

Last LA Rams team succeeded where the rest failed

By JOE GERGEN
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TAMPA — Perhaps it's not too late to get Bob Waterfield. After 28 seasons on the sidelines, he should be well rested. And Elroy Hirsch's legs may still be crazy after all these years. Certainly, they're worth a second look.

Call Tom Fears. Have him report to Rams Park, the former elementary school in Anaheim that serves as the team's practice facility. And tell him to bring Deacon Dan Towler and Tank Younger with him. There's a team going to the Super Bowl that calls itself the Rams, but there must be some mistake. These guys wouldn't even qualify for a screen test.

Once upon a time, the Rams glittered. The offense played make-believe with the football. Even their names had the ring of Hollywood. This is the team of Vitamin T. Smith and Touchdown Tommy Wilson and Jaguar Jon Arnett. And, talk about defense: Night Train Lane intercepted 14 passes in one 12-game season. The Fearsome Foursome was born under the Southern California sun. The Rams were somebody, and they had horns painted on their helmets to prove it.

Well, look at them now. A bunch of dirt farmers who have clawed their way into the spotlight on their hands and knees.

If the old image of the Rams still persisted in the minds of some children of the '50s, it was forever erased last weekend in an elegant championship contest as has been paraded before a national television audience. The Rams, who have cut

themselves adrift from Los Angeles after 34 years, ground down the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, 9-0, in a game that neither produced nor warranted a touchdown. And, for the very first time, they find themselves in the Super Bowl.

It's a situation that certainly will test the resolve of California fans. Never before has a "home" team appeared in a Super Bowl, and now the Rams will be playing pro football's ultimate game a few miles up the road in Pasadena. Judging by their popularity, they may succeed in turning the Rose Bowl into the Ghost Bowl. Only then will we know if a team burned its freeways behind it as it fled south.

The Rams, it should be noted, were pro football's first box-office smash. Three times during the '50s they drew crowds in excess of 100,000 to the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum. There was nothing uncommon about 80,000 or more fans cheering on the team as recently as the mid-'70s. But, in 1979, even with the stadium altered to seat only 73,999, there was nothing resembling a capacity crowd. The average attendance for the Rams' eight home games was 52,970. It is said the only sellout in Los Angeles this season was by the management.

That's because the Rams made it public long before the start of the season that they would be moving to Anaheim Stadium, a baseball park deep in Orange County, for the 1980 season. And the Los Angeles fans made it clear what they thought of the move, chanting, "Go to Anaheim, Go to Anaheim," in the course

of Rams' games. It has been a memorable season in Los Angeles, mainly for the wrong reasons.

"It's definitely ironic," veteran safety Dave Elmendorf said as the realization sank in. "The fans haven't been too kind to us this year. First, there was the announcement we were moving. And then we played miserably in so many games. We were booed roundly, and probably deserved it. But this makes up for all the boos."

Dennis Harrah, the offensive guard, was more contentious about it. He said he was "proud" to go to Anaheim. When the Eagles defeated the Chicago Bears in the first round of the playoffs, the game ball went to the City of Philadelphia. If it were possible, the Rams would like to punt the National Conference championship game ball to Los Angeles and then gang-tackle the man, woman or child who dared to field it. "We did this for ourselves, the 45 guys out there," Harrah said. "The fans counted us out. Everyone else bailed out. We were the only people left in the boat."

The late, great Los Angeles teams that dazzled and thrilled so many won only one National Football League championship, and that in 1951 when so many Americans had yet to grasp the social significance of the sport. George Allen's powerful Rams teams of the late '60s froze on the tundra of Green Bay and Minnesota. Chuck Knox coached five consecutive division winners, all of them more famous and likely more talented than this team, and

they annually collapsed in the playoffs. In Ray Malavasi's first year, 1978, the Rams were healthy and self-assured and were dismembered by the Cowboys.

Yet this is the first group of Rams to reach the promised land, a team that lost seven of its 16 games during the season and was booted out of the Coliseum in its final appearance. "I think we had more talent in the past," defensive tackle Mike Fanning said, "but the guys didn't want it as much. It's the American way: if you want something bad enough, you can get it. Well, we wanted this."

It seemed too cruel to point out that what the Rams have got is a date with the Pittsburgh Steelers, a mighty team from a conference that did some very un-American things to the Rams and their National Conference playmates during the season. The Rams certainly will not be favored on the field. They may not even be favored in the stands.

Elmendorf said he was optimistic. "I think we'll have great crowd support," he said. "After all, this is what the LA fans have been begging for for years. Isn't it?"

Well, yes. But think how much more fun it might be with Tom Harmon or Glenn Davis lined up in the backfield, with Norm Van Brocklin setting up in the pocket, with Deacon Jones and Merlin Olsen leveling blockers. Maybe Anaheim will love these Rams, but don't try to sell them to Hollywood. They're not very photogenic.

(Distributed by the Los Angeles Times-Washington Post News Service)



ROOKIE'S NIGHTMARE — Boston Bruins goalie Jim Stewart, just called up from Utica, N.Y., of the Eastern League, looks down as the puck zips past his left ear for the fourth goal of the first period by the St. Louis Blues in Thursday night's hockey match in the Boston Garden. The Blues made a fifth goal in the period, whereupon Stewart was relieved by another rookie. The Blues won, 7-4.

Lee Invitational attracts state's best wrestlers

By TONY ROMANACH
Advocate Correspondent

Dubbed "the best wrestling tournament in the state, including the state tournament," by Lee High coach Bill Bofinger, the 8th annual Lee Invitational is slated for Friday and Saturday with two state championship teams and 14 unbeaten wrestlers highlighting the action.

Action starts at 11:30 a.m. Friday with first round and quarterfinal matches. The tournament concludes Saturday with first round consolation starting at 10:30 a.m. Following the championship semifinals there will be a one-hour break at 2:30 p.m. before the third session starts at 3:30 p.m. Admission is \$1.50 per session.

The tournament's defending champion and 1979 state champion, Brother Martin, returns to defend its crown. This year's edition of the Crusader's features four outstanding wrestlers in Neil Roberts, 4-1 at 98; Kevin Scheid, 8-3 at 112; Tim Hooks, 8-0 at 167, and last year's state runner-up at 145, Mark Roberts, who sports an 11-0 record.

Roberts, however, will have a tough time in taking the 145-pound class title, since Kenny Monday, from Tulsa, Oklahoma's Booker T. Washington, has yet to lose a match in his high school career. Monday, a senior, is currently 102-0.

Monday's Washington school is also unfamiliar to losses, as the Tulsa team has captured the Oklahoma state championship the last four years.

Two other out-of-state clubs at the tournament are Minor High from Birmingham, Ala., and R. L. Turner from Dallas. Minor, state runner-up in 1979, features two state champions in Thornell Pitts at 112 and Thomas Hubbard at 185. Pitts is 12-0 this year, while Hubbard, an All-America linebacker in his junior year and an Ole Miss signee this season, is 11-1.

At the local level, Catholic High and Belaire are the strongest teams, sporting 6-0 and 7-2 records respectively in dual meets.

Catholic's Bears are paced by co-captain Scott Deumite, who is still unbeaten through 22 matches at 155. Deumite will face a stern test as Jesuit's Ricky Smith, 10-1, and Washington's Gary Taryto, 8-0, will be on hand to test Deumite's unblemished mark.

The Bears' other captain, Lenny Cardenas, 132, injured a shoulder which will sideline him for the tournament, thus preventing him from both improving on his 14-1 record and from possibly facing last year's state champion, Jesuit's Gary Labasse.

Labasse's toughest opposition will come from another New Orleans wrestler, DeLaSalle's Steve Gibbons, 20-3-1.

Belaire, meanwhile, has four wrestlers who captured one of the four top places in their respective divisions at last year's tournament.

Rich Larkin, 167, took second place at 145; Kevin Tabor, 145, was third at 126; Bobby Sartin, 155, was also third; and Darryl Boudreaux, heavyweight, finished fourth.

A team which nearly beat Belaire, losing to the Bengals 26-24 in early December, and considered a darkhorse by its coach, Milton Broussard, is Baker.

"Everyone keeps saying Catholic and Belaire are the strongest clubs in the city, but come city meet time, we'll decide who's going to win it," said Broussard.

His Buffaloes, 5-3 in dual meet action, are paced by senior Bruce Bowman, 119, and junior George Cupit, 126.

Bowman and Cupit are undefeated, having won 19 and 12 matches respectively.

Cupit's brother, James, also a junior, is 8-2.

Two other top Buffaloes are Dana Ash, 155, and Ken Woodward, heavyweight. Ash, 9-4, lost only 3-1 to Deumite at the Brusly Invitational earlier in the season, while Woodward, a senior, holds an 8-4 record.

The Buffaloes enter the tournament fresh from a 50-12 thrashing over Baton Rouge Magnet School, in which Baker won 10 of 12 matches.

The fourth local team in the tournament, the host Rebels, have run into hard times this season as Coach Bofinger's troops lost seven players to graduation.

However, the Rebels do have a top wrestler in Buck Knissen at 138. Knissen is 20-4.

Catholic wrestlers win

Catholic High had a pretty easy time pinning a 54-0 defeat to Tara in high school wrestling action Thursday night at Tara. The loss was the fourth loss of the season for Tara against three victories.

Results:
98 — B. Hopkins (Catholic) pinned Brad Chauvin 2:30
105 — Kevin Donaldson (Catholic) dec. Todd Miller 7-0
112 — Steven Loope (Catholic) dec. Dirk Chiles 3-2
119 — A. Kirby (Catholic) dec. David Decret 4-2
126 — Brent Murphy (Catholic) dec. Robert Hill 15-3
132 — Lenny Cardenas (Catholic) dec. Jeff Cronan 18-6
138 — Gary News (Catholic) pinned Mark Sylvester 5:19
145 — Gilbert Myers (Catholic) won by forfeit
155 — Scott Deumite (Catholic) won by forfeit
167 — Mike Leggio (Catholic) dec. Kevin Taylor 5-1
185 — Mike Martin (Catholic) pinned Chuck Taylor 2:53
hwy. — S. Broussard (Catholic) dec. David Rodgers 5-0

Lady Bucs win

Broadmoor's Lady Buccaneers raised its District 6-AAAA record to 3-0 via a 61-55 victory over McKinley's Lady Panthers at the Bucs gym Thursday.

Sandy Conner paced the winners with 20 points, while Susan Dixon added 19.

McKinley's Laynette Woods led all scorers with 32 points.

Taiwan plans to ignore IOC ruling

By WICK TEMPLE
NEW YORK (AP) — Eighteen athletes from Taiwan will march under the flag and name of the Republic of China at the Winter Olympics in Lake Placid next month unless they are forcibly restrained from doing so, a spokesman for the Taiwan Olympic group said Thursday.

"We're just going to show up at the Olympic Village and I fail to see how the American people will let us down," said Thomas Hsueh, an American citizen who lives on Taiwan and works as an engineering consultant. He also is an Olympic yachtsman and is part of a group working to keep the Republic of China's identity in international sports.

The International Olympic Committee has decreed that the Taiwanese must not use the name Republic of China or march under the ROC flag or use their anthem in the Olympics. Instead, they were told to participate as the Taiwan Olympic Committee. An arrangement was worked out with the People's Republic of China in October that Peking would compete but only on that basis.

"We have no objection to marching side by side with the People's Republic," said Hsueh. "But what the IOC demands of us

would outrage any reasonable man."

The Taiwanese have appealed the IOC's decision to a civil court in Lausanne, Switzerland, headquarters of the IOC. A hearing was held Tuesday on their request for a temporary injunction to keep the IOC's two-China plan from going into effect. A judge's decision is expected this weekend. IOC sources in Lausanne said.

Hsueh said if the court rules against the Taiwanese, they plan to appeal to a higher court in Vaud, Switzerland, then to the Swiss federal courts if necessary.

Hsueh was interviewed in New York while waiting to hear the outcome of the suit. Michael Lee, secretary general of the ROC Olympic Committee, was in Lausanne waiting for the judge to rule.

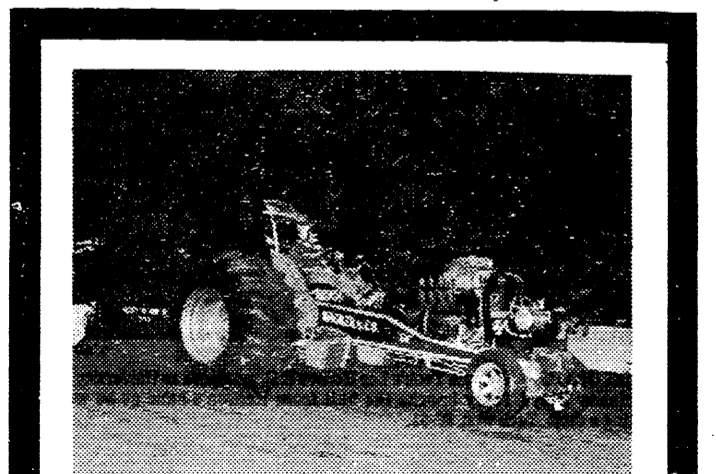
Julian Roosevelt of New York, American member of the IOC, said "There is no law in this country against their flag and I don't know who would throw them out. The IOC is taking orders from Peking."

Roosevelt said he had assurance from the U.S. State Department that the Taiwan Olympic delegation would get visas. The U.S. withdrew full diplomatic recognition of the Taiwan government in order to establish relations with the People's Republic of China.

Roosevelt said he saw no way either the IOC or the Lake Placid Olympic Committee could keep the Taiwanese from using the name Republic of China or marching under their own flag, especially if the suit in Switzerland is resolved in their favor or if it is under appeal.

The Peking Olympic officials have said they also will send athletes to the Winter Games, which start Feb. 12.

Hsueh contends, as does the suit, that the



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Lady Demons rout Tulane women, 70-58

NATCHITOCHES — Northwestern State University's Lady Demons broke an eight-game losing streak here Thursday night and did it in convincing style with a 70-58 win over Tulane University.

The Lady Demons, now 6-10 on the season, avenged an earlier loss to the Green Wave in New Orleans earlier this season, and put four players in double figures in taking the win.

Marilyn Gates gunned in 17 points to lead the Lady Demons, who host Northeast Louisiana tonight in a 7:30 p.m. game, while Theresa Long added 15, Sharon Brown 14 and Joan Darbonne 10. Long also had a game-high 15 rebounds as the Lady Demons took a decisive 48-28 advantage on the boards.

Terry Johnson led the way for Tulane, now 8-5 on the season, with 18 points before fouling out, while Sherri Fuqua was the only other Green Wave player in double figures with 11 points.

The Lady Demons hit 47.7 percent of their shots from the floor and never trailed in the contest, jumping to a 37-33 halftime lead and stretching the margin to as many as 16 points during the second half. Tulane, on the other hand, only managed to hit 33.9 percent from the field on 21 of 62 shots from the floor.

TULANE (58) — Taylor 00-00, Fogue 33-6 11, Tojeouse 2 2-6, Owens 4 1-29, Hill 2 0-16, Johnson 6-6 9 18, K. Kingman 3 2 3 8, Williams 00-0 0. Totals: 21 42-25 8.

NORTHWESTERN (70) — Washington 1 0-0 2, Darbonne 50-0 10, Willis 10-0 2, Gates 8 12 17, Jones 12-2 4, Brown 7 0-14, Long 6-5 3 15, Humphrey 1 0-2, Bemis 1 2-4. Totals: 31 84-70.

HalfTime Score: NSU 37, Tulane 33
Total Fouls: NSU 22, Tulane 16.
Fouled Out: Darbonne, Brown, Johnson.

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