked with the guys and told them to continue to play hard so they could walk down the street with their heads up, no matter how the game came out."
 The week before the Bears came to town, Whitehead said, "We had the worst practice sessions I can remember." But, when John North said, "Something's gotta be done," Bob Cummings started doodling, and something was done!
 Cummings had never coached in the pros in his life, but he detected a sameness in the Saints defense, and charted a course of changes. "In the first three games we were using the old standard four-three defense with overstrong and overweak. We realized that we needed to change, since this didn't seem to suit our personnel. So, we started using the overstrong interchange. Also, we used the odd defense at times which put Federspiel back in the middle where we could keep blockers off him so he could make more tackles. We began using some stacks, some split four, and we began shifting around quite a bit. These changes took advantage of the quickness which we **do** have. It meant the other team

just didn't know what we were going to do all the time."
 So, the Bears came to town and the Saints beat them 21-16. The vaunted Chicago running game was held to two first downs by rushing, and Bobby Douglass connected on just thirteen of thirty passes as the defense allowed just one touchdown!
 The Saints had put a little fun in their life. They had tried winning!
 In addition to moving linebackers inside the ends and quick shifting to odds and evens, Cummings speaks of another change in tactic and thinking. "We changed our defensive scheme. We started playing a four-three only on passing situations, and we let our linemen just take off like sprinters when the ball was snapped."
 On long passing situations, Coach Whitehead began adding a back, replacing a linebacker. This cut down on long completions as evidenced by the statistics. The Saints allowed six touchdown passes in their first two games, and just nine in the next twelve. That's doing something!
 Another change took place after the Chicago game. Players found they could smile again. Practice was even fun and confidence restored. Suddenly the Saints knew they had something going.
 However, the Lions of Detroit were next. Could this newly minted confidence buy another upset? It did . . . 20-13. The Lions managed but one touchdown out of 359 total yards because the Saints stopped them in the clutch. Example: third quarter, Detroit third and one on the Saints' fifteen. Taylor skirts right end but is stopped by Federspiel and Hall for no gain. Errol Mann then misses a 23 yard field

"SOMETHING'S GOTTA BE DONE"

goal. Fourth quarter Saints lead 13-10. Third and six, New Orleans twenty two. Landry blitzed by Myers, throws incomplete and Detroit settles for a field goal. Two straight and **"DEFENSE, DEFENSE"** from the crowd rattles the rafters at Tulane Stadium. New Orleans suffered their road disease in San Francisco, and even though they lost 40-0, one item was obvious. The defense didn't play 40 points bad, and they never threw in the towel!

Home again.

All the defense had to contend with was the Washington Redskins. Genius George Allen couldn't be fooled by all this foolishness. He had Larry Brown, Billy Kilmer and a bunch of receivers. And the Redskins are known for **their** defense and special teams!

Would home cooking turn the trick? Something did.

The Saints won, nineteen to three!

For Washington: no first downs rushing!! Total offensive yardage, 179. Net rushing yardage . . . 24. Larry Brown, MVP in the NFL, scratched for six yards in twelve lunges at the Saints' forward bastions. Billy Kilmer was sacked twice and Sonny Jurgensen three times.

In the third quarter, Jurgensen was holding a hot hand. The Saints led 16-0. But Jurgy marched his troops to the Saints' 32, when Ernie Jackson made a clean swipe of a pass intended for Roy Jefferson. The Skins got that close to the New Orleans goal line just once more and had to settle for a 35 yard field goal!!

Defense . . . Defense . . . Defense . . .

But, O.J. was on his way! Buffalo was hoping for a Super Bowl date. O.J. Simpson was shredding tacklers on his way

to 2,003 yards. So, on Sunday November 4, 1973, the New Orleans Saints did something they had never done before!

They registered a shutout . . . a whitewash . . . a zip-love score: New Orleans 13, Buffalo 0. For O.J., twenty carries netted **79** yards!! His longest gain was fourteen yards and as the fourth quarter curtain parted, the Bills were on the Saints' fifteen yard line. New Orleans led 13-0, but a full quarter remained. Ferguson swept left for four yards to the eleven. So, the stage was set for drama. Fourth and one . . . Saints eleven. O.J. will get the ball, and he can fall backwards and gain a yard.

Defense . . . Defense . . . Defense . . .

The snap . . . Simpson sweeps right . . . strong safety Jerry Moore turned him in . . . where Ernie Jackson and Jim Merlo waited in the gap . . . Moore joined the fight and O.J. went down . . .

Measuring sticks in . . . Breathless wait . . .

Signal . . .

No Gain . . . Saints ball!!!!!!!

Buffalo got no closer than the Saints' forty one the rest of the quarter and history was made!

Film study had shown Simpson's tendency to cut back. Jerry Moore remembered and stood his ground. Newsome and Merlo filled the hole . . . and this type of defensive teamwork and thinking had turned a dismal September into an exciting season.

Then the road and two losses!

The Rams were too tough and in San Diego, the Saints didn't seem interested enough.

Back home and Los Angeles again.

Home cooking didn't help. The Rams won again. A bad day in Milwaukee followed and the

Saints returned home for their final appearance before the home folks. Four straight losses

had tarnished those Golden Sundays against Chicago, Detroit, Washington, and Buffalo.

Skies were clear that December 9, the temperature was 49, and appropriate to the temperature the Forty-Niners were in. Attendance 62,490 and after 60 minutes of combat, a pleased crowd checked the scoreboard which read New Orleans 16, San Francisco 10.

The defense held again.

With a 16-10 lead, The Saints held the Forty-Niners twice in the fourth quarter. A key deflection by Ricky Kingrea on a pass to Jimmy Thomas helped save the day.

But the **day** belonged to the **team** . . . and the defense stood tall. The Forty-Niners converted only three of thirteen third down opportunities. They were racked for four fumbles and two sacks. Bivian Lee blunted a Spurrier drive with a first quarter interception after the Saints had moved ahead 7-0. And the Forty-Niners great wide receiver Gene Washington could find himself open for just one six-yard pass.

That fifth win was the final for New Orleans, but it reproved a point. They could **WIN!!** Their confidence was justified.

Upon coming to the Saints, Billy Newsome had said in camp, that New Orleans was a better team than the one he left in Baltimore.

After losing to the Colts, some folks must have wondered what team Newsome had played for in Baltimore. But the season proved Newsome knew something about comparative talent. The Saints **were** better than Baltimore.

The Saints began the year in such dubious fashion, it seemed inconceivable that even a modicum of respectability could

be achieved. But, not only was a respectable plateau of performance reached, but defensive records were set!!!

They recorded their first shutout in history against a team featuring the best runner in history. In winning five games at home, the defense allowed a total of 42 points and 3 touchdowns! Twenty less than they allowed Atlanta on that **sad Sunday in September!**

After surrendering 102 points in their first two games, the Saints allowed another 210 the final 12 games, or approximately 18 points a game, and their final total of 312 points for the season set a team record.

Washington's total 179 yard output represented a record low allowed by the Saints in their history and the Redskins total rushing yardage of 24 yards set another mark! The Skins averaged **4 feet** per carry for a record low in that category. A better, more consistent rush up front combined with better coverage from the linebackers and secondary to set records for least yards allowed passing, **2,178**, and lowest yield yards per play, 4.9 . . .

How times changed in a dozen weeks . . .

After Atlanta and Dallas, Tom Myers told Coach North he wanted a change of scenery. The pride of this All American out of Syracuse had been stepped on. He says now, "I felt if I made my feelings known, maybe I could bring to the attention of the coaches how we felt!!" . . . Now, talk to the players, and their thoughts turn to enthusiasm for a New Year, and a new opportunity to continue the winning spirit they **found** while **losing** in Baltimore.

For defensive captain Bob Pollard, the Baltimore game

represents one of his prouder moments as a player, and his moment to move came at a team meeting. "We watched the film of the game and the guys sort of sat quietly, with not much talking. Then the coaches told us to watch again . . . and, this time, to watch just ourselves. We did, and you could hear the players quietly pointing out things to the guy next to them . . . we were really seeing ourselves up close . . . when we finished, I stood up and made a little talk. I told them we had talent and we could make the big plays and we could win; and I said we'd better quit talking and start playing some Football."

For Pollard, that day stands out because his determination seemed to reach out to his teammates. He felt he was contributing something important to the team . . .

The secondary had to be pleased that Pollard took his rhetorical stand on that day, because in the first three games, the boys in the back room had been busier than a shoe salesman on dollar day. Consider, first, the **size** of the secondary folks. They aren't as big as backs or ends, but they were faced with head-on collisions with two who had successfully turned the corner or blasted up the middle full speed. Against Atlanta, they registered 19 solo stops . . . 11 against Dallas and **22** against Baltimore . . . a total of **52** solo tackles!! Don't forget those 6 touchdown passes in the first 2 games, while opposing quarterbacks were hitting on 24 of 33 passes attempted. By comparison, against Buffalo the secondary counted 9 tackles . . . Bivian Lee at cornerback had his best season. His support against the run improved, and his confidence spiraled as the season progressed, but Lee felt the sting of those first games

too . . . "We didn't know what hit us!!"

Lee's season, however, wound up on a high note because his experience eventually paid off. "I knew how to read my keys quicker, and this led to better concentration and allowed me to make quicker decisions." The linebackers were beneficiaries of Coach Cummings' and Whitehead's deliberations too. Joe Federspiel recalls that a new spirit inspired **him** especially after the win over Chicago. "I was aware that Dick Butkus was on the field too. I wanted to play a good game and I think the Bear game was my best." Joe continues: "The interchanges kept offenses off balance, and I was free to roam with our odd defense which kept the center from firing out on me."

Another tactical move helped. Coach Whitehead began inserting a fifth back in long passing situations, and this move provided speed and better deep coverage which cut perceptibly into enemy air strikes.

So, the profile for defense is looking up for this season, and Head Coach John North feels no momentum has been lost since the gear was packed last December. "Our team is older and smarter. We are way ahead of last year. Our players know what our coaches expect and our coaches, after studying film all winter and spring, know better what our players can do. When I look at our starters on defense, I feel it would be tough to trade **any** of them. The draft helped us, no doubt about that, and we'll have good competition for jobs and this will keep everybody hustling."

The spirit seems to reflect what Bob Pollard told his teammates last season.

"Let's quit talking and start playing football."

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SEAN'S

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Football to Louisianians is as essential as air-conditioning.

The bigness of football games makes Louisianians nervous. They jam Tulane Stadium, the Sugar Bowl and Tiger Stadium in Baton Rouge with squirrels in their stomachs. Football is their earth God.

They march into their stadiums carrying their cushions, their beverages, possessed by what they can no longer possess, filling the void with noise. Football makes their lives easier to bear.

What process of evolution has brought the game in Louisiana to its present super-status?

Football. Sunday afternoons and Saturday evenings in Tulane Stadium. Saturday nights in Tiger Stadium. The Saints. Tulane. LSU. Pinky Rohm. Gaynell Tinsley. Huey Long. Bernie Moore. Y.A. Tittle. Steve Van Buren. Jim Corbett. Paul Dietzel. Billy Cannon. The Chinese Bandits. National Champions. Beat Ole Miss! Archie Manning. Tom Fears. John Mecom Jr. Billy Kilmer. Doug Atkins. Steve Stonebreaker. Go, Saints, Go! Bedlam Bowl. Danny Abramowicz. Tom Dempsey. Jimmy Taylor. John North. Bennie Ellender. Tommy Mason. Go to Hell, LSU, Go to Hell! Charlie Hall. Monk Simons. Peggy Flournoy. Jim Pittman. Rick Kingrea. Richie Petitbon. Eddie Price.

The terms and the names are all interchangeable and unsubtractable.

Football happened first in Louisiana in New Orleans on Nov. 25, 1893, when LSU and Tulane unleashed their newly formed teams at one another. Their blood rivalry still thrives today.

The New Orleans "Daily Picayune" left no doubt there was to be no quarter asked or given, by printing a cartoon of a towheaded player telling his mother good-bye. Under the caption, "Just Before the Battle," was a little rhyme: "Farewell, mother; you may never press me to your heart again; for I'm likely to be slain."

Huey Long came into the football picture as a fan after he was elected governor of Louisiana in the 1920s. In 1930, Long leaped out of his "neutral" governor's box at the LSU-Tulane game when the Tigers were on the Green Wave 7 and fell on his knees and beat his fists on the earth for LSU to score,

to no avail.

Charlie McClendon joined the LSU staff as an assistant coach in 1953 and announced: "I have never seen anything like football at LSU. The fans are so much more rabid. They still are. I think they have become even more so each year."

Meanwhile, Clark Shaughnessy came to Tulane from the University of Minnesota in 1915 and in a brief period, established the Wave as a Southern power. In 1925, he elevated Tulane into national prominence with its unconquered team.

LSU football became 'big' while Huey Long was governor. Tulane was 'big' in the 1930s and 1940s but its football program nose-dived in the 1950s and 1960s. The Wave finally jumped back into the spotlight in 1970 under Coach Jim Pittman when it defeated Colorado in the Liberty Bowl, Tulane's first bowl appearance in 30 years.

Last fall the Wave downed LSU en route to an 8-3 regular season and a loss to Houston in the Astro-Bluebonnet Bowl. Tulane's rebound attracted 321,919 fans, setting an all-time record for total home attendance, breaking the old mark set in 1946.

That figure had to please Coach Bennie Ellender, who before the season had said, "there are a lot of people talking about us now, but they need to come out and buy some tickets and support our program."

Many Tulane fans went into hiding when then president Rufus Harris began a football de-emphasis program in 1951.

LSU's 70,000-seat Tiger Stadium, known as "Death Valley," is where college football is played at its best and where football is not merely seen, it is heard, the sound of it rising up in the steel and concrete enclosure like a particularly sinister tornado.

McClendon, when asked how much the crowd at Tiger Stadium means to his team, says: "That's hard to put your finger on. Certainly, having that kind of crowd behind you helps a team,

particularly when the team is trailing and the crowd cheers them on when they start a comeback. However, it can work two ways. I think sometimes the crowd helps get our opponents ready to play. Visiting coaches use the Tiger Stadium crowd at least to some



advantage. They tell their teams so much about the crowd and how noisy it will be that by the time they get on the field, playing in Tiger Stadium means more to them than just another football game. And, despite all the talk about the noise in Tiger Stadium, we very seldom have any problems with the crowd noise interfering with play."

The 1973 LSU-Tulane game drew more than 86,000 fans to Tulane Stadium, the largest crowd in the history of the South, college or professional.

The Saints enjoy the home-crowd advantage as evidenced by their 5-2 record at home in 1973.

Herman "Dutch" Grundmeyer, 66, boasts football was very much alive in New Orleans in the 1920s. Grundmeyer, who operates Johnny's Bar in Algiers, played for the Spartans back in those days, in something called the Independent Football League.

"Most of the men worked in the daytime and practiced by the



streetlights at night," recalled Grundmeyer. "Games were played on Sundays and fierce rivalries developed.

"People talk about how great the Saints' fans are, but they should have seen our supporters. It was like a picnic, fair and homecoming every Sunday. Dad would gather his barefoot sons and mom would tie ribbons in daughter's hair and baby would be bundled up in a blanket and the family would go to the field. We always claimed the fans from our side of the river, Algiers, were the best. They really knew how to encourage you to do your best.

"Having been a part of the Spartans for almost ten years is one of my most pleasant memories. We weren't fancy like the Saints... but we were a great team."

New Orleans has always been a magical passionate city whose diary is filled with romantic adventures of love, sport, chance, war, carnival frolic and lusty seaport trade.

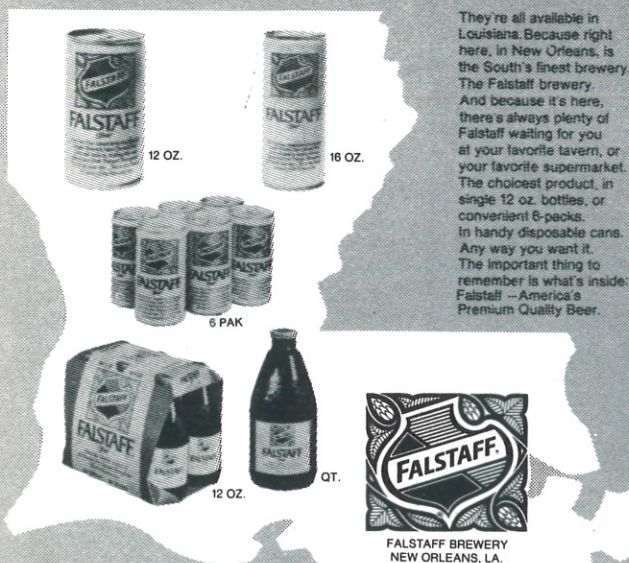
New Orleans was the ring capital of the world during the 1880s and 1890s. Every boxer of note appeared here during those years. Fight-mad crowds on Canal Street resembled those at Mardi Gras before big matches.

The Fair Grounds became the citadel of thoroughbred horse racing in 1872.

The Sugar Bowl, with much foresight, in the 1930s, decided to enlarge Tulane Stadium to its present seating capacity of 80,895.

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Organized baseball died in New Orleans in 1959 where only 27 had paid at City Park Stadium. But much of minor-league baseball had been done in by the late 1950s by major-league telecasts and air-conditioning. However, New Orleans once had battled other cities for the honor of pulling the largest opening-day crowd, an honor Mayor Robert Maestri helped the city win by turning the school children loose. The Pelicans' 1938 opener at Heineken Park attracted an overflowing gathering of more than 26,000.

After New Orleanians for five seasons turned out in impressive numbers for several pre-season National Football League games, the NFL awarded a franchise to the city on Nov. 1, 1966.

Seldom, if ever, in the history of sport has a team captured the imagination of its fans as did the Saints. The 1967 club set a record first-year average attendance of more than 75,000 a game. At that time, only four teams in NFL history had drawn more fans in a season. Saints games had a Mardi Gras atmosphere.

When the Saints opened their ticket offices for the first time in early spring of 1967, more than 20,000 season tickets were purchased in one frantic weekend. More than 34,000 were sold in all. The first-day sales set a record for the NFL.

Former Saints wide receiver Danny Abramowicz realized Saints fans were fanatics about their new team when the club flew back to New Orleans after beating the 49ers in a 1967 pre-season game in Portland, Ore.

"We had to stop in Oklahoma City, Okla., to gas up on our way back to New Orleans, with Covington, La., being our final destination to wind up training camp," recalled Abramowicz. "We flew all night and didn't get to New Orleans until early in the morning. But there must have been 5,000 fans at the airport to meet the team. Al Hirt was there with his horn."

Then there was a later date—when NFL history was made in New Orleans.

Tom Dempsey's world record field goal of 63 yards that beat the Detroit Lions on the final play of the game in 1970 put the fans in pandemonium as gnarled, old men in the stands hugged, kissed and danced with one another.

Dempsey was waived the following pre-season and finally hooked on with the Philadelphia



Eagles. Today, he says, "I'm glad the kick happened in New Orleans where our (Saints) fans could see it. Saints fans are unequalled anywhere else in the world. I still miss playing in front of them and all the noise they make."

"Playing in front of crowds like them was inspirational. I'll never forget the way the crowd reacted after that kick."

Bob Remy of Metairie, La., was the third person in line the day the season tickets went on sale. He considers himself the Saints' No. 1 fan.

"I'm definitely the Saints' most zealous fan," says Remy. "I have every article and picture to ever appear in the two local newspapers about the Saints. I have seen every home game and have every ticket stub. I have at least two copies of every home game program and most of the away game programs. I recently advertised in a California newspaper for one that I'm missing. Also, I have belonged to every Saints booster club."

I asked Remy to explain why the fans supported the Saints so well at their beginning?

"The three chief reasons were pride, John Mecom Jr. and Jim Taylor," replied Remy. "The vast majority of the people in Louisiana have an abundance of pride in their area. We believe we can do things as well as anyone. When the city was awarded an NFL franchise, we realized what an excellent opportunity it was to show our stuff. And, we did. And, we'll continue to do so."

"When Mr. Mecom was named president and majority stockholder of the franchise, he was not only the choice of Commissioner Pete Rozelle, but also the overwhelming choice of the football fans of Louisiana. We liked what he said and believed him to be sincere. He wants a winner as much as we do."

"All through the 1960s there wasn't a football player from Louisiana that was as popular as Jim Taylor. Seeing him in a Saints uniform instantly made us feel we were ready to knock heads with anyone. Jim was a fighter and a winner, and brought to our young team that special ingredient called 'class.'"

"There were other reasons: the pre-game and halftime extravaganzas, some quality players like Dave Whitsell, Doug Atkins, Mike Tilleman, Steve Stonebreaker, Jackie Burkett and others. Some of us were starved for good football because of Tulane's inability, at that time, to

win. The nickname 'Saints,' the smart-looking uniforms, the five pre-season victories, people just wanting to see the other teams were other big reasons the fans supported the Saints from the beginning. Also, Stonebreaker's incident (post-game brawl) with the Giants at Yankee Stadium proved our gang were battlers and had earned the respect of their opponents."

How does Remy contrast Saints fans from LSU and Tulane supporters?

"The Saints fans are older and have a better understanding of the game," judged Remy. "Besides that, there isn't much difference in them. The Tulane and LSU fans are just as enthusiastic."

Remy is of the opinion the Saints fans haven't changed much since 1967.

"They actually haven't changed much at all," said Remy. "Naturally, we have a better understanding of how the game is played, and have become better acquainted with the players, but basically we appreciate the current team as much as we did the 1967 squad. Fortunately, the seven teams have, we believe, played to the best of their ability. Until that changes, the Saints faithful will remain the same. Cheering, booing, second-guessing, occasionally having a couple of beers too many, but most of all, being entertained and having fun. That's what it's all about."

Remy was asked what the Saints fans expect from their team in return for their never-ending support?

"We expect our team to perform to the best of its ability and to show improvement as the season progresses," answered Remy. "Most of all, we want a group of men who want to play in New Orleans and represent the area with the same amount of pride as we, the fans, do."

Remy was so excited about the Saints' first opener with the Rams in 1967 that when he arrived at the stadium he discovered he had forgotten his ticket.

"But I was two and a half hours early and had no trouble going back home and returning for the kickoff," recalled Remy.

That was the game in which Saints rookie John Gilliam delivered the opening kickoff 94 yards before 80,789 fanatics. Mildly, it was an incredible beginning for the Saints and their fans. Although the Saints lost that first game, 27-13, their fans continued to howl.



Dick Gordon, Vice President of the New Orleans Saints, poses with the Government Bonds Award.



Both children and adult fans clamor for their favorite Saints' signatures.



The Saints convene an autograph session for their young boosters.

Afterwards, Rams wide receiver Bucky Pope put a new tag on Tulane Stadium. He termed it "Bedlam Bowl".

Commissioner Rozelle, a press box spectator that day, said after Gilliam's runback: "It was the greatest thing that could have happened to an expansion team... any team for that matter. It was a great moment and certainly one they'll be talking about for a long time."

That first season, Jim Taylor, the former Packers' great, saw major similarities between New Orleans and Green Bay. "The people in Green Bay seem to save all their enthusiasm for the football season," said Taylor. "I guess it's because football is their only major sport. New Orleans has other things to cheer about, but it's a city with a real football tradition. Still, I bet not one fan in 100 could have predicted the way New Orleans would back its pro team."

Taylor was correct. New Orleans had a delirious display for its heroes then and still does.

In their early years, the Saints were the NFL's wonder—a smash hit while losing.

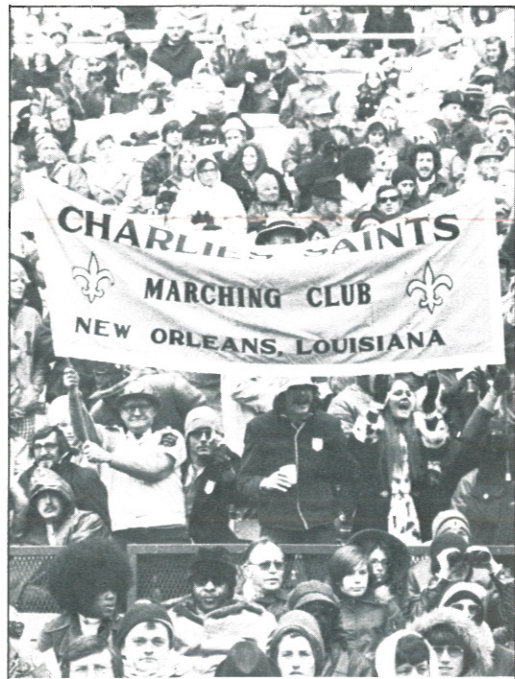
During the early seasons, entertainer Al Hirt, a minority stockholder in the Saints, would blow hot notes and lead cheers over a microphone.

As a result, the Saints worried many teams because it was always tough for the away team in New Orleans' Bedlam Bowl, filled with blood-lusting rebel fans.

News of the New Orleans fans' reached Vince Lombardi, who was to bring his Washington Redskins into Tulane Stadium for the 1969 opener.

Lombardi told author Tom Dowling in his book *Coach: A Season with Lombardi*: "That New Orleans, they're something else. Al Hirt blowing that damn trumpet on the sidelines, and they put up two big speakers on either end of the visiting bench, blaring right into your ears. Some 80,000 people screaming every time you've got the ball so you can't even hear your own signals, and when they've got the ball you can hear a pin drop. You know what I'm going to do? I'm going to take a pair of wire-clippers down on the sidelines, and the first time I hear Al Hirt blowing that damn trumpet in my ear, I'm going to cut the speaker cords. No, on second thought, maybe I'll have someone from the cab squad cut them."

Lombardi, as it turned out,



Charlie's Saints Marching Club is one of the loyal fan clubs supporting the New Orleans Saints.



The Saints 'N Sinners fan club has a birthday party for the Saints every year at the Metairie training facility on the Saturday nearest Nov. 1st.



An exuberant Saints fan lets off some steam.

and-answer session with them and they ask intelligent questions. Also, I give them a list of things to say to their husbands when they're watching a game together.

"One 60-year-old lady drove in from Biloxi, Miss., for the clinic. They want to understand the game and be able to converse about the games with their husbands."

Mrs. Carol Hauser, mother, housewife and executive with a New Orleans printing firm, was moved enough to write a letter to a newspaper about the hold the Saints had on women.

Wrote Mrs. Hauser: "When New Orleans got its franchise I was thrilled to death. I spent every waking moment studying plays, questioning bum calls, memorizing players' numbers, practicing booing. I became an expert. At last, the day of the first game dawned—the day I fell in love. I began to clip Saints photos out of the sports pages and taped them to my mirror. Today, my advice to other wives is this: You can watch the Super Bowl if you like and an occasional Sunday TV game won't hurt, but when you buy season tickets to the Saints games, watch out!"

Many Saints fans belong to organized booster clubs and meet weekly during the season. One such club is Charlie's Saints Marching Club, which was organized in 1967.

Joan K. Serpas, the club's secretary, explained the reasons why her lively group exists:

"There were several persons who were really interested and excited over the fact that New Orleans finally had its own pro team. Charlie Kertz, local saloon owner, and several of his customers decided that they would parade around the neighborhood after every Saints victory to show our neighbors how thrilled we were.

"We had so much fun, we decided to go to some of the out-of-town games in chartered buses. We've been to Dallas, Houston, Memphis, Atlanta and Miami.

"About midway through the 1967 season we decided that we wanted to show the Saints that we were their most loyal backers whether they won or lost so we decided to go to the airport to greet them when they returned from road trips.

"By 1969, we had 75 members and became an official club by getting a charter. We ordered gold shirts and black pants so we'd all be dressed alike at the games.

"We meet on the third Friday of the month and also hold picnics and dances. During the past several years we have sponsored several kids from the Crippled Children's Hospital at Saints games. Now, we are trying to raise money to donate towards an

addition to the Crippled Children's Hospital and for a new gym set and record players.

"I'm not being too modest when I say that our club is comprised of the greatest 145 Saints fans anywhere. We prove it all year round."

A group of season-ticket holders, unable to sweat out the dreadful void between football seasons, formed a Saints and Sinners Club in 1967. At one time the club had about 3,000 members.

Saints and Sinners president John Cieutat says the purpose of his group is to promote the Saints team to the Saints fans with family participation in mind.

"We meet each Tuesday night following all Saints games with a Saints player as our featured speaker," said Cieutat. "In addition to the meetings, we hold a birthday party for the Saints at their Metairie training facility on the Saturday nearest Nov. 1 with the public invited. This season, we are planning to have either a reception or appreciation night for the team."

The Touchdown Club of New Orleans lists its purposes this way: (1) To promote the best interests of the Saints and all parties connected therewith; (2) To support all sporting events conducted by the Saints; (3) To create spirit and enthusiasm among friends and supporters of the Saints and all other persons connected therewith; (4) To assist all players, coaches and other employees of the Saints in becoming acclimated and adjusted to the activities of the city of New Orleans; (5) To assist all players, coaches and other employees of the Saints in any way possible; and (6) To promote sports generally in the New Orleans Metropolitan area.

Stonebreaker was fined a reported \$5,000 by Rozelle following the Saints' post-game skirmish with the Giants in 1967 and a group of concerned fans formed for the purpose of rendering financial assistance necessary to pay the fine. The "New York Times" tagged Stonebreaker with the name "The Enforcer" and the group adopted that as its first name.

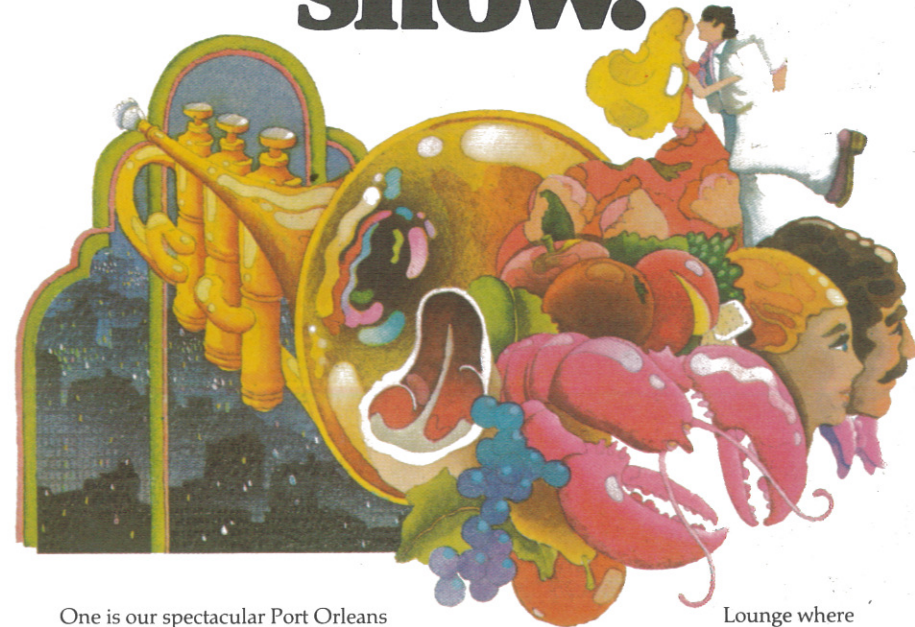
Although Rozelle disallowed the offer of payment of the fine, the club grew rapidly and soon became the Touchdown Club of New Orleans with a membership of 150.

Football games will always be the thing to keep the world from ever getting too sophisticated. And, perhaps, there's nothing wrong with that.

In Louisiana, football is the biggest of big games and the game to its fans is as necessary as blood to their well being.

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