

Sports Outlook



STAT SHEET

John Grabowski

Who's who in the NFL?

NFL contenders usually show their true colors at this time of the year. Keep that in mind while figuring out who's who in this strike-twisted season.

With playoff spots on the line, it can be one big game after another for clubs with post-season ambitions. As former NBA star Earl Monroe once put it, "If you lose the must game, the next one is a really must game."

The NFL record book shows that no matter how the eventual Super Bowl champ starts out each year, the team nearly always close with a rush.

Take 1986, for example. The New York Giants began the regular season with a 31-28 loss to the Dallas Cowboys. After seven weeks, New York's record stood at 5-2. From that point on, however, the Giants were invinc-

ible, winning their final nine regular-season games and all three post-season contests.

The Giants were 10-2 going into the last month of the regular season. After that, including post-season play, they were 7-0.

Let's look at the records of each of the last 10 Super Bowl champions — prior to December, and from December on.

When the records of all 10 are totaled, the results are dramatic.

Through the end of November, the teams combined for a mark of 97-20, or a winning percentage of .829. After that, their won-lost totals were 61-5, for an even more incredible .924 percentage.

Only two of the 10 — the 1985 Chi-

cago Bears and the 1982 Washington Redskins — had better percentages in the early part of the season.

In 1985, the Bears started out 12-0 before finishing 6-1 in December and January. The Redskins were 5-0 prior to December in the strike-shortened 1982 season, and 7-1 thereafter.

Five of the remaining eight champions did not lose a single game after November.

In part, this improvement was undoubtedly due to successful adjustments made when playing a club the team had met earlier in the season.

The 1986 Giants were an excellent example of a team which made the most of these "second chances." After losing the first game, 31-28, New York came back to defeat Dallas, 17-14, in their second meeting of the season. The Giants increased their winning margin against St. Louis from 13-6 to 27-7, and against Washington from 27-20 to 24-14 — to 17-0 in the NFC championship contest.

Of the teams New York played more than once, only Philadelphia cut the margin of victory by the Giants: from 35-3 to 17-14.

The New York Giants' point total by quarters in 1986 seems to reflect successful mid-game adjustments during the NFL season.

Although only Chicago (with 71) and New England (with 117) allowed fewer first half points than New York, no defense did better than the Giants after half-time. The Giants surrendered only 113 second-half points in 1986.

On offense, the Giants scored 170 points in the first half (fifth best in the NFC) and 201 in the second (first in the NFC).

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As a sport fencing requires concentration, stamina and speed. A fencing bout will last only minutes but is equivalent to a good tennis match in energy outlay.

Fencing is done with three weapons, the foil (a light weapon), the epee, (similar to the foil, but heavier), and the saber. Normally beginners start with the foil and they either stay with it or later change to one of the other weapons.

Fencing is an Olympic sport and as such closely regulated.

The Red Maple Fencing Club was formed in Georgetown in the Spring of '87, and is now in its second season of operation. Foil is the only weapon used at the club.

To start fencing you need at least a foil and a face mask. The face mask is essential for safety reasons. Later, when starting competition a protective jacket (getting hit is not dangerous, but it hurts!), a glove and breeches. Regular, normally white gym shoes are needed.

Age and sex don't matter much in fencing, the younger may be faster, but the older fencers have developed more skills. Strength is of little, if no importance. So anybody can start fencing (around the age of 10) and go on until a ripe old age. There are some terrific fencers around well in their seventies.

To see if you like it you can call Pam MacGillivray at 877-5798 and she will give you all the information you may require.

Broomball tournament

Applications are now available for teams wishing to enter the annual Halton Hills Winterfest Broomball Tournament, being held Saturday, Feb. 6, 1988.

For more information on the tournament, call 877-5185, ext. 262.

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