

SPORTS SLANTS

By Ray Shank

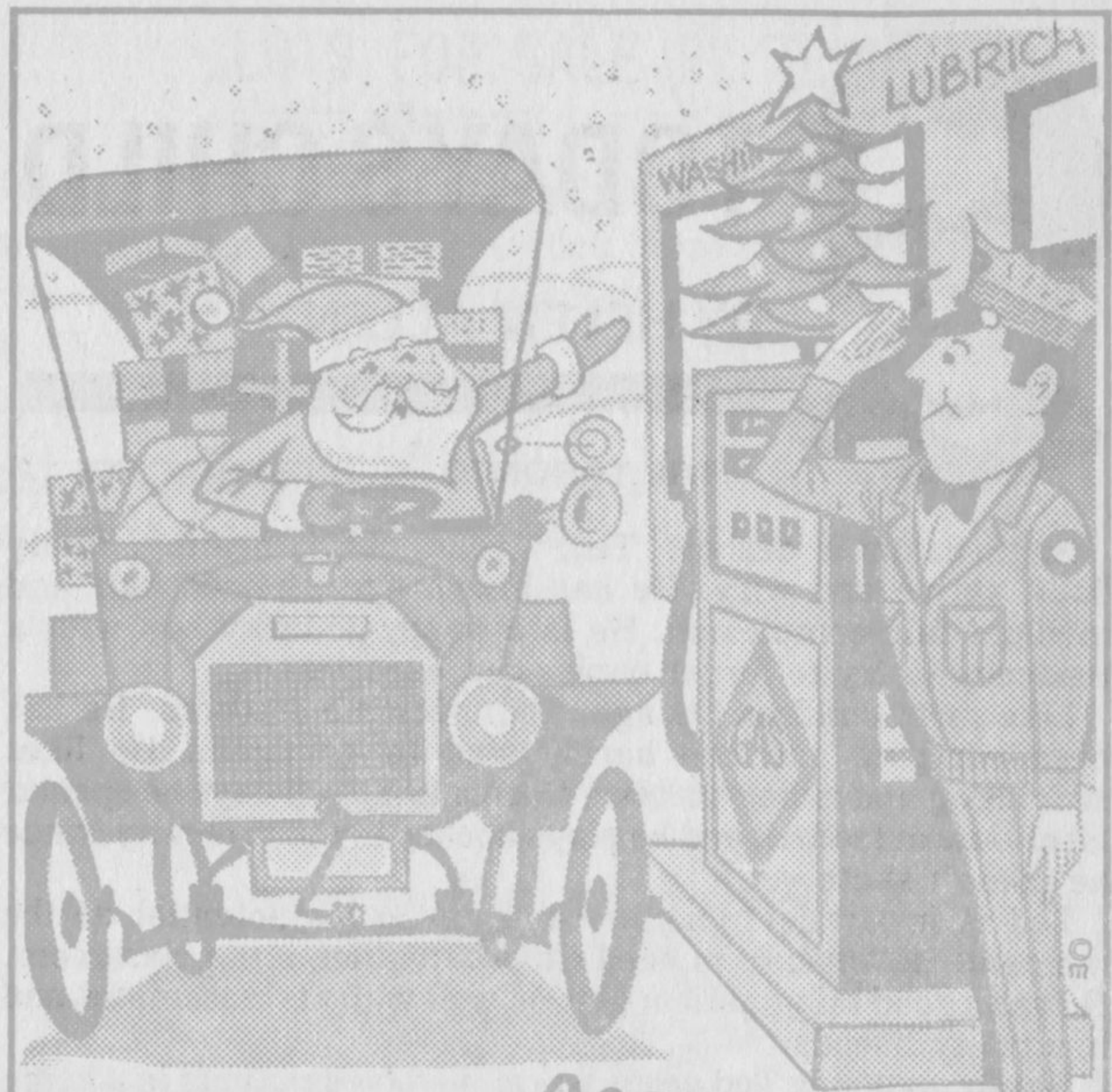
O.J. Simpson, the all-star back for Buffalo Bills, must be some kind of football player. The guy ran for 219 yards in 22 carries Dec. 9 -- that's pretty close to 10 yards per carry -- to come within 60 yards of Jimmy Brown's single season rushing record. Brown, who hung up his cleats a few years ago and now does his rushing on white girls on the movie screen, rushed for 1,863 yards his best season in the National Football League, while with Cleveland Browns. Simpson is about to pass that milestone, needing only 60 yards in his team's last game (the game has been played as you read this). Imagine ... that's an average of 133 yards a game ... or more than a mile in just 14 games.

And the Boston Bruins just keep rolling along. The last time the Bruins lost a game, as of this writing, was on Nov. 7, when they dropped a 7-3 decision to, of all teams, New York Islanders. Unless Phil Esposito or Bobby Orr get banged up, it's going to be near impossible for Montreal or any other team to catch the Bruins. Boy, the Bruins must have horseshoes in their hip pockets. Take Sunday,

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Dec. 9. They were down 3-1 to the tough Philadelphia Flyers with 1½ minutes remaining in the game. Then, with 1:22 left, Orr makes it 3-2 with a terrific shot from the point, after coach Bep Guidolin had pulled his goalie. Then, with 31 seconds left and Boston still playing with the extra attacker, Orr blasted another one from the point and, lo and behold, Espo, who happened to be cruising around the net, deflected it in and the score was all tied up. With that kind of thing going for you, it's a wonder Guidolin didn't keep his goalie out and try for the tie-breaker ...

Still with hockey, can't say the Detroit Red Wings are having the same luck. The Wings' main problem, I guess, is in goal. They've allowed 120 goals in 27 games, which amounts to about 4.4 per game, and that's bad. Philadelphia, least scored upon team in the NHL, thanks mainly to Bernie Parent, has a brilliant 1.64 goals against average.

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