

St. Louis Rams – NFL

St. Louis Rams NFL Football

Championship Visit

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36 Weekly Comp. Pres. Doc. 438

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Public Papers of the Presidents

March 2, 2000

CITE: 36 Weekly Comp. Pres. Doc. 438**LENGTH:** 933 words**HEADLINE:** Remarks Honoring the 1999 NCAA **Football** Champion Florida State Seminoles**BODY:**

The President. Thank you very much. Please be seated. Well, President D'Alemberte, I was hardly old enough to vote the first time I met you. [*Laughter*] You're aging well. [*Laughter*]

Coach Bowden, welcome. I also want to welcome all the Floridians who are here. I thank Senator Graham and Senator Mack for coming; and Representatives Boyd, Brown, Deutsch, Foley, and Miller -- and we have Senator Breaux from Louisiana is here, and Congressman Blumenauer from Oregon are here. I don't know if they're trying to spy for their **football** teams -- [*laughter*] -- but we're honored to have them. The mayor of Tallahassee is here, Scott Maddox; and State Representative Margie Turnbull. We welcome all of them. And mostly, I want to say a warm word of welcome to the Seminoles. I want to welcome you back to the White House.

This was the first national champion **football** team that I welcomed at the White House, in early 1994. And that team was 12 and 1; this team is undefeated. I came in with you, and I'm going out with you.

This team has won 109 games, this Florida State team, in the 1990's. Truly the team of the decade in American **football**. In the first Sugar Bowl of the new millennium you played a Virginia Tech team that you got way ahead of, but I think you must respect them a lot because they didn't give up. And Michael Vick and his Hokie teammates turned out to be worthy adversaries, Coach. And for those of us who love **football**, it was a sight to behold.

We all sat on the edge of our seats as you reclaimed the lead in the fourth quarter with your 85-yard scoring drive and quarterback Chris Weinke's touchdown pass to Ron Dugans. It was a 46 -- 29 victory, hard won and richly deserved. After it was over, I think there wasn't a single **football** fan in America who doubted that Florida State was truly the best team in the country and a deserving national champion.

I could say a lot about all the players and the ones who had starring roles in the games and not just the championship game but the other games. I watched several of them on television last year. But I want to say a special word of personal admiration and respect for Coach Bowden.

I have watched him year-in and year-out. I have watched him be gracious in victory and gracious in defeat, which is more difficult. Of course, it's easy if you don't lose very much. [*Laughter*] That makes it a little easier. But I have been immensely impressed by the leadership that he and his team have brought to the young men that have been on this **football** team, especially this year, but also

in past years.

Bobby, I was told that for 24 years you had an empty picture frame on your desk, waiting for an undefeated team, and I'm glad you can finally fill that picture frame. Congratulations to you.

And let me say to all the young men on this team, some of you will play some more **football** and go on into the pro ranks, and if you do, I wish you well. Most college **football** players, even on national championship teams, don't go on to play in the pro ranks, and I wish you well, too. What it takes to win on the **football** team, hard work and discipline and devotion to a common effort, give you pretty good lessons for life. And if you remember what brought you to the national championship, you'll be a champion when you leave Florida State, whether you play any more **football**, or not.

That is the ultimate lesson, Coach, of the way you run this team. I respect you; I admire you. I congratulate you all. And I thank you for giving the rest of us who just watch from the stands or on television a magnificent season. Thank you very much.

[At this point, Talbot D'Alemberte, president, Florida State University, and Bobby Bowden, coach, Florida State Seminoles, made brief remarks; and Todd Frier presented the President a team jersey.]

The President. That's great. I'm going to have to bulk up before I can -- *[laughter]*. Well, this is terrific. I want to thank all of you. A lot of people here I see made the trip up from Florida, and I want to welcome you to the White House and, in closing, just say this: When we have an event like this and we're able to invite people to come in here and express their pride and support for some remarkable achievement, it embodies the motto that the White House is the people's house.

And I think I should tell you that this is not only the first national championship of this new millennium, the first national championship team, but you are coming here in the 200th anniversary of the White House. It was completed in 1800, and John Adams, our second President, was the first person to live here. Every President since then has lived here.

And this house has seen a lot of changes and a lot of things come and go. But the feelings you have today, and I hope the pride you feel as Americans in being here, are what has sustained us now for 200 years. And if we just keep them, a couple hundred years from now, there will be another group of young people here celebrating an athletic achievement. Chances are they'll still be playing **football**, and the offensive line will average 500 pounds. *[Laughter]*

Thank you very much, and welcome.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:22 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Representatives Corrine Brown and Dan Miller; and Michael Vick, quarterback, Virginia Tech Hokies. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Talbot D'Alemberte, Bobby Bowden, and Todd Frier.

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34 Weekly Comp. Pres. Doc. 1137

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Public Papers of the Presidents

June 16, 1998

CITE: 34 Weekly Comp. Pres. Doc. 1137**LENGTH:** 484 words**HEADLINE:** Remarks Honoring the 1998 **Super Bowl** Champion Denver Broncos**BODY:**

Good afternoon. Thank you very much. Commissioner Tagliabue, Mr. Bowlen, Coach Shanahan, friends of the Broncos, I'm delighted to see all of you here. I want to especially acknowledge the presence here of Governor Romer and Senators Allard and Campbell and Hatch, Representatives DeGette, Schaefer, and Schaffer, and Mayor Webb, Ms. Martinez. And I'd like to say a special word of appreciation to Secretary Federico Pena and his wife, Ellen. He has been mayor of Denver, the Secretary of Transportation, and now the Secretary of Energy. And this is his last public event before going into the private sector, and he is going out on a high. So, thank you very much, Mr. Secretary.

Let me say to all of you, I think every football fan loved the last **Super Bowl**. Denver had one of the toughest roads to the **Super Bowl** in history, winning as a wild card team with a 12-point underdog, and won a magnificent game.

I learned that -- where's Terrell, where are you? *[Laughter]* I asked him if he thought I would look good in that five-button coat. *[Laughter]* And he said it wasn't Presidential. *[Laughter]* He was -- I learned in doing a little research for this event that he's the only person to ever win the MVP Award in his hometown and the only person ever to score three rushing touchdowns. And not only that, he sat out a quarter, as you remember, with a migraine. So that's a pretty impressive performance, running behind the lightest, but maybe the best offensive line in pro football. As you can look up here, light is a relative term. *[Laughter]*

There are a lot of things about this team I like. Three of the players actually have connections to my home State, which made me feel very happy. But I can tell you that maybe the most remarkable thing is the loyalty of the community, the steadfastness of John Elway. We're sorry he couldn't be here, and we're glad he's okay. Fifteen seasons, over 48,000 yards, and he's the oldest person ever to score a touchdown in the **Super Bowl**. That's like being light -- old is a relative term. *[Laughter]*

And Coach Shanahan, you've only been there 3 years, which is a remarkable tribute to your ability, and also to the teamwork of this team. I'm sure that every 1,000-yard receiver or 1,500-yard rusher, or star quarter-back who's ever been part of a **Super Bowl** team would say that it's teams that win championships. And a great team won this championship. We're honored to have them in the White House today.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:15 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he

referred to Paul Tagliabue, commissioner, **National Football League**; Pat Bowlen, owner, Mike Shanahan, coach, Terrell Davis, running back, and John Elway, quarterback, Denver Broncos; and Mayor Wellington E. Webb and city council woman Ramona Martinez of Denver, CO.

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33 Weekly Comp. Pres. Doc. 748

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Public Papers of the Presidents

May 20, 1997

CITE: 33 Weekly Comp. Pres. Doc. 748**LENGTH:** 852 words**HEADLINE:** Remarks Honoring the **Super Bowl** Champion Green Bay Packers**BODY:**

Thank you very much. Please be seated. I want to welcome the Green Bay Packers and their fans here and send a special welcome to the congressional delegation from Wisconsin, Senator Kohl, Senator Feingold, the Members of the House. And I see we also have some interlopers from Michigan and Minnesota who claim to be the -- *[laughter]* -- fans of the Packers. It's still snowing in all those places, according to the coach, so -- *[laughter]* -- you guys have got to stick together.

I want to thank Robert Harlan and Ron Wolf and Coach Holmgren for being here and, of course, Brett and Reggie and the whole team. I got a lot of good advice when we were up in the White House having our pictures taken from the players about my knee therapy, and I appreciate that. What I need is some advice about how to make sure it never happens again. *[Laughter]*

Congratulations on bringing the Lombardi Trophy back to Green Bay, for the first time in almost 30 years. I had two indications that this was going to happen. The first was my very early visit with the Packers at the stadium; I could see that this was a team on a mission. The second was that the Secretary of Health and Human Services, who used to be president of a little school in Wisconsin, told me that they were bound to win. And I'm glad to see you here, Secretary Shalala. Thank you.

Let me say that, for all of us who are football fans, this was a great year because of all the things that the Packers did, including having the best Packer defense in 35 years and the best in the **NFL**. I'd like to congratulate Fritz Shurmur and his whole team and say that we're glad that you recovered from the injury that you sustained during last year's playoffs. And if you want to come here and teach us how to play defense in the White House, we need it as bad as the Packers do.

I congratulate Reggie White on his sacks in the **Super Bowl** and on being the all-time **NFL** leader in sacks. And I also think the Packers offense deserves a lot of credit. Brett Favre won his second consecutive **NFL** MVP award. And I congratulated Antonio Freeman on that 81-yard record touchdown catch when I saw him in the line. It was a very exciting time, that long pass, the long pass to Andre Rison. And also, even though he's not here today, I don't think any of us will ever forget that Desmond Howard was the first special teams player ever to be a **Super Bowl** MVP. It was a great **Super Bowl** by a great team and a team effort, and I congratulate you.

I would also like to say something not just as President but as a citizen. In a world where professional athletics becomes, it seems, in sport after sport, more and more transient, where players, quite properly, have to look out for themselves in what may be a relatively short life span as professional athletes and people move from team to team and then teams move from town to town,

the Green Bay Packers are something special, unique, old-fashioned, and heart-warming. The team is owned by ordinary citizens from all walks of life. The profits get poured back into the team. The players and the coaches have a unique relationship with the fans, which all of us who watch the games even on television can tell. Whether the fans are lining up in the winter to shovel snow so the games can be played or the players are volunteering in the community, it really means something to the rest of the country to see the relationship between Green Bay and the Packers and to know, that come what may, it will be there next year and the year after that and the year after that. And I thank you for that. It's a good example that the rest of us should remember in all forms of human contests and endeavor.

Let me say, finally, I want to express my admiration for Coach Mike Holmgren. He has one of the toughest coaching jobs in the world. Green Bay is a wonderful place to be, but the expectations are reasonably high. [Laughter] I can't think of anybody who could have done a better job in fulfilling the legacy of Vince Lombardi, meeting the expectations of the people of Green Bay, and creating the kind of atmosphere on this team that is palpable even to an outsider: mutual support, teamwork, and always looking out for the ultimate goal and the welfare of the team and its success. This championship has earned him and his team their rightful place in history.

And Coach, I hope that you will always, always be proud not only of the team but of what you were able to do to infuse the kind of spirit that it takes to get people to work together and play together through the tough times as well as the good times.

Congratulations to all of you, and welcome again to the White House.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:35 p.m. on the South Portico at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to team president Robert Harlan; executive vice president and general manager Ron Wolf; head coach Mike Holmgren; quarterback Brett Favre; defensive end Reggie White; defensive coordinator Fritz Shurmur; wide receivers Antonio Freeman and Andre Rison; and punt return specialist Desmond Howard.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

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32 Weekly Comp. Pres. Doc. 113

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Public Papers of the Presidents

February 13, 1996

CITE: 32 Weekly Comp. Pres. Doc. 113**LENGTH:** 634 words**HEADLINE:** Remarks to the 1996 **Super Bowl** Champion Dallas Cowboys**BODY:**

Please be seated. Mr. Hill, it's good to see you. Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to the White House. It's a great pleasure and honor for me to welcome Jerry Jones and his family, and Coach Switzer and the entire Dallas Cowboys team, the coaches, the staff. Welcome back to the White House. This is beginning to be boring for them, I think. [Laughter]

But this is the only thing that happens at the White House as regularly as the State of the Union Address. In some ways, it's better. It's shorter -- [laughter] -- and there's no response. [Laughter]

I think everyone in America knows the remarkable record of the Dallas Cowboys; is well aware that they have won the **Super Bowl** 3 out of the last 4 years and that makes eight trips to the **Super Bowl** and five victories. This year I thought was especially important for the team, and Jerry Jones said so after the victory over Pittsburgh, I might add, a hard-won victory and an excellent game. And the Steelers put up a great fight.

But Jerry must have been thinking about the injuries the team had overcome, the fact that there were two losses in December. And I have to say to my longtime friend and fellow Arkansan, Barry Switzer -- he was second-guessed to much, for a while I thought people had mistaken him for the President. [Laughter]

I want to congratulate everyone who played on this team, Emmitt Smith for his remarkable record-setting 25-touchdown year; be a long time before that's -- [applause] I congratulate those who are here and those who are not here, Tony Aikman, all the receivers, the defensive backs.

But I would be remiss as someone who understands what it's like to get the limelight all the time, when you're backed by a team that deserves the credit, and they don't often get it. That's the way Presidents are. I'm always up giving the speeches, always getting the credit -- but as somebody who has been a football fan ever since I was old enough to know what the football looked like, I don't believe I've ever seen a team play better from tackle to tackle on offense and defense as the line did for the Dallas Cowboys in the closing games from the playoffs up to the Super Bowl. They were awesome, and they deserve a lot of the credit as well.

I want to say a special word, too, to Charles Haley, who came back from all of his injuries and played in the **Super Bowl**. It was wonderful to see him on the field. And if he wasn't out of pain, he sure hid it. And if you can play in pain, you can run for public office. [Laughter] It's something you might consider.

I also want to say a special word of appreciation -- I think all Americans and people who are fans of the Cowboys and people who are fans of the Steelers were glad to see the performance that Larry Brown put into the **Super Bowl** that won him the MVP award, especially after he lost his young son. I think every parent in america identified with it and admired his courage as well as his performance.

So this was a good year for the Dallas Cowboys. But because of the way they won and the way they played and the obstacles they overcame, it was a good year for professional football and for reminding us all that talent is never enough. You also have to want to win. You have to have the courage to accept adversity and overcome it when you face it. And you have to keep going when the going gets tough. This year the Dallas Cowboys did just that. And every one of us in america can cheer them for that great accomplishment.

So, congratulations. We're glad to have you at the White House.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:05 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Dallas Cowboys former player Calvin Hill, owner Jerry Jones, and quarterback Troy Aikman.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

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30 Weekly Comp. Pres. Doc. 403

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Public Papers of the Presidents

March 1, 1994

CITE: 30 Weekly Comp. Pres. Doc. 403**LENGTH:** 298 words**HEADLINE:** Remarks Welcoming the Super Bowl Champion Dallas **Cowboys****BODY:**

I'm glad to be here with the people who are negotiating my next year's salary. [*Laughter*]

Ladies and gentlemen, it's a great honor for all of us at the White House to have the Dallas Cowboys back here for a second year in a row. Coach Johnson, your team has a knack for coming to the White House.

I said they were negotiating my next year's salary. I really -- until you hired Bernie Kosar, I sort of wanted to be the backup quarterback. [*Laughter*] I'm the right height.

I want to congratulate Troy Aikman and Emmitt Smith and Russell Maryland and Michael Irvin for being selected to the Pro Bowl and for their brilliant play.

I also want to say that I really identify with the season the Cowboys had this year. They lost their first two games; they were even behind in the Super Bowl, but they kept coming back. Now the decade is not even half over, and they've already won two Super Bowls. There's no telling what this team can do. It's young. It's aggressive. It has a good attitude. It has great leadership.

And I have to say, a little bit of parochial pride on behalf of my State, that I'm really proud of the work that Jerry Jones has done with the Cowboys in such a few years and proud of the remarkable achievements this team has already seen. I think that it is just the beginning of what will doubtless be years and years and years of stunning achievement if they can just keep their goals high and keep working for them.

It's a great honor to have them here and I'd like to invite them to say a few words. Who's going first? Jerry?

Let's give them a hand.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:53 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Dallas Cowboys coach Jimmy Johnson and owner Jerry Jones.

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29 Weekly Comp. Pres. Doc. 362

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Public Papers of the Presidents

March 5, 1993

CITE: 29 Weekly Comp. Pres. Doc. 362**LENGTH:** 507 words**HEADLINE:** Remarks Welcoming the Super Bowl **Champion** Dallas Cowboys**BODY:**

The President. It's about time we had somebody with real popularity in here. [Laughter] I want to say it is a great pleasure and honor for all of us to have the Dallas Cowboys in the East Room. Four years ago they were about 1 and 15, and 4 years later they won the Super Bowl. In the parlance of Washington we call that deficit reduction. [Laughter]

I want to say a special word of appreciation to Jimmy Johnson and Jerry Jones. I watched them win a national championship for Arkansas 30 years ago before most of the players were born. And I've been cheering them on ever since. Most of the people in our State were Cowboy fans even before Arkansas got its hands on the Cowboys.

I also want to say something very serious. I watched this team over the last year win the way I think Americans win best. They hung in their. They were strong. They were dedicated. They started a lot of games slow, and they always finished fast. And that's what we have to do as a country. We have to endure. We have to never quit, and we have to finish fast. And I think that the country was very thrilled just to watch the renaissance of the Cowboys over the last couple of years.

Let me also say I had a very great political dilemma because the Super Bowl occurred the night I hosted the state dinner for the governors. So, I had the governor of New York and the Governor of Texas sitting on either side of me in the beginning of the game before it was obvious what the outcome would be. I was tested as never before in trying to maintain a poker face about the game. [Laughter] But you made it easy for us after a couple of quarters.

Let me say, again, on behalf of the Vice President and myself to you, Jerry, and to you, Jimmy, and to all the Cowboys, we're grateful to have you here.

And I understand that this is Michael Irving's birthday, is that right?

Jimmy Johnson. He probably just made that up. [Laughter]

The President. Is that right? Is that right? Is it your birthday? Come up here. How old are you? I said, "How old are you?" He said, "27, but tell them 24." [Laughter] Have you ever considered running for office? [Laughter] Can you imagine that, 27 years old and wealthy enough to retire the national debt. [Laughter] Well, happy birthday. I hope you'll have many more. You may not be able to have any years better than this one, but I hope you have many more at least as good.

[At this point, Dallas Cowboys owner Jerry Jones made a statement.]

Mr. Johnson. Mr. President, it is a tremendous thrill and tremendous honor for all of us to make you an official member of the Dallas Cowboys as a reserve quarterback.

The President. Thank you. I'm just going to sit around now and wait for my number to be called. [Laughter] I'm going to start practicing this afternoon. You know, it's never too late.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:20 p.m. in the East room at the White House.

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THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary
(Columbia, Missouri)

For Immediate Release

July 6, 2000

REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT
ON THE PATIENTS' BILL OF RIGHTS

University of Missouri
Columbia, Missouri

→ last time POPS in MO

11:45 A.M. CDT

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you very, very much. I want to begin by thanking President Pacheco and Chancellor Wallace. I'm delighted to be here. I want to thank the doctors and nurses who are here. And I want to say a special word of thanks to Doug Bouldin. I wish he could make that talk personally to every member of the United States Congress. That was very moving, and I thank him. (Applause.)

I want to thank the other officials who have joined us here -- Attorney General Jay Nixon; Secretary of State Rebecca McDowell Cook; State Auditor Claire McCaskill; Speaker of the House Steve Gaw; and Representative Harlan and the other members of the legislature that are here. And Mayor Hindman and members of the City and County Council who are here, I thank you all for joining me.

And, of course, a special word of thanks to Governor and Mrs. Carnahan for their friendship through the years and their leadership on this issue.

I must say I'm glad to be here. The last thing -- when I got up this morning, very early in New York, to come here, the last thing my wife said to me was, she said, you know, I went to Columbia once, it's a beautiful place. You'll have a good time. (Applause.) So I told Hillary, I said, well, you made the decision about how you're going to spend this year. I'm going to Columbia and have a good time. (Laughter.) It was great.

I understand that, in addition to the history lesson we got about the University of Missouri, that this University also began the tradition of homecoming. (Applause.) I always feel at home when I'm here in Missouri, so I like that and I wanted to mention it.

I'd like to say, too, how much I appreciate the opportunities that I've had to work with the leaders and the people of this state over the years -- during the terrible floods along the Mississippi; and then when we were promoting welfare reform, I came here more often than to any other state during the three-and-a-half-year battle we had to pass meaningful welfare reform legislation, because I thought that Governor Carnahan had done the best job of any governor in any state in showing how to do the right kind of welfare reform. (Applause.)

We've worked together in education, in fighting crime and, obviously, now, in ensuring quality health care. And I'd just like to say -- because I don't know how many more times I'll be in Missouri when I'm President -- (laughter) -- that before I was President, for a dozen years I was a governor of your neighboring state. It's a great job, it's like being President of a state without all the perks and without all the hassles. (Laughter.) And I served with four Missouri governors and over 150, believe it or not, other governors across America. And Mel Carnahan is clearly one of the very best governors I ever served

with. And I thank him. (Applause.)

When I knew I was coming here -- there are so many things that I want to talk about here at the university. I wanted to talk a little bit about increasing college access. We have now 10 million people taking advantage of either the HOPE Scholarship or the Lifetime Learning tax credit. We reformed the Student Loan Program. In seven and a half years, students have saved \$8 billion on student loan repayments. (Applause.)

We've increased the Pell Grant a lot, and now I'm trying to convince the Congress to let college tuition be tax-deductible up to \$10,000 a year. And I hope we can do that. (Applause.)

But the President talked about the importance of research, and we have tried to support basic research for our colleges and universities and through our national laboratories, and I could talk about that until tomorrow morning. But I'd just mention one thing to lead into why we're here.

I had the profound honor last week, along with Prime Minister Blair of Great Britain, to announce the completion of the first rough sequencing of the human genome. Now, this is a truly extraordinary thing that will change the lives of people who deliver health care.

Before you know it, young mothers will go home from the hospital with little genetic maps of their kids' lives. And it will be kind of scary in some ways, it will say, well, unfortunately, your child has a greater propensity to develop this or that problem. But it will also say if you do the following five things, you can cut the risk by two-thirds.

We will see the combination, the continuing combination of the information technology revolution with the revolution in genetics so that most of my friends in the field believe that within a few years, we'll be able to develop digital chips to replicate the failures of nerve cells, even in the spinal column, so that people confined the wheelchairs will be able to walk. (Applause.)

We will see -- people completely paralyzed will be able to regain the movement of their limbs. I believe that children born sometime within the next 10 years will probably have a life expectancy of somewhere around 90 years. And sometime in the first few decades of this century, we'll have children born, and if they can manage to avoid accidents or other unnatural causes of death, will have life expectancies of 100 years. Now, that's the good news.

But the reason we're here today is that we have to run our health care systems consistent with our values. And if we're going to have all these advances, they have to be implemented in a way that all Americans can be treated fairly, equally, and have access to the benefits of everything from emergency room care to basic care, to specialized care. That's what this whole debate's about. (Applause.)

Let me say to you, I feel a special responsibility here because I think, in general, managed care can be a good thing. That is, when I became President, the price of health care was going up at three times the rate of inflation every year. We were spending 4 percent more, and still are, of our Gross National Product on health care than any other country in the world. And it was obvious that we had to manage the system better.

But it's equally obvious that you can't turn the fundamental life and death decisions about the quality of health care over to people who are managing for things that have nothing to do with whether the patient

turns out healthy or not. And that's what this whole thing is about.

It's about how to strike the right balance toward saying, yes, health care is like any other big enterprise; of course, you should have prudent management; of course, we should avoid wasting any money; of course, we should do the very best we can to run it; but let's not forget why all these people are doing this, why they've got their white coats on -- it's to help people stay well and to help them get well if they get sick, or to help them recover if they're injured.

The reason we need the patients' bill of rights is because we are awash in examples, which Doug just gave us a couple of, of the forest overcoming the trees. We have lost the forest for the trees, over and over and over again. That's why we're here. (Applause.)

Now, as has already been said by the previous speakers, I wanted to come here because Missouri has passed a strong law, and you proved it wasn't a partisan issue in the Heartland. It's amazing how many issues that are partisan issues in Washington aren't partisan issues once you get five miles outside of D.C. I don't know -- (laughter.) But survey after survey after survey shows that more than 70 percent of all Americans, whether they identify themselves as Republicans or Democrats or independents, support a strong, enforceable patients' bill of rights. And, therefore, in Washington, we have an obligation to pass it, and not to pass less than that just because the organized interest groups are trying to prevent it up there. (Applause.)

Here's the state of play and why I wanted to come here to highlight this. We are so close. The Norwood-Dingell bill, a bipartisan bill, passed the House with a lot of votes to spare. We had virtually every Democrat for it and a fair number of Republicans voted for it. We had a good bipartisan group. Then the bill was taken up in the Senate and we came within one vote of having enough to pass it. We had all the Democratic senators. And Senator McCain, once again proving his independence, Senator Specter, Senator Fitzgerald, and Senator Chafee voted for it. So we're one vote away. And that's very important. And I came here because I don't think we ought to stop one vote short.

I don't know how many health care professionals I've heard tell stories like the one Doug Bouldin just told me. I don't know how many people I've heard -- I saw a nurse once who was trying to explain to me what she had to go through calling HMOs to get approval for health procedures that the doctor for whom she worked wished to perform that were blatantly self-evident, and how many times she'd been turned down, and how many times it was her unhappy duty to go tell the patient that once again he or she had been shafted. And I'll never forget that woman just weeping. She literally could not complete what she had worked so hard on to tell me. And I've seen it over and over and over again.

Now, I have done all I can do through executive action. I issued an executive order to extend the patients' bill of rights safeguards to the 85 million Americans who get their health care through federal plans -- through Medicare, Medicaid, the veterans' system, the federal health insurance plan. We have provided similar patient protections to every child covered under the Children's Health Insurance Program. But I've done all I can. The Governor and the State Legislature in Missouri, they've done all they can. But I want to explain clearly again why we need federal legislation and why only Congress can close the loophole.

In spite of your strong law, which is as good as any in the country, more than 1 million Missourians do not have patient protections today because they are in plans that our outside the jurisdiction of state law, under federal law. Now, only federal legislation can fix that. The House-passed bill, the Norwood-Dingell bill does it. And the protections are listed here on the chart.

First, it must protect every American in every health plan. The bill that the Senate did vote on -- that the majority passed, but they know is dead on arrival -- excludes over 135 million Americans. It covers fewer than one in 10 people in HMOs. I mean, why are we doing this, anyway?

So when you hear people say, well, I support a patients' bill of rights, the operative word in that sentence is "a" as opposed to "the." (Applause.) The difference in the one-letter word and the three-letter word is 135 million of your fellow citizens. This state has established strong safeguards, but not everybody is fortunate enough to live in Missouri. There are a lot of states that haven't done this.

Now, we have recognized that on certain fundamental things, there should be national action. That's Social Security, Medicare, environmental standards, the civil rights laws. We have said in certain fundamental areas a patchwork is not enough; there ought to be a floor on which every American stand and through which no American falls. That's what this bipartisan bill does.

The second thing, the patients' bill of rights must ensure access to specialists. Under the Senate bill -- the one that passed, not the one they beat by a vote -- you might have the right to see a cancer specialist. But the nearest doctor your plan may offer could be 100 miles away. or you might have to wait two weeks to see the person that's listed. That's wrong. The bipartisan bill ensures real access in a timely fashion to specialists. And if you or your family has ever needed one, you know how important that is. (Applause.)

The third thing the bill does is to ensure access to the nearest emergency room care -- and you just heard that story. (Applause.) Now, you've got to understand, this is not an exceptional story. This is not a story that happens to people in small towns, and, oh my goodness, our plan just didn't happen to cover -- you know, we've heard stories from people that live in big cities in this country where somebody gets hit by a car on a crowded city street where there's a traffic jam everywhere, and they go past three hospitals before they get to the one that's covered for the emergency room.

This is not -- Doug did not make up this story. I know you know he didn't make it up, but he did not make it up as a representative story. This is not some bizarre accident; this happens all the time, all over America. And most people don't know it, and when they hear it, they can't believe it. But it is true.

Now, the Senate bill, as Doug said, allows plans to saddle patients with an extra charge if they don't first call their health plan for their permission before they go to an emergency room. Now, I feel quite confident that whoever wrote that has never been hit in a cross-walk by a passing car. (Applause.) "I have three broken ribs, my nearest relative is 500 miles away; I also have a concussion, but could you please wait before you put me in that ambulance and let me call my health plan?"

We're laughing because we don't want to cry, but this can be a life or death decision. You know it and I know it. No one in an emergency should have to think twice about going to the nearest hospital. We just need to get over this.

Fourth, a real patients' bill of rights must ensure access to clinical trials. This is also very important. Only the bipartisan bill provides coverage for all clinical trials, from cancer to heart disease to Alzheimer's to diabetes. This is going to get to be more and more important. You're going to have an explosion of chemical trials as a

result of advances coming out of the Human Genome Project, and people shouldn't be denied the right to get a new lease on life because they happen to be in an HMO. (Applause.) That's not right.

Fifth, and fundamental, patients must be able to hold health plans fully accountable for harmful decisions. (Applause.) The Governor alluded to this, but -- and I'm not sure even he knows this because it was just released today -- but listen to this. A new analysis released today by a number of prominent legal scholars concludes that the Senate bill would be even worse than the current law, because it would effectively wipe out protections that states like Missouri have already passed, and replace them with provisions that would make it more difficult to hold plans accountable for harmful decisions.

In other words, when they voted to pass that bill, they voted to weaken the law you have already passed. So they voted to cast away vital protections that the Governor and the State Legislature fought so hard to give your families. That's not a step forward, it's a leap backward.

Now, the bipartisan bill, here's what it says. It doesn't say we want everybody to go file a lawsuit. That's not what it says. It says courts should be a last resort; there should be reasonable protection for companies and health plans that do the right thing; but if a health plan can be clearly proved to have caused harm, families simply must have the right to hold the insurance company accountable. A right without a remedy is not a right. (Applause.)

We need a real patients' bill of rights with real accountability and real rights, not one that just provides cover for the special interests. We don't need more cover for them, we need more health care coverage for the American people. (Applause.)

I want to say one other thing for the skeptics who will hear about this, because I know I'm largely preaching to the choir here. People say, oh, this is fine, but what does it cost? Does it cost something? Yes, it costs something. Do you know what it cost the federal health plans when I ordered all these protections I just told you -- I issued an executive order and we put it into the federal health plans - do you know what it costs? Less than \$1 a month a policy.

The Congressional Majority's own research service, that are the people that basically are against this, their own people say that the costs would be less than \$2 a month a policy. Now, I'd pay \$1 or \$2 a month on my policy to know that you could go to the nearest emergency room if you got in an accident. And I think you'd feel the same way about your friends and your neighbors. (Applause.) I would pay.

So all of this business about how the cost is going to bankrupt the country and add to new health care costs, it is simply not so. And we have got to be clear about that.

Now, we are so close. We're one vote away. We have to overcome all the maneuvering power that the interest groups have through their influence with the leadership in the Senate, but we're one vote away. We can enact a strong, enforceable patients' bill of rights this year. More than 300 health and consumer groups have endorsed it.

I've done everything I could to try to avoid making health care a partisan issue. We have passed bipartisan health care legislation to allow people to take their health insurance from one job to another, to have portability. We have enacted bipartisan legislation to provide for children's health insurance for low-income people that aren't poor enough to be on Medicaid. We've approved a measure that allows people with disabilities to keep their government-funded health care if they go

into the work force. It's been a Godsend; it hasn't cost you a penny as a taxpayer, and it's put a lot more people in the work force, making money and paying taxes themselves.

We have proved over and over again we could do this. And this whole thing is being hung up, with 70 percent of the American people on the other side, because one group of interests do not wish to be held accountable, like all the rest of us are, if they cause injury; because they don't want to give up the right to tell you which specialist to see, whether you could see one, and which emergency room you can visit. It doesn't make any sense.

So I'm honored to be here. I thank you all for what you have done and for once again having the Show Me State show the way. (Applause.) But I want you to think about the million Missourians who aren't covered by your own law, and the 135 million of your fellow Americans who wouldn't be covered by that Senate bill that poses as a patients' bill of rights. And I want you to think about the one vote standing between all America and the kind of health care system we need. All we need is one vote and we can change America for the better.

Thank you and God bless you. (Applause.)

END 12:10 P.M. CDT

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► Depth Chart ► Team Page

No.	Player	Pos	HT	WT	BORN	EXP	COLLEGE
99	Ray Agnew	DT	6-3	285	12/09/67	10	North Carolina State
20	Taje Allen	CB	5-10	185	11/06/73	3	Texas
92	Lionel Barnes	DE	6-7	240	4/19/76	2	Northeast Louisiana
32	Dre' Bly	CB	5-9	185	5/22/77	2	North Carolina
80	Isaac Bruce	WR	6-0	186	11/10/72	6	Memphis
23	Devin Bush	S	5-11	210	7/03/73	5	Florida State
24	Ron Carpenter	S	6-1	203	1/20/70	6	Miami (OH)
93	Kevin Carter	DE	6-5	280	9/21/73	5	Florida
56	Charlie Clemons	LB	6-2	257	7/04/72	3	Georgia
38	Rich Coady	S	6-1	200	1/26/76	2	Texas A&M
54	Todd Collins	LB	6-2	242	5/27/70	7	Carson-Newman
84	Ernie Conwell	TE	6-3	260	8/17/72	3	Washington
75	D'Marco Farr	DT	6-1	280	6/09/71	6	Washington
28	Marshall Faulk	RB	5-10	211	2/26/73	6	San Diego State
59	London Fletcher	LB	6-0	241	5/19/75	2	John Carroll
9	Joe Germaine	QB	6-2	205	8/11/75	2	Ohio State
60	Mike Gruttadauria	C	6-3	295	12/06/72	4	Central Florida
81	Az-zahir Hakim	WR	5-10	175	6/03/77	2	San Diego State
95	Nate Hobgood-Chittic	DT	6-5	295	11/30/74	2	North Carolina
42	James Hodgins	RB	5-11	230	4/30/77	2	San Jose State
25	Robert Holcombe	RB	6-0	210	12/11/75	2	Illinois
88	Torry Holt	WR	6-1	193	6/05/76	2	North Carolina State



2 Mike Horan	P	5-11	192	2/01/59	15 Long Beach State
82 Tony Horne	WR	5-9	173	3/21/76	2 Clemson
22 Billy Jenkins	S	5-10	205	7/08/74	3 Howard
52 Mike Jones	LB	6-1	230	4/15/69	9 Missouri
16 Paul Justin	QB	6-4	211	5/19/68	5 Arizona State
31 Amp Lee	RB	5-11	197	10/01/71	8 Florida State
57 Leonard Little	LB	6-3	247	10/19/74	2 Tennessee
41 Todd Lyght	CB	6-0	189	2/09/69	9 Notre Dame
35 Keith Lyle	S	6-2	204	4/17/72	6 Virginia
21 Dexter McCleon	CB	5-10	196	10/09/73	3 Clemson
64 Andy McCollum	G	6-4	295	6/02/70	6 Toledo
73 Fred Miller	T	6-7	306	2/06/73	4 Baylor
58 Mike Morton	LB	6-4	235	3/28/72	5 North Carolina
61 Tom Nutten	G	6-4	295	6/08/71	3 Western Michigan
76 Orlando Pace	T	6-7	334	11/04/75	3 Ohio State
91 Troy Pelshak	LB	6-2	242	--	2 North Carolina A&T
87 Ricky Proehl	WR	6-1	190	3/07/68	10 Wake Forest
45 Jeff Robinson	TE	6-4	265	2/20/70	7 Idaho
71 Cameron Spikes	G	6-3	300	11/06/76	2 Texas A&M
51 Lorenzo Styles	LB	6-1	245	1/31/74	5 Ohio State
83 Chris Thomas	WR	6-2	190	7/16/71	4 Cal Poly SLO
62 Adam Timmerman	G	6-4	295	8/14/71	5 South Dakota State
50 Ryan Tucker	C	6-5	285	6/12/75	3 Texas Christian
13 Kurt Warner	QB	6-2	220	6/22/71	2 Northern Iowa
36 Justin Watson	RB	6-0	225	1/07/75	2 San Diego State
14 Jeff Wilkins	K	6-2	192	4/19/72	6 Youngstown State
96 Jay Williams	DE	6-3	280	10/13/71	4 Wake Forest
86 Roland Williams	TE	6-4	268	4/27/75	2 Syracuse
77 Matt Willig	T	6-8	317	1/21/69	6 Southern California
98 Grant Wistrom	DE	6-5	255	7/03/76	2 Nebraska
90 Jeff Zgonina	DT	6-1	285	5/24/70	7 Purdue

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Tennessee 16



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Tennessee	0	0	6	10	16

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ATLANTA -- Unofficial play-by-play of Super Bowl XXXIV between the St. Louis and the Tennessee Titans:

First quarter

[Second quarter](#)

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[Fourth quarter](#)

St. Louis wins toss, elects to receive. Tennessee elects to defend east goal.

Hentrich kicks off to Horne at 6, 25 return to Rams' 31, tackled by Favors.

ST. LOUIS: 14:51

1-10-S31. Kearsse deflected pass caught by Miller for loss of 1.

2-11-S30. Faulk left sweep gain of 4, tackled by Jackson and Dorsett.

3-7-S34. Warner 17 pass to Bruce up right sideline, tackled by Rolle.

1-10-T49. Warner incomplete pass left flat, pressured by Evans.

2-10-T49. Warner incomplete pass up left sideline, dropped by Hakim.

3-10-T49. Warner 11 pass to Proehl, tackled by Robinson.

1-10-T38. Warner 9 pass to R.Williams right flat, tackled by Robinson.

2-1-T29. Holcombe 11 run up middle, tackled by Robinson and Bowden.

1-10-T18. Warner incomplete pass up right sideline, intended for Faulk.

2-10-T18. Faulk 1 run up middle, tackled by Evans and Bishop.

3-9-T17. Warner incomplete pass over middle, intended for Holt.

4-9-T17. Horan dropped snap on FG attempt, loss of 12 yards, tackled by Mitch

TENNESSEE: 9:40

1-10-T29. McNair 4 pass to Harris left flat, tackled by Fletcher and Collins.

2-6-T33. George 4 run off left tackle, tackled by Farr.

3-2-T37. Offside penalty against Carter, 5 yards.

1-10-T42. McNair incomplete pass right sideline, dropped by Dyson.

2-10-T42. McNair screen pass right side to George for 32 yards, tackled by Jones.

1-10-S26. Delay of game penalty against Tennessee, 5 yards.

1-15-S31. George 2 run up middle, tackled by Zgonina.

2-13-S29. McNair incomplete pass right sideline, intended for Byrd.

3-13-S29. McNair incomplete pass right flat, intended for Mason.

4-13-S29. Del Greco missed 47-yard FG attempt, wide left.

ST. LOUIS: 5:48

1-10-S37. Warner 32 pass to Holt over middle, tackled by Bishop.

1-10-T31. Warner 17 pass to Faulk over middle, tackled by Robinson.

1-10-T14. Faulk 3 run right side, tackled by Bishop.

2-7-T11. Faulk 2 run off left tackle, tackled by Fisk.

3-5-T9. Warner incomplete pass right side, intended for Hakim, defended by Wilkins.

4-5-T9. Wilkins 27-yard FG, 3:00.

ST. LOUIS 3, TENNESSEE 0

Wilkins kicks off to Mason in end zone, 18 return to Titans 16, tackled by Little.

TENNESSEE: 2:50

1-10-T16. McNair 12 pass to Harris right side, tackled by Bush and Jenkins.

1-10-T28. George 3 run left side, tackled by Jones.

2-7-T31. George up middle for loss of 1, tackled by Fletcher.

3-8-T31. McNair incomplete pass over middle, intended for Wycheck.

4-8-T31. Hentrich 49 punt, Hakim 10 return to Rams 31, tackled by Killens.

ST. LOUIS: :39

1-10-S31. Warner incomplete pass over middle broken up by Rolle, intended for Walker.

2-10-S31. Warner 52 screen pass to Faulk up right sideline, knocked out of bounds by Walker.

1-10-T17. Warner recovers own fumble for 1-yard gain, tackled by Evans.

ST. LOUIS 3, TENNESSEE 0
END OF 1ST QUARTER

Second quarter

2-9-T16. Warner incomplete shovel pass, intended for Hakim.

3-9-T16. Warner incomplete pass tipped by Kearse, intended for Proehl.

4-9-T16. Wilkins missed 34-yard FG attempt, wide right.

TENNESSEE: 14:48

1-10-T24. George 9 run off left tackle, tackled by Fletcher.

2-1-T33. George 2 run up middle, tackled by Farr.

1-10-T35. McNair 13 run up middle, tackled by Collins and Certer.

1-10-T48. McNair sacked by Carter for loss of 6.

2-16-T42. McNair 8 screen pass up left sideline to Harris, tackled by Jenkins.

3-8-50. McNair 9 pass to Mason right side, tackled by Lyght.

1-10-S41. McNair incomplete pass right sideline, intended for Sanders.

2-10-S41. George run for loss of 1, tackled by J.Williams and Zgonina.

3-11-S42. False start penalty against B.Matthews, 5 yards.

3-16-S47. McNair incomplete pass up right sideline, intended for Dyson.

4-16-S47. Hentrich 31 punt, downed by Phenix at Rams 16.

ST. LOUIS: 9:29

1-10-S16. Warner 11 pass to Bruce left flat, tackled by Bishop.

1-10-S27. Warner 6 pass to Faulk right sideline, tackled by Bishop and Dorsett

1-10-S33. Offside penalty against Holmes, 5 yards.

1-10-S38. Faulk 2 run left side, tackled by Wortham.

2-8-S40. Warner 15 pass to Bruce over middle, tackled by Walker.

1-10-T45. Warner 13 pass to Holt left sideline.

1-10-T32. Warner 1 pass to Holcombe right side, tackled by Wortham and Bow

2-9-T31. Warner 15 pass to Holt over middle, tackled by Sidney.

1-10-T16. Illegal contact penalty against Rolle, 5 yards.

1-10-T11. Warner incomplete pass over middle, intended for R.Williams.

2-10-T11. Warner incomplete pass right side, dropped by Holt in end zone, cov
Bishop.

3-10-T11. Warner incomplete pass over middle, intended for Bruce.

4-10-T11. Wilkins 29-yard FG, 4:16.

ST. LOUIS 6, TENNESSEE 0

Wilkins kicks off to Mason at 7, 19 return to Titans 26, tackled by Clemons.

TENNESSEE: 4:07

1-10-T26. McNair incomplete pass right side, intended for Harris, broken up by

2-10-T26. McNair incomplete pass right side, intended for Dyson, knocked down Lyght.

3-10-T26. McNair incomplete pass right sideline, intended for Mason.

4-10-T26. Hentrich 49 punt to Hakim, loss of 2 on return, tackled by Sidney.

ST. LOUIS: 3:38

1-10-S23. Holding penalty against R.Williams, 10 yards.

1-20-S13. Warner 7 pass to Faulk right sideline, forced out by Bowden.

2-13-S20. Warner incomplete pass right side, intended for Bruce, Jackson covered

3-13-S20. Warner 16 pass to Holt left sideline, tackled by Sidney.

1-10-S36. Warner sacked by Fisk for loss of 7.

TWO-MINUTE WARNING

2-17-S29. Warner 18 pass to Holt, tackled by Dorsett.

St. Louis calls first timeout at 1:43

1-10-S47. Warner incomplete pass over middle, intended for Proehl, covered by Mitchell.

1-10-S47. Warner 15 pass to Bruce left side, tackled by Sidney.

1-10-T38. Warner 17 pass to Hakim right sideline.

1-10-T21. Warner sacked by Holmes, negated by 5-yard holding penalty against Mitchell.

1-10-T16. Holding penalty against Nutten, 10 yards.

1-20-T26. Warner 6 pass over middle to Holt, tackled by Sidney.

2-14-T20. Warner scramble for no gain right side plus 10-yard face-mask penalty on Kearsse.

1-G-T10. Warner incomplete pass left flat, intended for Hakim.

2-G-T10. Warner incomplete pass over middle, intended for Bruce, hit by Holmes.

St. Louis calls second timeout at :24

3-G-T10. Warner incomplete pass left corner end zone, intended for Proehl, cov Mitchell.

4-G-T10. Wilkins 28-yard FG, :15.

ST. LOUIS 9, TENNESSEE 0

Wilkins kicks off, Mason downs ball in end zone.

TENNESSEE: 15

1-10-T20. McNair kneels down.

**ST. LOUIS 9, TENNESSEE 0
END SECOND QUARTER**

Third quarter

Wilkins kicks off to Mason in end zone, 29 return to Titans 28.

TENNESSEE: 14:50

1-10-T28. McNair 13 pass to Wycheck, tackled by Jenkins.

1-10-T41. George 4 run up middle, tackled by Jenkins.

2-6-T45. McNair 8 pass to Harris right sideline.

1-10-S47. George 13 run left sideline.

1-10-S34. George 2 run off left tackle, tackled by Agnew.

2-8-S32. McNair 3 screen pass to George left side, tackled by Collins.

3-5-S29. McNair incomplete screen pass, dropped by George.

4-5-S29. Del Greco 47-yard FG attempt blocked by Lyght, recovered by Farr at 32.

ST. LOUIS: 11:19 1-10-S32. Faulk 4 run up middle, tackled by Kears.

2-6-S36. Faulk run off right tackle for loss of 1, tackled by Kears.

3-7-S35. Warner 8 pass to Faulk over middle, tackled by Sidney and Mitchell.

1-10-S43. Warner 31 pass to Bruce over middle, tackled by Walker.

1-10-T26. Warner 16 pass to Conwell, tackled by Bishop. 2 offsetting personal penalties. Bishop hurt on play.

Official time out called at 8:24

1-G-T10. Warner incomplete pass knocked down by Kears.

2-G-T10. Faulk 1 run left side, tackled by Fisk and Evans.

3-G-T9. Warner 9 pass over middle to Holt for TD, 7:20.

Wilkins kicks extra point.

ST. LOUIS 16, TENNESSEE 0

Wilkins kicks off to Mason in end zone, 35 return to Titans 34, tackled by Little Lyght.

TENNESSEE: 7:08

1-10-T34. George 5 run up middle, tackled by Farr.

2-5-T39. George 9 run left side, tackled by McCleon.

1-10-T48. McNair 3 pass to Wycheck left flat, tackled by Jenkins.

2-7-S49. George 4 run up middle, tackled by Collins.

3-3-S45. McNair 5 pass to Wycheck right sideline, tackled by Lyght.

1-10-S40. George 2 run off right tackle, tackled by Fletcher.

2-8-S38. McNair 7 pass over middle to Wycheck, tackled by Fletcher.

3-1-S30. McNair 1 run on quarterback sneak.

1-10-S29. George 4 run up middle, tackled by Fletcher.

2-6-S25. McNair 23 run up middle, tackled by Bush.

1-G-S2. George 1 run up middle, tackled by Jenkins and Lyle.

Tennessee calls first timeout at :17

2-G-S1. George 1 run left side for TD, :14.

2-point conversion attempt, McNair incomplete pass, intended for Wycheck.

ST. LOUIS 16, TENNESSEE 6

Del Greco kicks off to Horne at 25, 12 return to Rams 37, tackled by Jackson.

ST. LOUIS: :05

1-10-S37. Faulk run off left end for loss of 1, tackled by Phenix.

**ST. LOUIS 16, TENNESSEE 6
END 3RD QUARTER**

Fourth quarter

2-11-S36. Warner incomplete pass right sideline, intended for Bruce.

3-11-S36. False start penalty against Pace, 5 yards.

3-16-S41. Warner incomplete pass up left sideline, intended for Holt.

4-16-S41. Horan 47 punt to Mason at 22, tackled by Horne for loss of 1 at Titar

TENNESSEE: 14:36

1-10-T21. George 6 run off left tackle, tackled by Bush.

2-4-T27. George loss of 2 on draw, tackled by Wistrom.

3-6-T25. McNair 9 pass to Dyson right side.

1-10-T34. George 6 run left side, tackled by Jones.

2-4-T40. George 3 run up middle, tackled by Fletcher.

3-1-T43. George no gain off left tackle, tackled by McCleon.

4-inches-T43. McNair 1 quarterback sneak.

1-10-T44. McNair 6 pass to Harris, tackled by Jenkins and Jones.

2-4-50. George 5 run off right tackle, tackled by Bush.

1-10-S45. McNair 21 pass to Byrd right side, tackled by Jenkins.

Tennessee calls second timeout at 8:33

1-10-S24. McNair 21 pass to Harris left side, tackled by Collins.

1-G-S3. George 2 run up middle, tackled by Fletcher.

2-G-S1. George 1 run right side for TD, 7:21.

Del Greco kicks extra point, 5-yard offside penalty against St. Louis, assessed c kickoff.

ST. LOUIS 16, TENNESSEE 13

Hentrich kicks off to Morton at 23, pitches to Horne who fumbles and recovers ; 21, tackled by Mitchell.

ST. LOUIS: 7:14

1-10-S21. Faulk 2 run left end.

2-8-S23. Warner incomplete pass deflected by Fisk.

3-8-S23. Warner incomplete pass, intended for Bruce, covered by Phenix.

4-8-S23. Horan 30 punt, downed by Jones at Titans 47.

TENNESSEE: 6:17

1-10-T47. McNair 11 run up middle, tackled by Wistrom.

1-10-S42. George 7 run up middle, tackled by Collins.

2-3-S35. George 1 run up middle, tackled by Fletcher and Farr.

3-2-S34. McNair 4 pass to Harris, fumble recovered by Byrd at Rams 28.

1-10-S28. George 3 run right side, tackled by Jones.

2-7-S25. McNair pass to Byrd for no gain, tackled by McCleon.

3-7-S25. McNair incomplete pass right side, intended for Wycheck.

4-7-S25. Del Greco 43-yard FG, 2:12.

ST. LOUIS 16, TENNESSEE 16

Hentrich kicks off to Horne at 10, 17 return to Rams 27, tackled by McCullough

ST. LOUIS: 2:05

1-10-S27. Warner 73 pass to Bruce up right sideline for touchdown, 1:54.

Wilkins kicks extra point.

ST. LOUIS 23, TENNESSEE 16

TWO MINUTE WARNING

Wilkins kicks off to Mason at 1, returned to Titans 22, 10-yard holding penalty 12.

TENNESSEE: 1:48

1-10-T12. McNair 9 pass to Mason over middle, tackled by McCleon.

2-1-T21. McNair 7 pass to Wycheck right sideline.

1-10-T28. McNair incomplete pass right sideline, intended for Dyson.

2-10-T28. McNair 12 run plus 15-yard face mask penalty against Bly.

1-10-S45. Offside penalty against Rams, 5 yards.

1-5-S40. McNair 2 run right sideline, tackled by Lyght.

2-3-S38. McNair 7 pass over middle to Dyson, tackled by Fletcher.

1-10-S31. McNair spikes ball.

2-10-S31. Offside penalty against Carter, 5 yards.

2-5-S26. McNair incomplete pass right side, intended for George.

3-5-S26. McNair 16 pass to Dyson right side, tackled by McCleon.

1-G-S10. McNair 8 pass to Dyson right side, tackled by Jones.

FINAL SCORE: ST. LOUIS 23, TENNESSEE 16

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Records set or tied in Super Bowl XXXIV

INDIVIDUAL Records Set

Most Passing Yards -- 414, Kurt Warner, St. Louis
Most Rushing Yards, Quarterback -- 64, Steve McNair, Tennessee
Most Receptions, Rookie -- 7, Torry Holt, St. Louis
Most Receiving Yards, Rookie -- 109, Torry Holt, St. Louis
Oldest Head Coach to Win Super Bowl -- 63, Dick Vermeil, St. Louis
Oldest Player in Super Bowl -- 40, Mike Horan, St. Louis

Records Tied

Two Teammates, 100+ Rec. Yards -- Isaac Bruce (162), Torry Holt (109)

TEAM Records Set

Most Passing Yards, One Team -- 407, St. Louis
Fewest Rushing Yards, Winning Team -- 29, St. Louis

Records Tied

Fewest Turnovers, Game, Both Teams -- 0
Most First Downs, Both Teams -- 50, Tennessee (27), St. Louis (23)
Most First Downs Passing -- 18, St. Louis
Most Yards Passing, Both Teams -- 615
Fewest Interceptions, Both Teams -- 0
Fewest Fumbles Lost, Both Teams -- 0
Fewest Rushing Attempts, Both Teams -- 49
Most Field Goals Blocked -- 1, St. Louis

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St. Louis 23, Tennessee 16

Posted: Sunday January 30, 2000 11:08 PM

SUPER BOWL AT ATLANTA	1	2	3	4	TOTAL
GA					
St. Louis	3	6	7	7	23
Tennessee	0	0	6	10	16

FINAL

- Links:
- [Team Stats](#)
 - [St. Louis Stats](#)
 - [Scoring Summary](#)
 - [Tennessee Stats](#)

Team Statistics

	St. Louis	Tennessee
Total First Downs	23	27
By Rushing	1	12
By Passing	18	13
By Penalty	4	2
Third Down Efficiency	5-12-42%	6-13-46%
Fourth Down Efficiency	0-1-0%	1-1-100%
Total Net Yards	436	367
Total Offensive Plays	59	73
Average gain per offensive play	7.4	5.0
Net Yards Rushing	29	159
Total Rushing Plays	13	36
Average gain per rushing play	2.2	4.4
Tackles for a loss - number and yards	4-5	4-5
Net Yards Passing	407	208
Times thrown - yards lost attempting to pass	1-7	1-6
Gross yards passing	414	214
Pass Attempts-Completions-Had Intercepted	45-24-0	36-22-0
Average gain per pass play	8.8	5.6
Kickoffs Number-In End Zone-Touchbacks	6-4-1	4-0-0
Punts Number And Average	2-38.5	3-43
Had Blocked	0	0
FGs - PATs Had Blocked	0-0	1-0
Net punting average	39.0	40.3
Total Return Yardage	8	-1
No. and Yards Punt Returns	2-8	1--1
No. and Yards Kickoff Returns	4-55	5-100

No. and Yards Kickoff Returns	4-55	5-122
No. and Yards Interception Returns	0-0	0-0
Penalties Number And Yards	8-60	7-45
Fumbles Number And Lost	2-0	1-0
Touchdowns	2	2
Rushing	0	2
Passing	2	0
Extra Points Made-Attempts	2-2	1-2
Kicking Made-Attempts	2-2	1-1
Passing Made-Attempts	0-0	0-1
Field Goals Made-Attempts	3-4	1-3
Safeties	0	0
Final Score	23	16
Time Of Possession	23:34	36:26

St. Louis Rams

RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	LG	TD
<u>M.Faulk</u>	10	17	1.7	4	0
<u>R.Holcombe</u>	1	11	11.0	11	0
<u>K.Warner</u>	1	1	1.0	1	0
<u>M.Horan</u>	1	0	0.0	0	0
Total	13	29	2.2	11	0

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PASSING	ATT	CMP	YDS	TD	LG	INT
<u>K.Warner</u>	45	24	414	2	73	0
Total	45	24	414	2	73	0

St. Louis Rams

Related Info:

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RECEIVING	NO	YDS	AVG	LG	TD
<u>T.Holt</u>	7	109	15.6	32	1
<u>I.Bruce</u>	6	162	27.0	73	1
<u>M.Faulk</u>	5	90	18.0	52	0
<u>A.Hakim</u>	1	17	17.0	17	0
<u>E.Conwell</u>	1	16	16.0	16	0
<u>R.Proehl</u>	1	11	11.0	11	0
<u>R.Williams</u>	1	9	9.0	9	0
<u>R.Holcombe</u>	1	1	1.0	1	0
<u>F.Miller</u>	1	-1	-1.0	-1	0
Total	24	414	17.3	73	2

DEFENSE	TKL	AST	COMB	SACK	YDS	IN	PD	FF	FR
<u>B.Jenkins</u>	9	3	12	0.0	0.0	0	0	1	0
<u>L.Fletcher</u>	9	2	11	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0
<u>M.Jones</u>	7	2	9	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0
<u>D.McCleon</u>	5	1	6	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0
<u>T.Lyght</u>	4	2	6	0.0	0.0	0	1	0	0
<u>T.Collins</u>	2	3	5	0.0	0.0	0	1	0	0
<u>K.Carter</u>	3	0	3	1.0	6.0	0	0	0	0
<u>D.Farr</u>	3	0	3	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0
<u>G.Wistrom</u>	3	0	3	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0
<u>J.Zgonina</u>	3	0	3	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0
<u>D.Bush</u>	2	0	2	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0
<u>J.Williams</u>	1	1	2	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0
<u>R.Agnew</u>	1	0	1	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0
<u>D.Bly</u>	1	0	1	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0
TEAM	1	0	1	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0
Total	54	14	68	1.0	6.0	0	2	1	0

SPECIAL TEAMS	TKL	AST	FF	FR	BL
<u>T.Lyght</u>	0	0	0	0	1
<u>C.Clemons</u>	1	0	0	0	0
<u>R.Holcombe</u>	0	1	0	0	0
<u>T.Horne</u>	1	0	0	0	0
<u>L.Little</u>	4	0	0	0	0
Total	6	1	0	0	1

KICK RETURNS	NO	FC	YDS	LG	TD
<u>T.Horne</u>	4	0	55	25	0
<u>M.Morton</u>	0	0	0	0	0
Total	4		55	25	0

PUNT RETURNS	NO	FC	YDS	LG	TD
<u>A.Hakim</u>	2	0	8	10	0
Downed	1	0	0	0	0
Total	2		8	10	0

PUNTING	NO	YDS	AVG	TB	IN20	LG
<u>M.Horan</u>	2	77	38.5	0	0	47
Total	2	77	38.5	0	0	47

FUMBLES	FUM	OWN-REC	YDS	TD	FORCED	OPP-REC	YDS	TD	OUT-BDS
<u>K.Warner</u>	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<u>B.Jenkins</u>	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
<u>J.Harris</u>	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<u>I.Byrd</u>	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Tennessee Titans

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RUSHING	ATT	YDS	AVG	LG	TD
E.George	28	95	3.4	13	2
S.McNair	8	64	8.0	23	0
Total	36	159	4.4	23	2



PASSING	ATT	CMP	YDS	TD	LG	INT
S.McNair	36	22	214	0	32	0
Total	36	22	214	0	32	0

Tennessee Titans

Related Info:

RECEIVING	NO	YDS	AVG	LG	TD
J.Harris	7	64	9.1	21	0
F.Wycheck	5	35	7.0	13	0
K.Dyson	4	41	10.3	16	0
E.George	2	35	17.5	32	0
I.Byrd	2	21	10.5	21	0
D.Mason	2	18	9.0	9	0
Total	22	214	9.7	32	0

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DEFENSE	TKL	AST	COMB	SACK	YDS	IN	PD	FF	FR
B.Bishop	4	1	5	0.0	0.0	0	1	0	0
A.Dorsett	1	4	5	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0
J.Kearse	4	0	4	0.0	0.0	0	2	0	0
D.Sidney	4	0	4	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0
E.Robinson	3	1	4	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0
J.Evans	3	0	3	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0
D.Walker	3	0	3	0.0	0.0	0	1	0	0
J.Bowden	2	1	3	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0
J.Fisk	2	0	2	1.0	7.0	0	1	0	0
B.Wortham	2	0	2	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0
D.Mitchell	1	1	2	0.0	0.0	0	1	0	0
S.Jackson	1	0	1	0.0	0.0	0	1	0	0
P.Phenix	1	0	1	0.0	0.0	0	0	0	0
S.Rolle	1	0	1	0.0	0.0	0	1	0	0
Total	32	8	40	1.0	7.0	0	8	0	0

SPECIAL TEAMS	TKL	AST	FF	FR	BL
D.Sidney	1	0	0	0	0
D.Mitchell	1	0	0	0	0
S.Jackson	1	0	0	0	0
G.Favors	1	0	0	0	0
T.Killens	1	0	0	0	0
G.McCullough	1	0	0	0	0
Total	6	0	0	0	0

PUNT RETURNS	NO	FC	YDS	LG	TD
D.Mason	1	0	-1	-1	0
Downed	1	0	0	0	0
Total	1		-1	0	0

PUNTING	NO	YDS	AVG	TB	IN20	LG
<u>C.Hentrich</u>	3	129	43.0	0	1	49
Total	3	129	43.0	0	1	49

Scoring Summary

First Quarter

ST. LOUIS - FIELD GOAL (12:00)

Play: Jeff Wilkins 27 Yard

Drive: 6 plays, 54 yards in 2:48

Key Plays:

- Warner 32-yard pass to Holt to Tennessee 42
- Warner 17-yard pass to Faulk to Tennessee 14

ST LOUIS 3-0

Second Quarter

ST. LOUIS - FIELD GOAL (10:44)

Play: Jeff Wilkins 29 Yard

Drive: 11 plays, 73 yards in 5:13

Key Plays:

- Warner 11-yard pass to Bruce to St Louis 27
- Warner 15-yard pass to Bruce to Tennessee 45
- Warner 13-yard pass to Holt to Tennessee 32
- Warner 15-yard pass to Holt to Tennessee 16

ST LOUIS 6-0

ST. LOUIS - FIELD GOAL (14:45)

Play: Jeff Wilkins 28 Yard

Drive: 13 plays, 67 yards in 3:28

Key Plays:

- Warner 16-yard pass to Holt on 3rd-and-13 to St Louis 36
- Warner 18-yard pass to Holt to St Louis 47
- Warner 15-yard pass to Bruce to Tennessee 38
- Warner 17-yard pass to Hakim to Tennessee 21

ST LOUIS 9-0

Third Quarter

ST. LOUIS - TOUCHDOWN (7:40)

Play: Torry Holt 9 Yard Pass From Kurt Warner (Jeff Wilkins Kick)

Drive: 8 plays, 68 yards in 3:59

Key Plays:

- Warner 8-yard pass to Faulk on 3rd-and-7 to St Louis 43
- Warner 31-yard pass to Bruce to Tennessee 27
- Warner 16-yard pass to Conwell to Tennessee 10

ST LOUIS 16-0

TENNESSEE - TOUCHDOWN (14:46)

Play: Eddie George 1 Yard Run (Two-Point Conversion Failed)

Drive: 12 plays, 66 yards in 7:06

Key Plays:

- George 9-yard run to Tennessee 48
- McNair 5-yard pass to Wycheck on 3rd-and-3 to St Louis 40
- McNair 7-yard pass to Wycheck to St Louis 31
- McNair 2-yard run on 3rd-and-1 to St Louis 29
- McNair 23-yard run to St Louis 2

ST LOUIS 16-6

Fourth Quarter

TENNESSEE - TOUCHDOWN (7:39)

Play: Eddie George 2 Yard Run ([Al Del Greco](#) Kick)

Drive: 13 plays, 79 yards in 7:15

Key Plays:

- McNair 9-yard pass to Dyson on 3rd-and-6 to Tennessee 34
- McNair 2-yard run on 4th-and-1 to Tennessee 45
- McNair 21-yard pass to Byrd to St Louis 24
- McNair 21-yard pass to Harris to St Louis 3

ST LOUIS 16-13

TENNESSEE - FIELD GOAL (12:48)

Play: Al Del Greco 43 Yard

Drive: 8 plays, 28 yards in 4:05

Key Plays:

- McNair 11-yard run to St Louis 42
- McNair 6-yard pass to Harris on 3rd-and-2 to St Louis 28
- Byrd recovery of Harris fumble at St Louis 28

ST LOUIS 16, TENNESSEE 16

ST. LOUIS - TOUCHDOWN (13:06)

Play: [Isaac Bruce](#) 73 Yard Pass From Kurt Warner (Jeff Wilkins Kick)

Drive: 1 play, 73 yards in 0:18

ST LOUIS 23-16

Attendance: 72,625



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WORLD SPORT

Kurt Warner

Statistics: SEASON | SPLITS | CAREER



St. Louis Rams | QB | #13

College: Northern Iowa

Rookie Season: 1998

Height: 6' 2"

Weight: 220

Contract Status: Active

Seasons: 2

Born: June 22, 1971 in Burlington, IA

SEASON STATISTICS

PASSING												
Year	G	GS	Att	Com	Pct	Yds	Yds/Att	Lg	TD	Int	Int%	Rating
1999	16	16	499	325	65.1	4353	8.7	75	41	13	2.6	109.2

RUSHING							MISCELLANEOUS					
Year		Att	Yds	Avg	Lg	TD	Sckd	Yds	Fum	Rec	Yds	Pts
1999		23	92	4.0	22	1	29	201	9	0	0	252

SEASON SPLITS

PASSING	RUSHING	SITUATION
Month By Month	Month By Month	By Venue
Week By Week	Week By Week	By Game/Situation
Vs. AFC	Vs. AFC	By Quarter/Down
Vs. NFC	Vs. NFC	

CAREER STATISTICS

PASSING										
Year	Team	Games	Att	Com	Pct	Yds	Yds/Att	Lg	TD	Rating
1998	StL	1	11	4	36.4	39	3.5	21	0	47.2
1999	StL	16	499	325	65.1	4353	8.7	75	41	109.2
		Games	Att	Com	Pct	Yds	Yds/Att	Lg	TD	Rating
Totals		17	510	329	64.5	4392	8.6	75	41	107.9

INTS				SACKS			RUSHING			
Year	Team	Int	Int%	Sckd	Yds	Att	Yds	Yds/R	Lg	TD
1998	StL	0	0.0	0	0	0	0	0.0	0	0
1999	StL	13	2.6	29	201	23	92	4.0	22	1



Totals	Int	Int%	Sckd	Yds	Att	Yds	Yds/R	Lg	TD
	13	2.5	29	201	23	92	4.0	0	1

Kurt Warner

Statistics: [SEASON](#) | [SPLITS](#) | [CAREER](#)

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What small markets?

Thanks to exciting game, viewership up from last year

Posted: Monday January 31, 2000 06:09 PM

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NEW YORK (AP) -- Small markets don't hurt Super Bowl ratings -- especially when the game goes down to the final play.



St. Louis' stirring 23-16 victory over Tennessee on Sunday night drew a 43.2 rating and a 62 share on ABC, up 7 percent from last year. That makes it the 19th-highest rated among the 34 Super Bowls.

Last year's game, Denver's 34-19 win over Atlanta, received a 40.2 rating and 61 share, the lowest rating since the 1990 game registered a 39.0 rating.

ABC estimated 130,745,000 people watched the game, making it the fifth most-watched telecast in U.S. history, trailing four other Super Bowls. Last year's game, broadcast by Fox, was watched by 127.5 million.

The No. 1 program was the 1996 Super Bowl between Dallas and Pittsburgh, watched by 138.5 million. Sunday's game pushed the final episode of "M-A-S-H," broadcast by CBS on Feb. 28, 1983, and watched by 121.6 million, out of the top 10 list, which now includes nine Super Bowls and the women's skating final of the 1994 Winter Olympics.

With two small markets, ABC said last week it hoped for a 42.0 rating, but the close games caused ratings to grow throughout the night.

When the game began at 6:26 p.m. EST, it had a 39.0 rating and 61 share, which grew to 41.4/64 from 6:30-7 p.m., 42.7/64 from 7-7:30 p.m. and 43.5/64 from 7:30-8 p.m.

The halftime show got a 40.8/48 in the next half hour, and the second

half began with a 43.9/62 from 8:30-9 p.m. That was followed by a 44.2/62 and a 46.9/65 for the final half hour, which included Kurt Warner's 73-yard touchdown pass to Isaac Bruce and Mike Jones' tackle of Kevin Dyson at the 1 as time ran out.

The rating for the final half hour was up 21 percent from the 38.9 for the final half hour last year.

In St. Louis, the game produced a 55.6 rating and 78 share, and in Nashville, Tenn., it drew a 50.3/67.

In Houston, the Titans' home when the team was the Oilers, the game got a 47.0 rating and 67 share. In Los Angeles, the former home of the Rams, it got a 38.7/64.

In New York, the game got a 39.6 rating and 54 share.

The rating is the percentage of television households watching a telecast, and each point represents 1,008,000 homes. The share is the percentage tuned in among those televisions on at the time.

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The Scotsman

January 29, 2000, Saturday

SECTION: Pg. 35**LENGTH:** 1547 words**HEADLINE:** VAGABOND OWNERS STRIKE IT RICH ON THE LONG ROAD TO **SUPERBOWL****BYLINE:** Tom Humphries**BODY:**

THIS year's **Superbowl, or Superbowl XXXIV** as Americans denote it, is a strange, almost lightweight affair. It lacks the gathering thunder-cloud ominousness of previous gladiatorial encounters and reeks, instead, of downright novelty.

Atlanta, the capital of the steamy south, finds itself in the grip of an ice storm and playing host to a couple of uncelebrated vagabond franchises from St Louis, Missouri and Nashville, Tennessee.

The players involved are barely household names in their own mansions. More media attention has focused on the rates being charged by ABC television for 30-second advertising slots than on most of the playing personnel.

For the 3,000 bored and shivering journalists gathered here, the best stories by far are the two mean, grasping old-timers who own the competing franchises. Both of them jilted big cities which had made them lots of money. Both of them have enough colour, toughness and shade about them to make them look like refugees from *The Sopranos*.

The St Louis **Rams**, formerly the Los Angeles **Rams**, are owned by one Georgia Lee Irwin Geiger Johnson Hayes Wyler Rosenbloom Frontiere whose mileage on church aisles makes Henry VIII look like a marriage guidance expert.

Georgia, once the regular moll of the famed gangster Meyer Lansky, inherited her franchise when her sixth husband (Husband VI, that is) drowned while swimming off Florida's coast.

Georgia took the **Rams** by the horns, fired her son-in-law who had been groomed to run the team and eventually packed the players into a moving van and shifted them from LA to St Louis which gave her a spanking new \$ 260 million stadium in exchange for her presence.

All this was some time after Husband VII had done some jail time for scalping tickets (10,000 of them) on the last occasion the **Rams** reached a **Superbowl**.

It would take quite a character to match Frontiere.

Fortunately, it is one area where the outsider Tennessee Titans break even.

Bud Adams made his money in trucking and oil but will be remembered when he dies as the man who took an NFL franchise from football-crazy Texas to the country music capital of the world. And made a fortune in doing it.

In moving to Nashville, Bud Adams changed the way in which business people looked at the economics of sports franchises. Small towns came to see sports organisations as nifty marketing tools. Sports owners came to realise that being courted by a small town created a situation wherein one could hold one's existing market hostage.

As a result of the Nashville coup the National Football League had to change its own rules and start spending its own money on infrastructure before chaos descended. As a result, there are those in the league who would have been happy to see the Adams franchise languish for a decade or so in the anonymity it endured in Houston when they were the Houston Oilers.

Instead, they have squeaked into a **Superbowl** and Bud Adams is the wrinkled poster boy for all smart, go-getting owners.

Nobody in Houston ever imagined their team would leave them for a hokey little country music town in Tennessee, let alone leave them and take the new team to the **Superbowl**.

These days "Possum Holler" is how Houstonians bitterly refer to the town which cuckolded them. Title Town is how Nashville thinks of itself.

It was in November 1995, that Adams went behind a disbelieving Houston's back and came to a \$ 292 million agreement for a new stadium in Nashville. On 4 May, 1996 Nashville voted to hand over a \$ 77 million bond issue to help finance the stadium.

When land and business relocations were counted the deal was worth about \$ 300 million to Adams.

Nashville voted 59 per cent to 41 per cent in favour of putting itself on the big league map.

Deal done Adams moved quickly to pay over \$ 7 million just to get his team out of its commitments to Houston as quickly as possible.

While he waited for his new stadium on the banks of the Cumberland River in Nashville to be built he housed the team first in Memphis and then at Vanderbilt University.

They achieved neither success nor popularity at either venue, but Adams was just biding his time.

In 1998, the NFL insisted on retiring the Oilers name and Adams agreed to a name change. Last February the team became the alliterative and somewhat trite Tennessee Titans. In Houston they scoffed that even the name was frayed having been discarded a long time ago by the team now known as the New York Jets.

For the third year running, Adams' franchise had recorded the lowest average attendance in the league but with the 67,700 capacity Adelphia Coliseum completed (and \$ 30 million pocketed for the naming rights) Adams' team began selling themselves feverishly to their new home. Last autumn, a 60-stage whistle-stop tour through the region brought players and officials through the state of Tennessee and introduced the franchise to neighbouring markets in Alabama, Kentucky and Mississippi.

Months later, in their first season as the Tennessee Titans, the team has brought Nashville to the event which is the Grand Ole Opry of hype and excess.

Adams is guaranteed full houses for a decade.

It's not a case of nothing but blue skies of course. Jilted Houston is still hurt by abandonment.

When the Titans inaugurated their own franchise Hall of Fame just before Christmas one of the Oilers stars due to be honoured was Earl Campbell, regarded by most as the greatest player ever to play for the club. Campbell refused to come to Nashville, declining to have anything to do with "some club in Tennessee".

Adams remains irascible. In April 1997, he asked Nashville to cut the agreed rent on the Adelphia Coliseum by two thirds. The Council promptly approved a 64 per cent cut.

Nashville is too busy celebrating to be anything other than charmed. In the South, college football and the Southern Baptist church have been the principal religions since the Civil War ended. The NFL is sinful, rich and brash. The success which was so long denied to the franchise in Houston has flowed sweetly in Nashville.

Bud Adams is counting the dollars and the blessings.

"Maybe I'm not popular in Houston but I can still walk around town without being afraid," he says. "But in Nashville they've been very good to me and I want to do what we can to be successful here for a long time."

Not everyone is as happy.

Adams' coup changed the environment for sports franchises forever. It came at a time of flux. The Cleveland Browns abandoned Cleveland for Baltimore and many tears were shed. The Los Angeles **Rams** and the Los Angeles Raiders both quit LA. Oilers' move was the biggest drop down in terms of market size ever. Nashville was ranked by TV executives as the 33rd biggest market in the US. Houston was fourth.

The move chilled the NFL to its marrow. In American football you protect the quarterback. In American football administration you protect the TV deal. The NFL's current TV deal is worth \$ 17.6 billion.

Networks need big markets.

Adams was penalised \$ 25 million for the move (he built the penalty into his deal with Nashville) while the NFL moved to prevent other franchises from bullying helpless cities while romancing smaller towns on the make.

Massive loans (\$ 200 million worth) have been given to three big market franchises to build new stadiums and keep them where they belong.

The top six existing market teams in the NFL have now the right to borrow 50 per cent of stadium costs from the NFL, teams in lesser markets can borrow 34 per cent. The system isn't popular and Adams is blamed for a situation wherein smaller franchises heavily subsidise richer teams. Sixty per cent of NFL game receipts go to the home team. Big market teams who go into debt under the new loan scheme don't have to pay visiting teams their 40 per cent share until they have repaid their NFL loan. To make matters worse, now Adams, the villain of the piece, is enjoying his most glorious day.

Houston also remains ambivalent and hurt. The 37-year marriage of city and franchise hadn't been perfect but there were sweet moments. The Oilers were perennial losers but 50,000 filled the Houston Astrodome to welcome them back after they lost a big game in 1978. The following year they lost again at a similar stage of the play-offs and 70,000 filled the Astrodome.

When they left, the Houston Chronicle asked its readers to vote as to whether they wanted the paper to continue covering the team's fortunes in Nashville.

Readers voted 3-1 against continued coverage, but the real surprise was over 30,000 took the trouble to vote.

Houston has recovered its dignity and late last summer beat out Los Angeles to claim the rights to the NFL's 32nd franchise which will open for business in two years.

Again Bud Adams was stirring it up, going on the record to say that the new Houston franchise should pay the NFL \$ 1 billion before being allowed to set up shop.

In Houston, the new franchise will guarantee itself its biggest day when it whups the arriviste Titans.

Meanwhile, Texas must swallow the sight of Nashville inheriting that part of the earth which really matters.

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The Boston Herald**January 31, 2000 Monday THIRD EDITION****SECTION:** SPORTS; Pg. 130**LENGTH:** 766 words**HEADLINE:** FOOTBALL: **SUPERBOWL XXXIV**; Storybook ending for Kurt - Warner most valuable in Super Bowl**BYLINE:** By George Kimball**BODY:**

ATLANTA - Joe Montana never passed for 414 yards in a Super Bowl.

Neither did Terry Bradshaw, Joe Namath, Steve Young nor John Elway. That the all-time greatest passing performance in Super Bowl history was turned in by Kurt Warner may make future football historians scratch their heads in wonder, but somehow we doubt it. Last night may only have been his coming-out party.

"I haven't even thought about it," said Warner. "All I've thought about is that ring, and how it's going to feel putting it on."

The latest chapter of Warner's improbable supermarket to Super Bowl story was written last night, when the rags-to-riches quarterback who had come from nowhere to become the NFL's Most Valuable Player was the best player in the biggest game of his life. Game MVP Warner threw for 414 yards and two touchdowns, including a 73-yard strike to Isaac Bruce with less than two minutes on the clock, as he led the St. Louis Rams to their 23-16 victory in Super Bowl XXXIV.

"We knew it was going to be a great game, a tough game," said Warner. "We just made that one play that put us over the top."

In 33 previous Super Bowls, the winning quarterback had never attempted more than 36 passes. Warner threw 35 of them in the first half alone. Indeed, he had completed 19 of them for 277 yards by intermission, but the Rams had managed only three field goals in five red-zone possessions.

Allowing the Titans to remain so dangerously close nearly proved fatal for St. Louis. By the time Warner got his offensive unit back on the field just before the two-minute mark, Tennessee had stormed back to tie the game at 16-16, and the way Steve McNair had rallied his troops, there was still some disagreement among the electors over which quarterback was going to be the MVP.

"We were just saying, 'Hey, we've got two minutes.' We'd been moving the ball up and down the field all day. There was no reason in two minutes we couldn't move it at least into field goal range," said Warner.

That was the long-range outlook. First, though, the Rams decided to take one shot at the home run.

"Actually, it was just a 'go' route," said Warner. "We'd called it a little bit earlier, and they told me that Isaac had beaten his guy over there, so we wanted to take a chance and see if we could get it downfield and get a big one right off the bat. We figured they might not expect it."

The play was called "Twin Right, Aces Right, 999 Halfback balloon." Essentially it called for all three wideouts to run 'go' routes, but Bruce is the one Warner was looking for.

"We called it right then for several reasons," said Rams offensive coordinator Mike Martz. "One, Isaac had beat the corner earlier on the route and we wanted to see if he could do it again. Two, there were only five seconds till the two-minute warning, so if we took the shot there, Isaac wasn't going to be gassed for the next play. And three, if it didn't work, we had two more plays left to get the first down."

As Bruce streaked down the right sideline, Titans defensive end Jevon Kearse was churning straight at Warner, driving Rams tackle Fred Miller in front of him like a snowplow.

As Warner released the ball, Miller was knocked backward into him.

A split second after the ball was gone, Kearse delivered a karate chop to the head that knocked him down.

Bruce gathered the ball in near the 40, eluded a couple of tackles, and sprinted the rest of the way. The tied score had lasted all of 22 seconds.

"I couldn't really see," Warner recalled of being leveled by Kearse. "I kind of got my head up enough to see (Bruce) come back. I thought he'd caught it, but I couldn't tell. I didn't see him take it into the end zone. I just heard everybody screaming."

Said Bruce: "The guy covering me (Samari Rolle), he never saw the ball. He fell right on his face. Then, after I caught it I saw the safety overrun me, so I ducked. After that it was just a race to the end zone."

At last night's postgame interview session, somebody actually asked Warner if the Rams had been aware of the gravity of the situation just before he broke it open with the bomb to Bruce.

"Of course we were," he said. "I mean, there's two minutes left, the game's tied, and it's the Super Bowl. Of we were thinking that. I mean, by no means were we doubting that we could win the game. If you're a quarterback and don't feel like you can make plays every week, then you're in the wrong business."

Photo Caption: QUITE A PAIR: Rams quarterback and Super Bowl MVP Kurt Warner (right) hugs coach Dick Vermeil following St. Louis' 23-16 win. AP photo

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The New York Times♦ [View Related Topics](#)**January 31, 2000, Monday, Late Edition - Final****SECTION:** Section A; Page 1; Column 1; Sports Desk**LENGTH:** 1230 words**HEADLINE:** **SUPERBOWL XXXIV;**
Rams Win Super Bowl Thriller, as Titans Fall a Yard Short**BYLINE:** By MIKE FREEMAN**DATELINE:** ATLANTA, Jan. 30**BODY:**

It was a fitting end for this St. Louis Rams team of castoffs. The quarterback, Kurt Warner, was bagging groceries at one point at a store in Cedar Falls, Iowa. The wide receiver, Isaac Bruce, was once labeled as a player whose injured hamstrings made the news more than his touchdown catches. The coach, Dick Vermeil, succumbed to what he called burnout, leaving the profession for almost two decades.

Then came a miraculous play, on the biggest stage in football, and suddenly the three men were not the punch line to a joke. They were Super Bowl heroes.

Warner, with just 1 minute 54 seconds left in the game, connected on a 73-yard pass to Bruce for the game-winning touchdown, a play that will surely go down in championship lore. It broke a 16-16 tie and made the Rams 23-16 winners over the Tennessee Titans tonight in Super Bowl XXXIV.

St. Louis then held on, barely, halting Tennessee only when receiver Kevin Dyson was tackled by linebacker Mike Jones about a yard short of sending the game into overtime on the final play.

It was one of the most exciting Super Bowls ever, culminating a year in which no-name players like Warner turned from pumpkins to Pro Bowlers and nontraditional teams like the Titans and the Rams went from embarrassment to being championship contenders.

Several years ago, while out of professional football, Warner was busy asking people if they wanted paper or plastic while working in a grocery store, but tonight he threw for a record 414 yards, breaking Joe Montana's mark of 357 in Super Bowl XXIII against Cincinnati in 1989. Warner, whom Vermeil compared with Montana last week, was voted the game's most valuable player.

"I guess it is sort of a storybook ending," said Warner, who played in the Arena league and N.F.L. Europe before landing in the National Football League in 1998 as a backup. "When you think about where I was and where I am now, it seems pretty incredible."

The cast of players in this game who were great is long. Bruce had 162 yards on 6 catches, while Rams receiver Torry Holt set a Super Bowl record with reception yardage by a rookie, 109. Titans quarterback Steve McNair, only the second black quarterback to play in a Super Bowl, was at times breathtaking, completing 22 of 36 for 214 yards, and he set a Super Bowl record for rushing yards by a quarterback with 64. Tennessee's bruising Eddie George, who dominated the second half, finished with 95 yards on 28 carries.

And then there was Vermeil, who at 63 became the oldest coach to win a Super Bowl. Vermeil returned to coaching three years ago, and at one point he was hated by Rams players for his brutal practices. But after consulting with them, and softening his approach as a stern disciplinarian, he earned their respect and trust.

"Right now I feel so good and so proud of this football team and organization," he said.

Among the spectacular plays and outstanding stories came a scary moment in the third quarter safety when Blaine Bishop, was carted off the field after trying to tackle the 265-pound tight end Ernie Conwell. Bishop's head snapped back ferociously, and he lay on the turf for almost 10 minutes, with both Titans and Rams players holding hands on the sidelines and praying. Bishop sustained no serious neck damage -- the preliminary diagnosis was a sprained neck -- but he had been knocked unconscious.

Bishop was immobilized as a precaution, his neck strapped down, and he was taken to the locker room and then to a hospital for further examination while the crowd of 72,625 at the Georgia Dome sat in stunned silence. About an hour after the game, Bishop rejoined his team.

Coach Jeff Fisher, sensing his team was becoming unnerved by the injury, gathered his players around him and told them that while everyone's thoughts were with Bishop, there was still a game to play.

"Everybody in this stadium and around the country was concerned," Fisher said. "I wanted to let my team know that he was O.K."

The cold reality of professional football is that the game goes on despite what can be grotesque injuries. The Titans, in the wake of Bishop's injury, were left without both starting safeties.

Before the injury the Rams had dominated offensively, moving the ball up and down the field almost at will, but they usually stalled once they got inside Tennessee's 20-yard line. All the Rams could manage were three field goals and a 9-0 lead midway through the third quarter.

That changed when Warner, on third and goal at the Tennessee 9-yard line, threaded a perfectly thrown pass to Holt, and the Rams took a 16-0 lead.

McNair proved to be one of the league's more resilient players this season. He showed it again after the Rams' touchdown when, during Tennessee's drive he scampered 23 yards to the St. Louis 2. It was the longest run by a quarterback in Super Bowl history. Two plays later George scored from 1 yard out. The Titans missed the 2-point conversion and trailed, 16-6.

McNair continued his hot streak. After Tennessee forced the Rams to kick their first punt, McNair, often criticized for his lack of passing skills, made several great throws on the following drive, including a pass to tight end Jackie Harris that went 21 yards to the St. Louis 3. George, breaking three tackles, ran the ball in again from the 1, though replays showed his knee was down before he got into the end zone. The Rams could have challenged the touchdown using instant replay, but did not.

Warner, who was outstanding in the first half, froze in the second, as the Tennessee defense began to dominate, and McNair did not waste his opportunities. He led the offense on another scoring drive, tying the score at 16-16 when Al Del Greco connected on a 44-yard field goal.

After the Titans scored, just 2:12 was left. Most teams would have been conservative, attempting to eat up the clock, and maneuver into field goal range.

But the Rams are extremely aggressive offensively, and the offensive coordinator Mike Martz blurted into Vermeil's headset, "Let's put the ball in the hands of Isaac Bruce."

The Rams went to a play that Martz had called earlier in the game, on the opposite sideline. It was unsuccessful. But not this time.

Quick strike. Long ball. Touchdown.

"I saw the safety overrun me, and I ducked under him, and after that it was a race to the end zone," Bruce said. "I wasn't going to lose that race."

McNair wasn't done, though. He led the Titans from their own 12-yard line to the St. Louis 10 with six seconds left. Along the way, he made several key runs that kept the drive alive, including one where he spun free of two defensive linemen like a magician.

"I had him right in my grasp," the Rams' Kevin Carter said, "and he slipped away."

Then, on what would be the final play of the game, McNair again rolled out, and under pressure, threw a strike to Dyson at about the 5-yard line. But in what was surely the most important tackle of his life, Jones wrapped up Dyson.

Dyson stretched as far as he could, but his reach ended about a yard short. The clock wound down to zero.

"I thought it was a touchdown," McNair said. "But you have great athletes on both sides of the ball and they made the play."

Vermeil said, "When I saw the ball in the air, I was terrified."

The terror lasted only for a second. It was replaced by joy, and probably a small feeling of vindication.

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GRAPHIC: Photos: The Rams' Todd Lyght, who had four tackles and two assists, brought down Titans receiver Derrick Mason last night at the Georgia Dome. (Al Bello/Allsport); Torry Holt of the Rams celebrating after catching a 9-yard touchdown pass from Kurt Warner in the third quarter last night. The touchdown put the Rams ahead by 16-0 and set the stage for a furious rally by Tennessee. (Barton Silverman/The New York Times)(pg. D4); As time ran out, Kevin Dyson lunged to score but could not escape Mike Jones as the Rams won the Super Bowl, 23-16, over the Titans in Atlanta. (John Gaps III/Associated Press)(pg. A1)

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Los Angeles Times♦ [View Related Topics](#)**January** 31, 2000, Monday, Home Edition**SECTION:** Sports; Part R; Page 2; Sports Desk**LENGTH:** 851 words**HEADLINE:** SUPER BOWL XXXIV / **ST. LOUIS 23, TENNESSEE 16;**
SUPER BOWL REPORT**BYLINE:** Houston Mitchel, Times Staff Writer**BODY:**

Impact Player: Ram quarterback Kurt Warner. He couldn't put the ball in the end zone but marched his team downfield twice and quickly answered any question of whether he would be nervous. The only drawback to Warner was ABC's coverage. The network lavished Warner with praise at every opportunity.

Missed Opportunity: Each team missed a field-goal attempt, the Rams because Mike Horan couldn't set the ball down properly for Jeff Wilkins, the Titans because Al Del Greco hooked his 47-yard attempt to the left.

Did You Notice? Al Michaels can't count. Time after time, he would announce that a run or pass was for a certain number of yards, and he was almost always wrong. Hey Al, it's your job to watch the game and give the right information. If you get it wrong, correct yourself.

Highlight Reel: Warner and Marshall Faulk caught the Titans off-guard with a quick count and hooked up for a 52-yard pass play down the right sideline. It was Faulk's first real action of the game.

Best Number: The \$ 2 million spent by E-Trade on the dancing chimp commercial. I'm not sure if it will make me use their Web site, but it was funny.

Worst Number: The Titans "amassed" eight yards rushing. For some reason, the Titans seemed to be holding Eddie George in reserve. Didn't they realize there's no game next week?

*

Impact Players: The Ram defense, which harassed and hurried Titan quarterback Steve McNair, who completed only two of seven passes in the quarter. McNair was inept in the first half, overthrowing several receivers and looking nervous throughout.

Missed Opportunity: Three times the Rams had a chance to score a touchdown in the quarter, three times they failed, coming away with only two field goals. The score could easily have been 28-0 at halftime, instead of 9-0.

Did You Notice? The Titans really missed Marcus Robertson, their captain on defense who was sidelined with an injury. Without him, the Tennessee defense seemed confused at times, and didn't have anyone to take charge when Warner was moving the Rams downfield.

Highlight Reel: The Titan defense stopped the Rams on first and goal with less than a minute to play, giving the Tennessee offense a chance in the second half.

Best Number: Warner passed for 277 yards in the half and attempted 35 passes, a Super Bowl record.

Worst Number: The Rams scored a touchdown 66% of the time they had the ball in the red zone during the regular season. On Sunday, they were 0 for five in the first half. They certainly didn't look like the same offensive powerhouses they were during the season.

*

Impact Player: Ram receiver Torry Holt. He was solid all game, and it was fitting that he scored the game's first touchdown. His nine-yard catch was his seventh reception, and gave him 109 yards receiving.

Missed Opportunity: Through three quarters, the championship game missed an opportunity to be entertaining. Even the commercials, usually the highlight of any Super Bowl, were generally awful.

Did You Notice? ABC kept showing Warner's wife throughout the game. That was bad enough, but then they kept showing her when Blaine Bishop of the Titans was injured. Didn't the Titans have anyone relatives or wives in the stands? Regis Philbin has less of a presence on ABC than Warner did Sunday.

Highlight Reel: Trailing, 16-0, with the ball at the Ram 25, McNair faked a pass and ran up the middle for 23 yards, setting up the Titans' first touchdown. Where had that play been earlier in the game?

Best Number: 15. That's how many minutes were left in this lackluster game after the quarter ended. And it ended up being 15 of the best minutes in Super Bowl history.

Worst Number: 37:40. That's how long it took, in game time, before a touchdown was scored. But after the first touchdown, the scoring started to flow.

*

Impact Player: Isaac Bruce. His game-winning reception was as good a play as any receiver has ever made. It took the spotlight away from Eddie George, who took over the game for the Titans and almost single-handedly carried them to the 16-16 tie.

Missed Opportunity: Mike Jones' tackle on the game's final play stopped the Titans' last threat one yard short of the goal line, and denied us the first Super Bowl overtime.

Did You Notice? Once again, ABC decided that the key touchdown, Bruce's 73-yard reception, was an opportunity to continue "The Kurt Warner Story." Michaels and Boomer Esiason talked about the

great pass Warner made (complete with shots of Warner's wife), when it was obviously Bruce with the outstanding effort on a pass that was underthrown.

Highlight Reel: Bruce's game-winning reception, Jones' game-saving tackle and McNair escaping the grasp of two defenders to complete a pass to Kevin Dyson.

Best Number: After combining for nine in the first half, the teams combined for 30 points in the second half.

Worst Number: Five. That's the number of seasons since the Rams played in Los Angeles. Then again, after Georgia Frontiere's postgame "This proves we made the right decision in coming to St. Louis" comment, good riddance to them.

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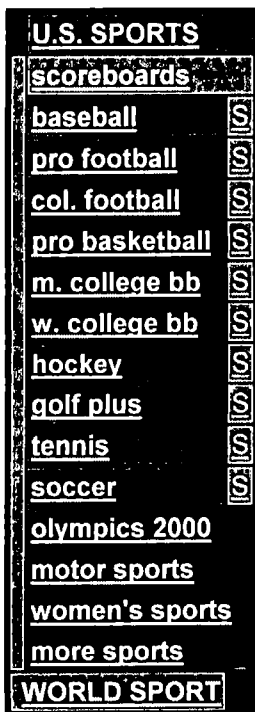
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Rams like their team speed

Posted: Friday January 28, 2000 07:30 PM

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By Josie Karp, CNN.com

ATLANTA (CNN.com) -- The Rams didn't just blow teams out this season. They blew right by them. The Rams rewrote an old adage and may have set a new precedent:

Team speed kills.

"A lot of teams have one or two guys that are extremely quick, extremely fast," says quarterback and league MVP Kurt Warner. "But we've got whole units that are surrounded that way and I think when you can match up against a team when you've got speed in every position coming from every direction I think its hard to stop."

Warner should know because his statistics back him up. Through 16 games, he has thrown for over 4,500 yards, 41 touchdowns and just 13 interceptions. And just as impressive, Warner's completion rate is 65.1% while his quarterback rating is 109. 2. Both tops in the league.

"Someone said, 'speed kills' and without a doubt you know what our whole defense is based upon," said defensive end Grant Winstrom. "Everybody's usually smaller than whoever they are playing against but those big guys have a hard time handling movement, so we're very quick front, move around, we stunt, we slant."

Defense, offense, and special teams. Every Rams unit was built with the team's unique speed vision.

"A lot off things go into the puzzle for us when we talk speed and we basically break everything down to play speed," says vice-president and director of player personnel Charley Arme. "So we want to



The Rams' speedy receivers factored heavily in the emergence of Kurt Warner. Al Bello/Allsport

Going
into
S. Bowl



know for example, if a DB can run a 4.37 straight ahead, can he play 4.37 with back pedal, plant, close and driving the ball. So we analyze speed a little different than most people do."

Players say it's a philosophy and a mentality that is transferred directly on to the field.



"We try to play fast," says running back Marshall Faulk who is averaging 5.5 yards per carry and knows a little something about speed. "We try to make things happen. We try to attack and we try to get after you. And with that it makes a team that much faster when they're attacking. You can be fast and not attacking. But we attack, we come after people."

On an artificial surface like the one they play on at home and the one at the Georgia Dome, the Rams speed is accelerated. Players can stop, cut back and change direction quickly because of the sure footing. It's one of the reasons Rams wide receivers rack up so many yards after the catch.

"Before you know it you're turning around looking back saying to yourself, 'whose man is that?'" says wide receiver Az-Zahir Hakim who has scored eight times this year. "All of a sudden we're bobbing and weaving in the end zone."

Head coach Dick Vermeil attributes his team's success to the type of pass plays his Rams use plus of course, there's that speed thing.

"We average over eight yards per pass attempt which is outstanding. And a high percentage for that reason for that high average per pass attempt is ball being caught close to the line of scrimmage and then an explosive player with quickness and speed taking it downfield and making other defenders miss."

Having played the Rams before, the Titans have an advantage. At least they've seen the difference between the Rams on film and the team on the field.

"I think it would be tougher for an opponent to try to duplicate our speed on the practice field," Vermeil said. "And I think they would notice a drastic difference between the tempo with which they practice the game and the tempo with which they have to compete against us successfully."

Players on Tennessee's defense know they will be tested, but they also think if they just do their job, they can slow the Rams down.

"As difficult as it is get in the right place and make the tackle that's what you've got to do," said linebacker Jason Fisk. "Get them down on the ground so they can't get any yards. That's how you slow them

down."

Fellow linebacker Barron Wortham thinks the Titans can do more than that.

"It's all about getting the right matchups out there. Knowing who's on the field and who's not on the field. If we get the right matchups it won't be that difficult stopping them."

The Rams have reduced the Super Bowl to a game of tag.

The Titans are it.

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SUPER BOWL XXXIV

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Closer Look

Rams' fortunes hinge on final play of the game

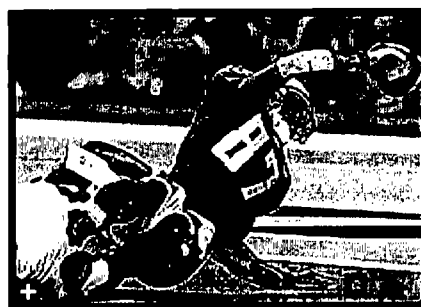
Posted: Monday January 31, 2000 08:33 AM

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By Ryan Hunt, CNN.com

ATLANTA -- One tackle. One yard. And one amazing finish to one improbable season for the St. Louis Rams.

Mike Jones had the ultimate game-saving tackle Sunday. It was a Super Bowl-saver. Jones stuffed Kevin Dyson and the Tennessee Titans on Super Bowl XXXIV's final play, clinching St. Louis' 23-16 win Sunday in the Georgia Dome.



Kevin Dyson's playoff luck ran out when he ran into linebacker Mike Jones in the waning seconds of the fourth quarter. AP

The kind of play dreams are made of -- sort of.

"You dream of making the game-winning interception and taking it the other way, but not anything like this," Jones said. "I knew I was at the 2- or 3-yard line, and the only way [Dyson] was going to get in the end zone was a missed tackle. So I thought to myself, 'Wrap this guy up and we've won the game.'"

CNN.com's Pat Kirwan

"The Rams were in a particular coverage, which is called a 'three-on-two,' in the slot side. The first guy who goes deep gets a double cover. The guy who comes underneath gets a single.

"The wide receiver came under and got marked by Mike Jones. Mike did an excellent job. They had the first receiver doubled, so when Steve McNair looked, he saw double coverage and threw down below. End of game."

Jones did indeed wrap up Dyson after a 9-yard slant which ended Super Bowl XXXIV on the 1-yard line.

It was a fitting conclusion to two of the wildest minutes in Super Bowl history.

Following the Rams' go-ahead score, Steve McNair drove the Titans down the field 78 yards in a little more than 90 seconds just to get Tennessee in position to tie the score. McNair's Houdini-like escape from the grasps of Kevin Carter and Jay

Williams and 16-yard completion to Dyson on the game's penultimate play had St. Louis on its heels.

Six seconds and 10 yards separated the Titans from the end zone -- and the first overtime in Super Bowl history. This time, though, there would be no miracle.

"It's ironic that it came down to something like that," said Dyson, who scored on an even more improbable kick return to beat Buffalo in the Wild Card round. "Maybe I should have pitched it back to somebody.

"As soon as I caught it I was thinking yellow paydirt. When we called the play, I didn't think anyone would be in the middle of the field."

"I never even saw the play, actually" said Carter, who nearly sacked McNair on the previous down to seal it. "I didn't know where [Dyson] was. Then I saw all my teammates jumping and all the confetti falling from the sky. That's when I knew he wasn't in the end zone."

The Rams, frankly, were surprised that McNair didn't throw the ball into the end zone in the first place. But when Dyson caught the slant near the right hash of the 4-yard line, Jones was there -- like he has been so often for the Rams this season.

"I knew my man Mike would be there," St. Louis middle linebacker London Fletcher said. "I just looked up at the clock, the clock was at zero. I didn't know what to do. It was the ultimate feeling -- relief, jubilation, fatigue. It was quite a moment."

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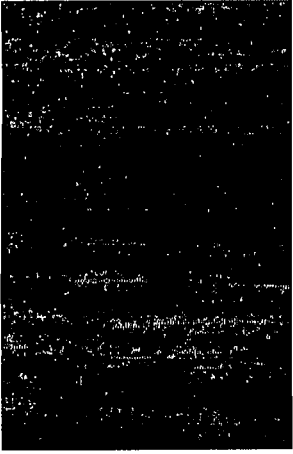
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FEATURES

NFL INSIDER

Simply, superb

By Vic Carucci
NFL Insider Magazine

ATLANTA (Jan. 30, 2000) — Neither rain, nor sleet, nor snow ... nor NFL parity could keep the St. Louis Rams and Tennessee Titans from staging one of the greatest Super Bowls ever played.

Forget about the markets of these teams being too small to warrant or maintain the world's attention.

Never mind the absence of established marquee players on either side.

Disregard the un-Atlanta-like weather that messed up travel plans and practice schedules and made some cranky journalists long for the more traditional NFL title game surrounded by palm trees.

They played Super Bowl XXXIV under a roof. And once the Rams and Titans took the field inside the Georgia Dome Sunday, nothing on the outside mattered.

All you had were two teams playing football about as well as it can be played — playing with as much heart and grit and effort as I've witnessed in any Super Bowl in recent memory.

For the first time in a long while, the game's quality was almost as large a postgame topic as its outcome. Even Dick Vermeil, the most emotional person ever to walk an NFL sideline, recognized that fact long before mentioning that he got his Super Bowl retribution 19 years after his Philadelphia Eagles lost to the Oakland Raiders in XV.

"I think we showed America what the Super Bowl is all about today," Vermeil said. "It had to be great to watch."

It was, Dick.

No matter your loyalty, this one made your heart pump a little faster and your fingernails get a little shorter.

A screenwriter couldn't have put together a more dramatic finish. Two minutes left. Score tied at 16-16. Tennessee, once trailing 16-0,



The Rams and Titans "showed America what the Super Bowl is all about," said Dick Vermeil.

on the verge of staging the greatest comeback in Super Bowl history.

If you were still in your seat, you jumped out of it as the final seconds ticked off and St. Louis linebacker Mike Jones desperately clung to the legs of Kevin Dyson, keeping the Titans' wide receiver only inches from the end zone to seal the Rams' 23-16 victory.

Perhaps the only other Super Bowl that compares with XXXIV is XXV. But what made Sunday's better, in my estimation, was that it ended with a man-to-man physical conflict. Super Bowl XXV ended with a missed field goal.

"The whole world saw an extraordinary football game between great players on both sides," NFL Commissioner Paul Tagliabue said as he presented the Lombardi Trophy to Rams owner Georgia Frontiere. "Kurt Warner, Isaac Bruce, all of the Rams' players; Steve McNair, Eddie George and all of the Titans' players played an incredible football game."

Incredible and nearly perfect. You had no turnovers and only a modest number of penalties.

You had Rams quarterback Kurt Warner, whose storybook season ended with the NFL and Super Bowl MVP awards, tearing up the Super Bowl record book with the golden passing arm that only five years ago was carrying boxes in a grocery store.

You had Titans quarterback Steve McNair making big things happen with his legs and his arm. I'm still trying to figure out how, on third-and-5 with 22 seconds left, he muscled away from two Ram defensive linemen in the backfield and completed a pass to the St. Louis 10.

Are you kidding me?

And what about Isaac Bruce, the Rams' big-play master, disappearing until he caught a 73-yard touchdown pass with 1:54 left? And how about that second-quarter explosion by rookie St. Louis receiver Torry Holt? And all of those mouth-smashing runs by Titan running back Eddie George?

"That is what Super Bowls are made of," said Rams running back Marshall Faulk. "Two teams competing, trying to do their best and win the ballgame. It was one of the most exciting games I've ever been a part of and won."

"The two best teams in football played today," Bruce said. "I knew they weren't going to lay down. I knew we were going to have to kill them."

Ultimately, the Rams snuffed the Titans' valiant comeback attempt.

But through both teams' remarkable performance, a great Super Bowl was born.

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'It's a dream come true'

Thousands jam streets to celebrate Rams' championship

Posted: Monday February 07, 2000 02:24 PM

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ST. LOUIS (CNN.com) -- A city used to celebrating baseball victories got some winter cheering practice as thousands lined downtown streets to welcome back the Super Bowl champions.

St. Louis Rams coach Dick Vermeil -- who would later retire -- led the day-after parade down Market Street in a wagon pulled by the Anheuser-Busch Clydesdales, and players followed in 60 Dodge Ram pickup trucks.

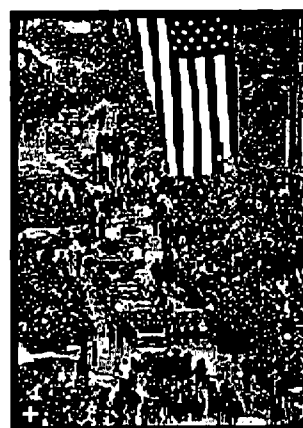
The six-block procession began 40 minutes late and was slowed to almost a standstill as fans overcame a police barrier to swarm the champs. With Sunday's 23-16 victory over the Tennessee Titans, the Rams had won the NFL title for the first time in the city's 40-year football history.

"Thank you very much world champions," Vermeil told the crowd. "As a representative of these guys, the management and the coaching staff, I'd like to thank you for your support. I'd like you to know that the Rams aren't world champions. St. Louis is world champions."

Not since 1982 had St. Louis celebrated a major championship -- and that team, like most of the rest, came on the baseball diamond.

But in this crowd, Cardinal red gave way to Rams blue and gold. Shirts and hats depicting the team's latest accomplishment were flying off roadside sales carts, and many fans who didn't buy a souvenir made their own.

"After two divorces, this is all I can afford," said Dave Bilyeu, who



Rams fans started lining the streets of downtown St. Louis several hours before the players were scheduled to arrive. AP

sported a gold cardboard crown with two spiraling horns on the sides. "If my ex-wife saw me in an NFL hat, she'd want more money."

Dan Morgan had a similar idea but made his horns out of long blue and gold balloons. Within a couple hours in the bitter cold, some of the balloons had deflated.

"This is all I've got," Morgan said. "I'm not carrying any extra horns."

Fans broke into a chant of "MVP" as the truck carrying Kurt Warner made its way through the throngs of people. Warner is only the sixth player in league history to win the award in both the regular season and Super Bowl.

By now this town knows all too well the tale of the former Arena League standout who went from grocery stocker to NFL hero, leading the Rams from worst to first. Never before had a team that finished last in its division gone on to win the Super Bowl the next season.



Rams linebacker London Fletcher basked in the applause of thousands of screaming Rams fans during the parade. AP

"I'd like to say that we forget about the grocery stores and all that stuff, and we start thinking about a repeat," Warner said.

The parade ended at Kiener Plaza, where several players addressed the fans with the Gateway Arch in the background. Few words were audible beyond the first few rows, but the crowd burst into cheers

after every sentence all the same.

"This is great. It's a dream come true," said running back Marshall Faulk, the AP Offensive Player of the Year. "The fans have been great. We appreciate you guys supporting us. Thank you!"

Rams owner Georgia Frontiere, who inherited the team from her late husband and moved it from Los Angeles to St. Louis in 1995, held up the Vince Lombardi Trophy.

That sparked a deafening cheer, and one male fan shouted, "Georgia baby, I love you!"

Greg Shipley of St. Charles was too far away to get a good look at the trophy, but he didn't mind. He had constructed his own out of aluminum foil, although the football had become a bit deformed due to the crush of the crowd.

Some fans camped out for hours before the rally just to get a good spot. Fran Barnes was part of a group of people who sat on lawn chairs

several hundred feet from the stage.

As the crowd filled in, Barnes discovered she wouldn't be able to see. So, she packed some snow and ice together and built her own personal pedestal. From that vantage point, she had a great view.

Monte and Patti Roy, who were also decked out in blue and gold, said the team had certainly strengthened their relationship. They made a pact at the beginning of the season to kiss every time the Rams scored.

But Patti Roy said they aren't fair-weather fans.

"We were the people who were the last in the dome even when they were bad, saying, 'We love you! Go Rams! We're No. 1!'" she said.

St. Louis fans also were signing a large "get well" banner that will be sent to Kansas City Chiefs linebacker Derrick Thomas, paralyzed from the chest down following a car crash on Jan. 23.

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Vermeil's Coaching Career

Story Added Wednesday, February 02, 2000

1959 Served as an assistant coach at Del Mar High in San Jose, Calif., after receiving a master's degree in physical education from San Jose State, where he played quarterback.

1960 At the age of 23, hired as head coach at Hillsdale High in the San Francisco suburb of San Mateo, Calif. Guided the team to a 9-0 record in the second of his three seasons. Posted a 17-9 mark overall.

1963 Served as an assistant coach at San Mateo College.

1964 Hired as head coach at Napa Junior College, near his birthplace in the northern California community of Calistoga. Posted a 7-2 record.

1965 Hired as an assistant coach at Stanford under John Ralston. Served for four years on a staff that included future NFL head coaches Bill Walsh, Mike White, Jim Mora and Rod Rust.

1969 Served as special-teams coach for the Los Angeles Rams under George Allen.

1970 Served as an assistant coach for UCLA under Tommy Prothro.

1971 Returned with Prothro to the Rams and served as quarterbacks and special-teams coach for three years.

1974 Hired as head coach at UCLA. In his second season, received national recognition for guiding the team to its first Rose Bowl appearance in 10 years. UCLA (9-2-1) upset No. 1 Ohio State. Posted a 15-5 mark overall.

1976 Returned to the NFL as head coach of the woeful Philadelphia Eagles.

1978 After two losing seasons, guided the Eagles (9-7) to their first playoff berth since 1960. Selected as NFC coach of the year by four organizations.

1979 Led the Eagles (11-5) to the playoffs. Selected as NFL coach of the year by two media groups and as NFC coach of the year by three organizations.

1980 Guided the Eagles (12-4) to Super Bowl XV but lost to the Oakland Raiders on Jan. 25, 1981. Selected as NFL coach of the year by one organization.

1982 Resigned as Eagles coach with a 54-47 regular-season record, and later moved into broadcasting. Served as a TV analyst for CBS and ABC for 14 years.

1997 Hired as head coach of the Rams.



1999 After two losing seasons, led the Rams (13-3) to a Super Bowl victory over the Tennessee Titans on Sunday, in franchise's first playoff appearance since 1989. Received coach-of-the-year honors from several organizations.

2000 Retired as Rams coach Tuesday, handing the reins to offensive coordinator Mike Martz.



Comment on this story at the [RamsFootball.com BBS](http://www.ramsfootball.com/bbs)

Vermeil Retires

Story Added Tuesday, February 01, 2000

ST. LOUIS -- After more than 40 years as a coach, Dick Vermeil is going out on top.

Tuesday, two days after winning his first Super Bowl and after a long talk with his wife, the St. Louis Rams' head coach decided to retire at age 63.

His eyes filled with tears and voice choked with emotion, Vermeil said it was "an unbelievable feeling" to leave as a champion.

"I think the time is right," he said, the Super Bowl trophy sitting on a table to his right. "Very few people in this profession get this opportunity."

This exit was the antithesis of the first time he walked away from NFL coaching, complaining of burnout when he left the Philadelphia Eagles.

The decision elevates offensive coordinator Mike Martz to head coach. The Rams signed Martz, who directed the NFL's top-rated offense, producing 526 points -- third highest in league history -- to a new two-year contract in December that ensured he would inherit Vermeil's job.

Martz, who is scheduled to undergo surgery for a neck problem that bothered him all season, did not attend the news conference.

"I told everyone before the season

SEAN SALISBURY

Tuesday, Feb. 1

The timing couldn't be better for Dick Vermeil to step down as the Rams' head coach. The last time he left the game because of burnout, but he came back to coaching almost two decades later to coach a team to a Super Bowl championship.



Vermeil has survived through adversity, changed his coaching personality when most coaches wouldn't, and came up with one of the greatest NFL stories ever in Kurt Warner. He won the Coach of the Year award. You couldn't write a story about your football team better than this. When Trent Green went down, nobody gave his team a shot to even sniff the playoffs. What better way to go out? Why wouldn't he finish this way?

I'm very happy for Vermeil. He has handled himself like a true gentleman. After last year, when everyone said he was old and washed up and needed to retire, this year he proved he was innovative; he did it his way. Now, Vermeil has his life back.

"I told everyone before the season that Mike Martz was the type of coach who would go after it -- from the first game to the last," said Isaac Bruce, who caught the winning touchdown pass in the Super Bowl.

He's turning the Rams over to offensive coordinator Mike Martz, a person he trusts. I think Martz will make a great head coach. It's a wonderful situation for Vermeil and the Rams.

Vermeil, who coached two Super Bowl teams 19 years apart, began his career in 1959 as a high-school coach in San Jose, Calif. He coached high-school and small-college football in California until the mid-1960s, then was an assistant coach with Stanford, UCLA and the Los Angeles Rams through the early '70s.

After a successful two-year stint as UCLA head coach, capped by a 23-10 victory over Ohio State in the Rose Bowl, Vermeil took over the woeful Eagles in 1976. He led the Philadelphia to its one Super Bowl appearance in 1981, and that 27-10 loss to Oakland fueled his return to the profession in 1997, after a 14-year hiatus from coaching that saw Vermeil serve as a television analyst for NFL and college football for CBS and ABC.

He leaves the Rams with two years to go on a five-year contract worth \$9 million, but with nothing left to prove after his Rams defeated the Tennessee Titans 23-16 on Sunday in Super Bowl XXXIV.

Going out on top

Vermeil was close to not being around for the 1999 season because of his disastrous beginning with the team. After the Rams went 5-11 and 4-12 in his first two seasons, there was talk that he could be fired.

Dick Vermeil is the fifth coach to leave his team after winning a Super Bowl. The other four are Vince Lombardi, Bill Walsh, Bill Parcells and Jimmy Johnson. All but Walsh returned later to coach another NFL team.

His players weren't happy. Most of it was only grumbling, because of extremely hard practices that often left the players exhausted before they stepped on the field on Sundays.

But four prominent players, including cornerback Todd Lyght, boycotted the final team meeting of the 1998 season. That sent a message to the coach, who described it at the time as a "shot in the back."

Vermeil, however, weathered the problems and led the team to an incredible turnaround.

In his first stint as an NFL coach with the Eagles, which ended in 1982, Vermeil called the plays and basically ran the whole show with an iron fist. He left the game with burnout, and when he returned he became a benevolent overseer.

During the Super Bowl buildup, Vermeil hedged on his future. On one

hand, he loved coaching. On the other hand, Carol Vermeil, his wife of 44 years, told him: "What else do you have to prove?"

After a day to digest the Rams' victory in perhaps the most thrilling finish of the 34 Super Bowls, Vermeil decided his wife was right.

Comment on this story at the [RamsFootball.com BBS](http://www.ramsfootball.com/BBS)

Ram News  Back



Vermeil deserves all the accolades -- and our gratitude

By Bernie Miklasz

Story Added Wednesday, February 02, 2000

Hail to the victor

It was the perfect, happy ending. Dick Vermeil deserved to go out as a champion. He had no more mountains to climb, personal or professional.

He conquered himself, getting control of the obsessive, consuming behavior that drove him out of coaching in 1983.

After losing 23 of 32 games his first two seasons in St. Louis, he adapted to his players and the league, made changes and earned the affection and the respect of his team.

After nearly being fired a year ago, Vermeil won over his critics. He built just what he had in the glory days in Philadelphia -- a tough, caring family circle -- and combined it with a prolific offense. It was the ideal blend of old-school football and new-age football.

Vermeil won every NFL coach of the year award. He gave St. Louis its first home NFL playoff game -- and NFL postseason victories -- in the city's 33-year NFL history.

The players loved him. His assistants loved him. His fans loved him. His owners loved him. The media loved him, too.

And then Dick Vermeil won the greatest Super Bowl ever played.

If we're talking transformation, this was probably the finest one-year coaching job in NFL history. Vermeil took a sorry, no-account 4-12 team and made it a world champion. And he did it after losing his starting quarterback, Trent Green, and putting his faith in an obscure backup named Kurt Warner.

He turned the down-and-out Rams into Super Bowl champions. He made St. Louis -- the place that the NFL kicked around for so long -- the league's new title town.

Dick Vermeil did so much for the franchise and the city.

He made a clean sweep of honors. For an NFL head coach, this is like taking an Oscar, getting a Grammy, winning a Tony, picking up an Emmy, receiving a Golden Globe and landing a Pulitzer Prize. The Nobel is in the mail, too. And Vermeil already brought the Lombardi Trophy home to Rams Park.

And he did all of this with class. We may one day see a better football coach in St. Louis. But we'll never be as fortunate to have a better person coaching the Rams. DV has retired with that prize.

"I just feel real fortunate to be one of the guys who could win a Super Bowl for him," Rams linebacker Todd Collins said. "He's an amazing man."

And now -- 40 years after he coached his first high school football game at Hillsdale High -- Vermeil has made his second and final retirement from the game.

And this one is so much sweeter. When he retired from the Eagles early in 1983, Vermeil left without a Super Bowl ring. He left without finding inner peace. He left without securing career closure. Restless, he returned to search for all of those things. And now he has them. He's a champion. He's happy. He has proved himself in two ways: that he could still be an effective coach, and that he could do it in a healthy, moderate way. And by winning a Super Bowl championship, Vermeil's career is complete.

It took him three years to mold this team, and he made plenty of mistakes along the way. But the squad that won the Super Bowl was a wonderful reflection of its coach and a direct extension of his personality.

It was so fitting that a true-blue Vermeil guy - linebacker Mike Jones - saved the Super Bowl by making a tackle about 36 inches from the end zone. Jones was the first defensive player signed by Vermeil when DV took over in 1997, and he embodies all of Vermeil's qualities.

The Rams had all of those scrappy London Fletcher-type players shunned by other teams. And many of the stars were second-chance guys. Jones was an old college running back. Warner stocked grocery shelves and bounced around, waiting for an opportunity. Running back Marshall Faulk was dumped by Indianapolis.

"I think there's a lot of guys on our team with stories," tight end Ernie Conwell said. "This team is filled with a lot of overachievers. A lot of guys who have had to overcome in their lives. I think part of that is Coach Vermeil. He looks for guys who have character and weren't handed everything on a silver platter. He knows they'll give him their best effort."

The 1999 Rams were that team. Vermeil summed it up best when he spoke to President Clinton via phone in the locker room after winning the Super Bowl: "Mr. President, this football team is what America is all about - good people that work hard and care about each other. Those aren't just words, that's what they are all about. Believe me."

Personally, I will have one lasting memory of Vermeil: seeing him on the victory platform in Atlanta, holding the silver Lombardi Trophy, surrounded by his smiling, triumphant players. That's what coaching is to Dick Vermeil. It isn't about personal glory and accolades. It's about getting a group of 53 men together to build relationships - and build a team.

"I cherish the relationships I have with the players and the coaches, not winning football games," Vermeil said late on Sunday night. "When I was an assistant football coach, a high school football coach, I never wanted to be more than that. I never thought about being a head coach in college or a head coach in pro football. I just wanted to coach. I have a passion for the game and a compassion, I guess, for the people who play the game, the kids who play it. That's what is great about America. If you work hard and have a passion about something and have compassion about people at the same time, the good things really can happen to you."

Some bad things happened to Vermeil. The meltdown in Philadelphia, the two-year struggle in St. Louis. But now it's all good. He leaves as a winner. He leaves after making St. Louis a winner, too.

Thanks, DV.

Walking away is not Vermeil's style

By Vahe Gregorian Of The Post-Dispatch
Story Added Wednesday, February 02, 2000

When Dick Vermeil retired Tuesday, two days after his Rams won the Super Bowl, he completed another monumental achievement.

He let go. Just like that.

"I think the time is right," Vermeil said.

As exquisite an ending as it is, as many hints as there had been that it could happen, nothing in Vermeil's 63-year profile of furious toil and frantic perfectionism suggested he could simply walk away.

Perfectionism began at home

From the day Vermeil graduated from grammar school, he grew acquainted with the meaning of the phrase he came to use this season -- "Gotta go to work."

At his father's "Owl Garage" in Calistoga, Calif., Vermeil, the oldest of three boys, was groomed to become an auto mechanic himself. The time with his father, Louis, seemed to shape the oft-conflicted Vermeil in many ways.

As a young man, Louis Vermeil was fascinated with the thought of being able to work 24 consecutive hours -- and occasionally did it just to do it. Vacations weren't for Vermeils, and Dick Vermeil says he never saw his father sit and relax.

Whether Dick Vermeil took on that fiendish work ethic to emulate his father or to avoid having to be a mechanic is unclear even to Vermeil. What is clear is that the part of Dick Vermeil that can't praise people enough -- even, on occasion, those who don't deserve it -- is the opposite of his father.

"My father was a wonderful man, but he invented the phrase 'verbal abuse,'" Vermeil once told The New York Times.

After Dick Vermeil's Calistoga High team lost a championship game because punter Vermeil tried to run with a bad snap instead of kicking away, Louis Vermeil scolded his son -- who burst into tears and went home and cried rather than attend the team's season-ending party.

"I was a critic," Louis told Sports Illustrated in 1983. "I didn't want him to think life was easy. I'd praise him behind his back to everybody; I never realized how much he wanted me to praise him."

Neither Louis Vermeil nor his wife, Alice, graduated from high school, but Dick Vermeil went to Napa Junior College and then to San Jose State. At San Jose State, one of Vermeil's coaches was Bill Walsh, who would go on to remarkable success with the San Francisco 49ers and with whom Vermeil remains close.

The tendencies that would distinguish Vermeil, then nearly extinguish him, were obvious even then. He attended school full-time, played football, worked in his dad's shop until midnight and studied from midnight to 3 a.m. And he only gathered momentum after getting his first coaching job, in 1960 at Hillsdale High in San Mateo. While fashioning a team that would go 9-0 in his second season, Vermeil at one time or another worked: at a food warehouse, driving an ice-cream truck, pumping gas or digging swimming pools.

Financial struggle that those days might have been for Vermeil and his wife, Carol, his high school sweetheart, Vermeil still recalls them fondly and occasionally refers to specific games.

Vermeil scaled the ladder, most notably stopping as an assistant at Stanford from 1965-68, spending a year with the Rams in 1969 and again from 1971-73 before becoming head coach at UCLA in 1974. In his second season there, he took the Bruins to their first Rose Bowl appearance in 10 years -- and his team upset top-ranked Ohio State.

Philadelphia Eagles owner Leonard Tose, who just happened to need a coach, was watching that game and was mesmerized by Vermeil. Shazam -- Vermeil took over the Eagles and ultimately charmed the most cynical of sports towns. Though he last coached there in 1982, Vermeil still is featured on Philadelphia billboards touting Blue Cross/Blue Shield.

"Credible. Honest. Strong. Reliable. Compassionate -- you can go right down the Boy Scout oath, and that's Dick Vermeil," Richard Maloney, senior director of corporate communications for Independence Blue Cross, said in 1997.

Not that Vermeil was an instant hit. His Eagles won only nine games in his first two seasons, and his perkiness didn't immediately impress his players.

"The day he came in," former All-Pro linebacker Bill Bergey said in 1997, "my reaction was, 'Where in the hell did we get this Harry-High School coach? I can't believe we have somebody this crazy and gung-ho.'"

But sparked by Vermeil's discipline and enthusiasm, the Eagles qualified for the playoffs for the first time since 1960 in his third season. In his fifth season, they were 12-4 and Super Bowl bound, where they lost to the Raiders.

"Not a very good feeling"

The very means that Vermeil had summoned to get the Eagles where they were would soon boomerang on him. His perfectionism finally had overwhelmed him, making defeats devastating and even most victories unsavory.

His obsessive ways had been legendary. He often slept at the office .o.o. where he once conducted interviews for assistants from midnight to 3 a.m. so as not to lose any time during the work day .o.o. where he once suggested his wife bring the family Christmas tree to set up presents around.

By 1982, his senses skewed further by the player strike, Vermeil officially was burned out. In retrospect, Vermeil himself has said he was bound for the "looney-bin or the graveyard."

"I never thought I'd reach this point, but I have and, I can tell you, it's not a very good feeling," he said at the news conference announcing his resignation from Philadelphia.

For the next 14 years, Vermeil ostensibly became a television analyst -- "stealing for a living," as he jokingly called it last week. But by the time he took the Rams job, he came to portray that time as "grad school on football and life."

The football part came in the form of watching coaches coach. The life part came from therapy, trying to learn to cope with his own intensity, and from peaceful time with his family. Still .o.o.

"He's not really great with leisure time," Carol Vermeil has told the Post-Dispatch. "He has this idea if you're not doing something productive, you're wasting time. It's just the way he is."

Somewhat stoked by a flirtation with Philadelphia in 1995 -- different parties offer different views on why it didn't work out -- the time and circumstances felt right when Rams president John Shaw called in 1997. But many were perplexed by his choice.

"Only time will tell whether this hire is a stroke of genius or an incredible blunder by the NFL's losingest franchise in the '90s," the Post-Dispatch wrote at the time.

It appeared to be a blunder at times, with Vermeil's curious manner of handling personnel problems involving Lawrence Phillips and Tony Banks and practices that nearly incited mutiny. After two years, he was 9-23, and his job was in jeopardy. But Vermeil, though he doesn't like to admit it, adjusted his practice habits. He and his staff made key acquisitions and key cuts.

"I think he looks for guys who have character," tight end Ernie Conwell said Sunday. "He wants guys who have not had their lives handed to them on a silver platter. He knows they'll give him the best they can."

And perhaps he knows, at last, that he has given himself that, too.





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'The time is right'

Rams' Vermeil decides to leave football as champion

Posted: Monday February 07, 2000 02:10 PM

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ST. LOUIS (CNN.com) -- Dick Vermeil's voice broke and the tears flowed -- one final time as an NFL coach.

The league's most emotional coach, standing within arm's reach of the Super Bowl trophy his St. Louis Rams won only two days earlier and referred to as "Champ" by the team president, stepped away from the game Tuesday.

It was a scenario that would unsettle the most manly of men. One knew that Vermeil, who seemingly wept at the drop of a hat during his three seasons in St. Louis, would not even attempt to rein himself in.

Vermeil, 63, said it was an "unbelievable feeling" to leave as a champion. He's going out on top.

"I think the time is right," he said. "Very few people in this profession get this opportunity."

Q&A With SI's Peter King

CNN.com: Peter, you called it the day after the Super Bowl, but didn't it seem like it came a little quickly?

Peter King: It seems that he's had his mind made up for some time now, that he was going to retire. Some of the people close to him have told me not to listen to what he said about coaching until 2002. They told me that if he won the Super Bowl, it was



With a victory in Super Bowl XXXIV, Dick Vermeil has reached the NFL mountaintop.
AP

Vermeil's quick decision had a lot to do with emotion. He didn't want to be involved with the free agency period that starts Feb. 11, so he leaves with two years to go on a five-year, \$9 million contract.

"I don't want to participate in that," Vermeil said. "I don't want to cut the squad. These are my guys."

Owner Georgia Frontiere tried to talk

better than 50-50 that he'd retire. Vermeil out of it, team president John Shaw said he should at least wait to make sure and special teams coach Frank Gansz made an impassioned plea. Rams players just wanted the best for the coach who made it a point to get to know all of them.

"I feel indebted to coach Vermeil," said linebacker London Fletcher, who also urged Vermeil to stick around. "He gave me an opportunity that maybe nobody else would have and I'm very grateful."

Linebacker Mike Jones, who made the game-saving tackle on Tennessee's Kevin Dyson, said looking back that Vermeil dropped a few clues on the flight back from Atlanta but "I never put it together."

"It's a great legacy," Jones said, "going from worst to first."

San Francisco general manager Bill Walsh, a longtime friend of Vermeil, agreed with the coach that the time was right.

"At this stage of his life, he's accomplished everything," Walsh said. "Now it's time for him to thoroughly enjoy the rewards of what he's accomplished."

This exit was a lot different than the first time he walked away from NFL coaching, complaining of burnout when he left the Philadelphia Eagles in 1982.

The decision elevates offensive coordinator Mike Martz to coach. The Rams signed Martz, who directed the NFL's top-rated offense (33 points a game), to a two-year contract in January that assured he would inherit Vermeil's job.

"I told everyone before the season that Mike Martz was the type of coach who would go after it -- from the first game to the last," said Isaac Bruce, who caught the winning touchdown pass in the Super Bowl.

Martz, scheduled to undergo surgery Wednesday for a neck problem, didn't attend the news conference. A Rams spokesman said Martz would postpone surgery and hold a news conference Wednesday morning.

Vermeil coached two Super Bowl teams 19 years apart. He led the Eagles to the Super Bowl in 1981, and that 27-10 loss fueled



ONE FOR THE AGED			
	YEARS	MONTHS	
D. Vermeil (Rams)	63	3	
W. Ewbank (Jets)	61	8	
B. Switzer (Cowboys)	58	3	
B. Walsh (49ers)	57	1	
G. Selfert (49ers)	55	0	
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his return to the profession in 1997.

Vermeil led the Rams to a 13-3 record this year after winning only nine games his first two years. Following last year's 4-12 mark, there was talk that he could be fired.

The players weren't happy, either. Most of it was only grumbling because of extremely hard practices that often left the players exhausted before they stepped on the field on Sundays.

Four prominent players, including cornerback Todd Lyght, boycotted the final team meeting of the 1998 season. That sent a message to the coach, who described it at the time as a "shot in the back."

Vermeil, however, weathered the problems and led the team to an incredible turnaround.

In his first stint as an NFL coach with the Eagles from 1976-82, Vermeil called the plays and basically ran the whole show with an iron fist. When he returned, he became a benevolent overseer.

As is his trademark, Vermeil fought back tears throughout the news conference. Sometimes, he lost the battle and choked up, especially when he talked about his players and the Rams organization.

Out On Top

Coaches to step down
after winning Super Bowl

Coach	Team	Year
Dick Vermeil	Rams	1999
Jimmy Johnson	Cowboys	1993
Bill Parcells	Giants	1990
Bill Walsh	49ers	1988
Vince Lombardi	Packers	1967

"I don't have the ability to verbalize how I feel," he said. "I'm so appreciative of what my coaching staff has done. And these players, geez, these guys are unbelievable."

During the Super Bowl buildup, Vermeil hedged on his future. On one hand, he liked coaching. On the other hand, Carol Vermeil, his wife of 44 years, told him:

"What else do you have to prove?"

Vermeil said his wife brought up the possibility of retirement after the Rams beat the Minnesota Vikings in the playoffs. They talked about it again following the parade through downtown St. Louis on Monday, a day after the Rams' 23-16 victory.

Finally, the couple discussed retirement again, briefly, Tuesday morning. Vermeil said, however, it was strictly his decision.

"I love these guys, too," Carol Vermeil said. "After my own boys, I call them my boys. But there's a time for everything."

Vermeil said he'll pursue a job in television again. During his 15-year hiatus from coaching, Vermeil was a college football analyst. He also plans to spend time at his Philadelphia area ranch with his wife.

Two sons, a daughter and 11 grandchildren live nearby.

"We're world champions," Vermeil said. "How many coaches can go out having participated in a world championship contest?"

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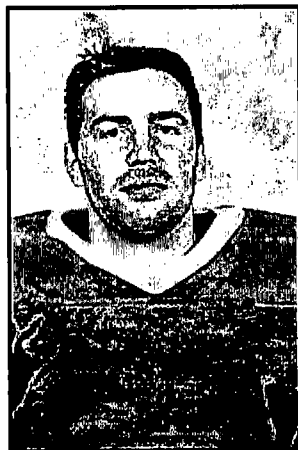


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Player Profile



Kurt Warner

#13

Position: QB

Height: 6-2

Weight: 220

Birthdate: 6/22/71

College: Northern Iowa

NFL Experience: 2

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Pro Highlights:

Has potential to develop into solid quarterback in the league...raw talent with outstanding arm strength and accuracy...signed with the Rams 12/26/97...beat out Will Furrer in 1998 training camp for third quarterback position...starting quarterback for Amsterdam Admirals of NFL Europe in 1998...played for Iowa Barnstormers of the Arena Football League from 1995-97...spent 1994 training camp with the Green Bay Packers. 1998: Saw first career action in the fourth quarter of Rams final game against San Francisco 12/27 completed four passes for 39 yards assumed the backup role behind Steve Bono for the final two games after a season-ending knee injury suffered by Tony Banks vs. New England 12/13 did not play at Carolina 12/20 inactive third quarterback for first 14 games. NFL Europe 1998: Started all 10 games for the Admirals...led league in passing yards (2,101), attempts (326), completions (165) and touchdowns (15). Arena Football League 1995-1997: Passed for 10,164 yards and 183 touchdowns in three seasons with the Barnstormers...led Iowa to two straight Arena Bowl appearances...holds all of Barnstormers individual passing records.

College Highlights:

Gateway Conference offensive player of the year senior season at Northern Iowa...led the conference in total offense and passing efficiency...passed for over 300 yards four times...two-time Gateway player of the week...only started senior season...graduated with a degree in communications.

Personal Info:

Born Kurtis Warner in Burlington, Ia...attended Cedar Rapids Regis High...lettered in football, basketball and baseball...Des Moines Register

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all-state selection in football senior season...married (Brenda)...has three children, sons, Zachary, and Kade and daughter Jesse...resides in St. Louis County.

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January 17, 2000

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* Good
Background

HEADLINE: No Passing Fancy;

After years of struggle, down-to-earth **Kurt Warner** may be Super Bowl bound

BYLINE: Alex Tresniowski, Grant Pick in St. Louis

BODY:

This was the night, Brenda Meoni was sure--the night **Kurt Warner** was going to propose. After all, she and her boyfriend of four years had just bought a house together and were going out to celebrate with Jesse and Zach, her two young children from a previous marriage. What better time to pop the question? But nothing happened. "I was mad," says Brenda, 32. "I thought he would have proposed already." The night was nearly over when they got home, where Warner had four glasses waiting: two with champagne, two with soft drinks. First he asked Jesse and Zach if he could marry their mother. Then the words "Will you marry me?" appeared in Christmas lights on the back fence. Brenda said yes.

Some proposals take a little time to get just right--not unlike some quarterbacks. Consider St. Louis Ram **Kurt Warner**, 28, who a mere five years after stocking shelves for minimum wage has become the highest-rated passer in the National Football League--and the sweetest success story in sports. Emerging from the obscure indoor Arena Football League, the 6'2" Warner threw for an amazing 41 touchdowns to lead the Rams to a 13-3 record--the second best in the NFL--making them a favorite to reach the Super Bowl on Jan. 30. "We have an unselfish group of guys and an unselfish leader in Kurt," says Rams coach Dick Vermeil. "He has an ego, but it's not big. He simply believes in himself."

The unflappable Warner credits that confidence to faith and family. A fervent Christian who holds a weekly Bible-study class in his home, he doesn't smoke, drink or swear, and once spent the moments before a big game painting his daughter Jesse's fingernails. "He's a great father, great husband, great friend and great player--probably in that order," says teammate Tom Nutter. Warner certainly dotes on Zach, 10, and Jesse, 7, whom he legally adopted after marrying Brenda in 1997, as well as on their 15-month-old son Kade. "The kids mean everything to me," says Warner. "They are my life."

His own parents--Gene Warner, now 52 and a phone-company supervisor, and Sue, 51, a clerk for a plastic-bag manufacturer--divorced when Kurt was 5, and he was raised primarily by his mother in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. (His father later remarried.) Ferociously competitive even then, Warner "always kicked our butts when we played sports with him," recalls his stepbrother Matt Post, 31. Still, as a quarterback at the University of Northern Iowa in Cedar Falls, "I sat on the bench for three seasons," Warner says. But his college years weren't a total wash: In 1992 he met Brenda, a divorced ex-Marine, at a country-music club. "I'm 25 and the mother of two," Brenda says she told him that night. "I can understand if I never see you again." Warner was at her door the next morning.

Since that day, he has helped her through some difficult times. Her son Zach suffered brain damage after falling on his head as an infant and is now legally blind. In 1996, Brenda's parents were killed when a tornado tore through their Mountain View, Ark., home. "Kurt had been close to them too," says Brenda. "He was by my side."

As was Brenda by Kurt's when the going got tough for him. In 1994 he failed a tryout with the Green Bay Packers and wound up stocking shelves at a Cedar Falls grocery store until the Iowa Barnstormers of the Arena Football League hired him in 1995. Warner threw for 183 touchdowns in three seasons and was signed by the NFL's then-lowly Rams in 1997. He played only three minutes his first year, but when the starting quarterback was injured before this season, Warner stepped in and turned the club around. "Once they allowed me to just play," he says, "it became my team."

And while Warner still works for minimum wage --\$ 250,000, the NFL minimum for second-year players--he's in line for a multimillion-dollar contract renewal. He and Brenda, a nurse, live in a four-bedroom frame house in a St. Louis suburb. They donate time and money to the nondenominational St. Louis Family Church, as well as to Camp Barnabas, a Christian retreat for sick and disabled children in Purdy, Mo.

Whether or not Warner leads the Rams to Super Bowl glory, it's a safe bet he'll remain the same thoughtful guy--albeit one who doesn't much care for housework. "If I say 'Clean the bathroom,' it means he flushes the toilet," says Brenda. But hey, **Kurt Warner** came late to success; if any man can learn, this is the one.

--Alex Tresniowski --Grant Pick in St. Louis

GRAPHIC: COLOR PHOTO: PHOTOGRAPHS BY STEVE SCHAPIRO, Sacked by fan mail at home (with wife Brenda), Warner "is just a regular guy," says a friend.; **COLOR PHOTO:** AL TIELEMANS/SPORTS ILLUSTRATED, "He doesn't get rattled," a teammate says of Warner (vs. the Titans).; **COLOR PHOTO:** PHOTOGRAPHS BY STEVE SCHAPIRO, Warner's most impressive playing comes off the field with (from left) Brenda, Zach, Jesse and Kade.

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

LOAD-DATE: January 11, 2000

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Search: Biographical; Warner, Kurt

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7-13-00

Earlier This Week, Superbowl MVP, Kurt Warner underwent emergency appendix surgery. His appendix was successfully removed and Kurt is on a healthy recovery. It is not sure if he will be able to make July training camp because of it though. But this will not stop him from showing up at Veten's Memorial Auditorium in Des Moines where he played quarterback for the Iowa Barnstormers. He will be there at next weeks game!



Even after the Rams failed to score a touchdown in the first half, MVP Kurt Warner believed he could find a way. (741 K)

Rams DE Carter explains the defensive strategy designed to contain Titans' McNair. (1.85 M)

Rams WR Isaac Bruce describes his game-winning catch. (53 K)

Steve McNair says the Titans couldn't take advantage of opportunities. (195K)

Rams coach Dick Vermeil passes the credit on to his players. (180 K)

Eddie George says the Titans can use the loss for inspiration next season. (242 K)

Kevin Dyson says the defeat is hard to swallow. (81 K)

Postgame reflections

Super Bowl XXXIV Galleries

CLOSER LOOKS

Rams' fortunes hinged on game's final play

Mike Jones' tackle of Kevin Dyson on the 1-yard line as time expired preserved St. Louis' thrilling 23-16 win.

FULL STORY

Titans did (almost) everything right on Bruce's touchdown catch

Free safety Anthony Dorett overran the play, allowing Isaac Bruce to cut inside him and dash 73 yards for the

wideout Kevin Dyson at the Rams' one, confetti flew and fireworks exploded in the Georgia Dome, and the coronation of Kurt Warner, American Sports Hero, was complete. By now we know the 28-year-old's triumphant tale by heart -- the family tragedy, the job stocking groceries for minimum wage at an all-night supermarket, the minor league football struggles -- and it seems almost clichéd, or somehow beyond belief. Yet the one person who appears unfazed by the improbability of it all is the guy doing the heavy lifting. *You* may have considered Warner a nobody before the 1999 season began, but the quarterback inside him never saw it that way.

"How can you be in awe of something that you expect yourself to do?" Warner asked late Sunday as he rode a team bus from the Georgia Dome to the Rams' hotel. "People think this season is the first time I touched a football; they don't realize I've been doing this for years -- just not on this level, because I never got the chance. Sure, I had my tough times, but you don't sit there and say, 'Wow, I was stocking groceries five years ago, and look at me now.' You don't think about it,

game-winning touchdown.

[FULL STORY](#)

HEROES & GOATS

HERO	GOAT
	

Kurt Warner, QB, St. Louis

The deadly accurate Warner capped his unthinkable trip from Arena Bowl to NFL MVP by setting the Super Bowl passing record (414 yards), including the game-winning 73-yard bomb to Isaac Bruce with 1:54 left.

Denard Walker, CB, Tennessee

On the Rams' first play after Tennessee tied it at 16-16, Walker was the defender burned on Bruce's big catch down the right sideline, failing to turn around and look for the ball until it was too late.

MORE STORIES

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INSTANT POLL

What was most damaging to the Titans?

- ☐ Al Del Greco's missed FG
- ☐ [Blaine Bishop's](#) injury
- ☐ Going for 2 down 16-6
- ☐ Isaac Bruce's 73-yard TD
- ☐ Kevin Dyson downed at the 1

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and when you do achieve something, you know luck has nothing to do with it."

No, Warner and the Rams weren't lucky, nor was it merely good fortune that electrifying quarterback [Steve McNair](#) and his Titans were down only 16-0 midway through the third quarter before they mounted a furious comeback. The lucky ones were the 72,625 fans in the stadium -- and the tens of millions watching on television -- who saw two proud and courageous teams wage one of the most stirring battles the NFL has known. While Warner, who eclipsed Joe Montana's 11-year-old Super Bowl record by throwing for 414 yards, was the game's MVP, the true measure of his performance and of this epic event transcended statistics. "This Super Bowl really was a representation of all that is good in the NFL," said St. Louis tight end [Ernie Conwell](#), whose only catch, a 16-yard reception that helped set up the game's first touchdown, was marred by a frightening neck injury to Tennessee strong safety and defensive leader [Blaine Bishop](#). "You had two class organizations that have fought their way up to this level, with two high-character coaches and two solid groups of guys. Today we showed the nation, and the

world, why football is such a great game."

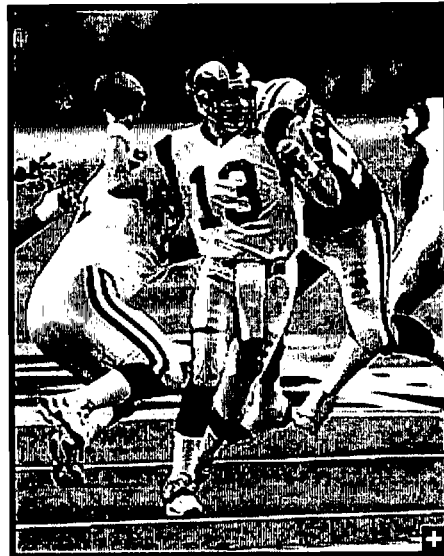
The game provided a passionate climax to an emotional eight days for pro football, a span that began with the horrific car accident that left [Kansas City Chiefs](#) linebacker [Derrick Thomas](#) paralyzed from the chest down (and killed Thomas's friend Mike Tellis); included an overblown winter-storm watch that rivaled the hysteria over Y2K; and finished with Titans coach Jeff Fisher whispering consoling words into McNair's ears as the Rams celebrated a few yards away. In the

center of it all, as usual, was Warner, who in 41 months had gone from anonymous replacement for injured starter Trent Green to ubiquitous symbol of sudden, stunning athletic success. On the Wednesday night before the title game, when Conwell considered asking Warner to join him and other teammates for an evening out, one St. Louis player wondered whether they wanted to deal with all the hoopla the quarterback's presence would generate. They decided to leave number 13 alone; he spent the night holed up in his room. "I'm a mess," Warner said the next day as he sat fidgeting at a team reception for arriving family members. "Today my only break was a 10-minute lunch. I just want to crawl in a hole and hide."

Instead he took his wife, Brenda, to dinner -- and then rebuffed her attempts to lure him back to her hotel room, because he wanted some rest. Fame has changed life dramatically for Kurt and Brenda, who still have a rock outside their modest St. Louis home that reads, THE WARNERS. The added tension took its toll on the family on the day last December when Kurt, the eventual league MVP, learned he had been selected as the NFC's starting quarterback for the Pro Bowl. "We were in a nasty fight," Brenda recalls, "and I went out to run some errands. My friend, Kim, was watching the kids [Zachary, 10; Jesse, 8; and Kade, 1] and called on my cell phone to tell me some flowers had been delivered. I figured they were from Georgia [Frontiere, the Rams' owner] because she's always sending them to Kurt, but there were 13 red roses, so Kim opened the card and read it to me. It was from Kurt, telling me he'd made the Pro Bowl: 'This is a great day for me, but it would mean nothing without you there to share it.'"

Leave it to Kurt, in difficult times, to be the Man. Like Montana, who guided the San Francisco 49ers to four Super Bowl titles, Warner, who completed 24 of 45 passes for two touchdowns with no interceptions on Sunday, thrives thanks to a scary combination of quick reads, pinpoint accuracy and grace under fire.

Yet unlike so many St. Louis opponents this season, Tennessee, which on Oct. 31 handed the Rams their first defeat, refused to sit back and let Warner score at will. Mixing coverages and varying blitzes, the Titans, while allowing Warner to throw for 277 first-half yards, put a major hurt on the quarterback -- he injured his ribs while taking a shot as he overthrew wideout Ricky Proehl in the end zone 24 seconds before halftime -- and tightened up where it counted most. The red zone was the dead zone for St. Louis, which staked out a mere 9-0 halftime lead despite moving inside the 20 on each of its five first-half possessions.



Warner threw for a record 414 yards and -- just as important -- didn't turn the ball over.
Walter Iooss Jr.

Oddly enough, the game didn't start shining until after a brush with football's dark side. With 8:24 left in the third quarter Conwell took a helmet-first hit from Bishop that left the defender lying facedown on the carpet. Conwell attends the same fundamentalist church as Warner, and he began praying for Bishop. Rams coach Dick Vermeil soon gathered his players for another prayer. Bishop was carted off with a sprained neck and taken to a hospital for precautionary X-rays. Tennessee, already missing free safety Marcus Robertson, who had fractured an ankle the previous week in the AFC Championship Game, seemed to be finished, especially after rookie wideout Torry Holt (seven catches, 109 yards) cradled a nine-yard dart from Warner in the middle of the end zone three plays later.

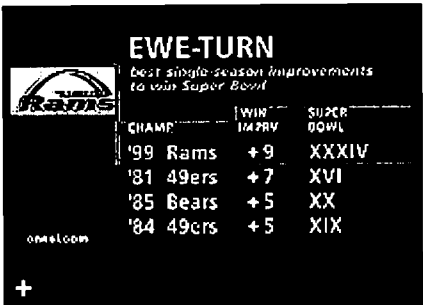
Trailing 16-0, the Titans did what they always do: They stayed in a fight they seemed to have no business in. Dual-threat McNair (22 completions in 36 attempts, 214 yards; eight carries, 64 yards) perked up, leading a 66-yard touchdown drive that ended on Eddie George's one-yard run with 14 seconds left in the third quarter. Tennessee missed the two-point conversion, but St. Louis went three-and-out, and George, who had 77 of his 95 rushing yards in the second half, finished the Titans' next drive with a gritty two-yard touchdown run. Tennessee held again and tied the game on Al Del Greco's 43-yard field goal with 2:12 to go.

At that point the Titans looked fresh and energized, while the Rams were breathing more heavily than a bunch of construction workers watching Ashley Judd walk past. Said Mike White, St. Louis's assistant head coach, "[The Titans have] had so much success in the fourth quarter all year, and they just turned it up. People have been

calling them a team of destiny, and it was like they just believed it was their time."

The quarterback of destiny, however, had the final say. With the Rams taking over on their own 27, offensive coordinator Mike Martz called 999 H-Balloon, a play in which Holt lines up wide to the left and three wideouts start from the right: Inside man Proehl runs a post, and slot man Az-Zahir Hakim and outside man Bruce (six catches, 162 yards) join Holt in running go routes. When Warner saw that Bruce would be single-covered by cornerback Denard Walker, he knew where he wanted to go. But Kearsse's vicious rush caused the quarterback to release early, and the ball was underthrown. "I was thinking, I hope Ike comes back for it, because it's not far enough," Warner said later. That's exactly what Bruce did, turning to catch the ball at the Tennessee 43, then freezing several defenders, cutting to the middle and outracing everyone to the end zone.

The race wasn't over, though, and Warner watched in wonder as McNair nearly willed the Titans to a tying touchdown. With 22 seconds remaining and the ball on the St. Louis 26, McNair produced one of the most scintillating efforts in Super Bowl history, scrambling more than 10 yards behind the line of scrimmage and bulling free of would-be sacks by defensive linemen Kevin Carter and Jay Williams before releasing a perfect pass to Dyson at the Rams' 10. Tennessee called its final timeout with six seconds remaining, and the season came down to one precious play.



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'85 Bears	+5	XX
'84 49ers	+5	XIX

reach. He caught the ball in stride inside the five and had only one man between him and the first overtime game in Super Bowl history. Jones, however, wrapped up the wideout, and Dyson's lunge for the goal line fell short. "It seemed like slow motion," Jones said. "I couldn't see McNair throw the ball, but I could feel it."

It was the rarest of football events -- a Super Bowl that exceeded its colossal buildup, and nice guys finished first and last. The victory was an inspirational validation for Vermeil, who returned in 1997 from a 14-year absence and by the middle of his second season was facing a near-mutiny by his players because of his relentlessly demanding approach. After a 4-12 finish in '98, St. Louis upgraded its roster, and Vermeil and his assistants wisely loosened the reins.

The Titans sent tight end Frank Wycheck into the end zone, hoping to draw several defenders to the area and hit Dyson on an underneath slant with room to run. Dyson, whose kickoff return off a Wycheck lateral had given Tennessee a stunning wild-card victory over the Buffalo Bills, had another Music City Miracle in

Soon Fisher's team will shake off the agony of defeat and celebrate the joy of the journey. As driven and intense as he can be, Fisher has more perspective than most men in his profession. Five hours before the game, just before he left his hotel room to attend chapel services, the 41-year-old coach returned a call to a dying man in Florida who had been moved by the Titans' rousing run through the postseason. "This will be my last Super Bowl," the man told Fisher, "and I want you to win it." As Fisher hung up the phone, his wife, Juli, looked on in awe. "He doesn't get emotional much," she said, "but he was really choked up. I thought, What a great man he is. Because isn't that what this is all about -- touching people, using your success and good fortune to try to reach out and connect?"

Brenda Warner also used the term "great man" to describe her husband, who gets irked when people attribute his or his team's success to luck or astrology or the sage (allegedly used for cleansing) that burned inside the Rams' locker room before Sunday's game. Warner wears number 13 as a way of underscoring his aversion to superstition, because he believes such views are inconsistent with a faith in God. Clutching a Bible on the postgame bus ride, Warner didn't act like a man who had gotten lucky. Told by offensive line coach Jim Hanifan that he had broken Montana's Super Bowl yardage record, Warner replied, "The only record of his I want to break is to win five of these babies."

Later, he flashed back to perhaps his darkest moment, the night in 1996 when he was awakened by a call from a sobbing Brenda, then his girlfriend, telling him that her parents had been killed by a tornado that leveled their Arkansas home. Within five minutes he was out the door of his apartment in Des Moines, where he was playing for the Arena League's Iowa Barnstormers, and on the road to Brenda's, an hour and 40 minutes away in Cedar Falls. "The whole time I just thought I was dreaming," he said, "that I would get there and everything would be fine."

The bus pulled up at the Rams' hotel, and Warner was back to his rock-star reality. He and his teammates walked toward the main entrance, and when someone spotted Warner, fans converged madly, and he was ushered through a side door and up a service elevator. After a quick visit to his eighth-floor room, Warner was escorted through various kitchens, laundry areas and service hallways to the team's victory party, where he hugged Brenda and other family members and had his aching ribs blessed by Jeff Perry, the pastor of the Warners' St. Louis church, and Jeff's wife, Patsy. As a band played Eddie Floyd's *Knock On Wood*, Warner was asked whether he had seen *Heaven Can Wait*, the 1978 film in which Warren Beatty plays a quarterback who is taken by an overzealous angel after a bike accident and ends up winning the Super Bowl for the Rams.

It turns out that Warner saw the flick on TV as an eight-year-old in Cedar Rapids, and he doesn't remember much: the accident, a couple of football scenes and the ending, when Beatty gets the girl. That final scene is perfect: The Rams have won the big game, and Beatty, the hero, is the last player to leave the locker room when Julie Christie approaches. She sees something special about him, then it registers: "You're the quarterback," she says.

Now back to real life: As Sunday turned to Monday and the victory party raged on, the world's greatest quarterback looked lovingly into Brenda's eyes. "I miss our kids," he said, then kissed her and smiled.

Schmaltzy? You bet. It's the Warners' story, and they're sticking to it.

Issue date: February 7, 2000

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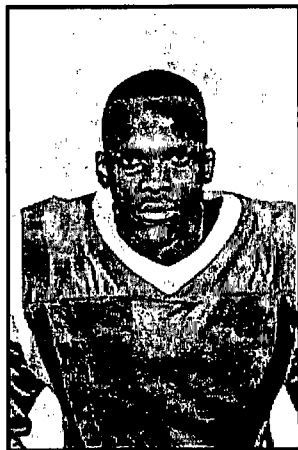
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Thursday Jul. 13, 2000 04:35:45 PM

Player Profile



Isaac Bruce

#80

Position: WR

Height: 6-0

Weight: 188

Birthdate: 11/10/72

College: Memphis

NFL Experience: 6

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Gifted athlete...one of best route runners in league...smooth, fluid, graceful...big-play receiver who is one of best in the NFL...no player in league history caught more passes in first three NFL seasons (224), surpassing Andre Rison (215, 1989-91), Sterling Sharpe (212, 1988-90) and former Ram Tom Fears (212, 1948-50)...received overdue recognition with first Pro Bowl invitation in 1996, becoming first Rams' receiver since Henry Ellard in 1989 and first Ram since Jerome Bettis in 1994...1995 and 1996 recipient of Daniel F. Reeves Memorial Award, given to club's MVP...joined DE Jack Youngblood (1975-76) and Eric Dickerson (1983-84) as only players in club history to honored with the award in back-to-back seasons...ranks sixth on Rams in all-time receptions (312), seventh in career receiving yards (4,663) and is third in career 100-yard receiving games (18)...only Jerry Rice (3,575) and John Jefferson (3,431) recorded more yards in their first three seasons... holds four Rams' single-season records, including most receiving yards (1,781), most receptions (119), most consecutive 100-yard receiving games (6) and most 100-yard games (9) set in 1995...first NFL reception was 34-yard touchdown...since then reached endzone 28 times for 29 career touchdown receptions, for seventh on club's all-time list...1994 recipient of Carroll Rosenbloom Award, given to team rookie of the year...voted Rams rookie of the year by Orange County Sports Association and Southern California Sports Broadcasters Association...first of three second round draft selections by Rams in 1994 NFL Draft (33rd overall). 1998: Ranked fourth on team in receptions and third in yards with 32 receptions for 457 yards and one touchdown, despite missing eight games with hamstring injury before being placed on injured reserve 12/7... posted two 100-yard receiving games...led the Rams in receptions three times and receiving yards four times...led NFL in receiving after two weeks...opened season with 10-reception, 131-yard effort vs. New Orleans...followed with 11 receptions for 192 yards and one touchdown against NFC Central Division champ Minnesota...reception total tied for highest-single game total NFC in 1998 and tied the second-highest total of Bruce's career, while receiving yards total was the fourth-highest of career...caught career-long 80-yard pass for touchdown in fourth quarter...30-yard run on reverse gave him 222

yards, the second-highest total yards effort of career and the most by an NFC player in non overtime game last season. 1997: Ranked second on club in receptions with 56 and receiving yards with 815...led squad in touchdown receptions with five despite missing almost all of first five games due to a hamstring injury...recorded two 100-yard receiving games and led club in receptions and yardage six times...ranked third on club in scoring with 30 points...appeared in first game of season at Denver 9/14...snapped streak of 4 consecutive games with at least one reception after leaving game in first quarter without catching a pass because of hamstring injury...returned to starting lineup three weeks later at San Francisco 10/12...registered best receiving performance by any NFL receiver in 1997, exploding for career-high 233 yards on 10 receptions and two touchdowns at Atlanta 11/2...233 yards was fourth highest ever by Ram...only player in Rams' history and seventh NFL receiver to record three games with at least 200 yards...grabbed nine passes for 144 yards and two touchdowns (tied career high), including game-winner on five-yard reception from Tony Banks at New Orleans 12/7. 1996: Led team with 84 receptions and NFL with 1,338 yards...became first Rams receiver since Henry Ellard in 1990 and 1991 to post back-to-back 1,000-yard receiving seasons...first Ram to lead league in receiving yards since Ellard in 1988...joined Tom Fears (1949-50) and Ellard (1989-91) as only receivers in Rams' 61-year history to post consecutive 1,000-yard receiving seasons...averaged 15.9 yards a catch with seven touchdowns and recorded five 100-yard receiving games...hailed in season highs in receptions twice with 11 on 9/22 vs. Washington and 10/27 at Baltimore with a then-career-high 229 yards...capped season with seven receptions for 104 yards in Pro Bowl. 1995: In first year as starter enjoyed best ever season by a Rams' receiver and second greatest receiving season in NFL history with 1,781 yards on 119 catches...trailed only San Francisco's Jerry Rice (1,848) after breaking former Houston Oilers Charley Hennigan's 34-year-old record of 1,746 set in 1961...119 catches rank 1st on the NFL's all-time single season reception list...shattered four Rams' records, including most receiving yards (1,781), most receptions (119), most consecutive 100-yard receiving games (6) and most 100-yard games (9)...tied for second (Harold Jackson, 1973) for most touchdown receptions by a Ram in one season (13) and for second (Willie Anderson, 1989) for most receptions in one game (15)...first player in NFL's 76-year history to record three consecutive games with at least 170 receiving yards (181, 191, 173)...ended season as Rams' leading scorer with 80 points...won many accolades, including USA-Today's All-Joe team, All-Madden, Daniel F. Reeves Memo Award (team MVP), Fox's Terry Award for Best Second Year Player and All-Pro by Pro Football Weekly and Sports Illustrated...only player in NFL to earn both Offensive and Special Teams Player of the Week in honors...finished second in the NFL in receiving yards, fourth in receptions and in total yards from scrimmage (1,798)...first career start season opener at Green Bay 9/1 and made back-to-back plays to help Rams win 17-14...blocked and recovered a Craig Hentrich punt to set up his 23-yard touchdown reception on next play...logged first 100-yard receiving game of career with five receptions for 100 yards at Carolina 9/17...established team record with six consecutive 100-yard games vs. Carolina 11/12, breaking Elroy Hirsch's record of five in 1951 by making nine receptions for 110 yards and one touchdown...streak was snapped one short of NFL record the following week at Atlanta when he recorded seven receptions for 91 yards...became 12th player in NFL and first Ram with 100 receptions in one season by catching nine for 68 yards against Washington 12/17...closed season by posting 15 receptions for 210 yards and one touchdown versus Miami 12/24...the 15 receptions were the most by NFL receiver in 1995. 1994: Ended season with 21 receptions for 277 yards to rank seventh on team despite playing in only 12 games...also saw action on special teams...missed last four games after spraining right knee at San Diego 11/27...placed on injured reserve 12/9...first NFL reception was 34-yard touchdown from quarterback Chris Miller at Atlanta 9/11.

College Highlights:

Ended collegiate career with 113 receptions for 1,586 yards and 15 touchdowns...attended West Los Angeles and Santa Monica Junior College before transferring to Memphis State in 1992...physical education major.

Personal Info:

Born Isaac Isidore Bruce in Ft. Lauderdale, Fla...attended Dillard High in that city...as senior, was All-City selection while leading team to 1989 Florida State 5A Championship...finished year with 39 catches for 644 yards (16.5 avg.)...has 14 brothers and sisters and is 13th of 15 children...was 1998 Rams Sprint Good Sport/Man of the Year and the 1997 Rams True Value Man of the Year, recognizing his sportsmanship and community involvement...1997 Rams this season will again partner with company to provide 10 tickets, t-shirts, lunch and transportation to children's organizations to attend Rams' home games...was United Way Spokesman in 1996-97 and United Way Leadership Giver in 1997 and 1998...has donated \$33,000 through endorsements and performance donation to Childhaven, an educational facility serving children with behavior and communication disorders..."adopted" Bruce Elementary in St. Louis and makes frequent visits to school and annually celebrates his birthday with the students...nicknamed "Reverend Ike" because he wants to be a minister after playing career...single...resides in St. Louis.

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Issac Bruce

Super Bowl XXXIV Champions St. Louis Rams' Wide Receiver
and

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Isaac Bruce's faith sustained him through a horrific car wreck, just as comforted him through times bad and good on the playing field

GOLEINP

Posted: Saturday, December 11, 1999 | 2:09 p.m.

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A Story of Faith: Isaac Bruce and The Miracle on I-70



By Bernie Miklasz
Post-Dispatch Sports Columnist

His car was out of control after blowing the rear left tire, skidding away from east-bound Interstate 70, headed toward the gully, about to roll over, driver-side first.

By now you have probably heard the play-by-play. About how Rams wide receiver Isaac Bruce, who makes a living catching footballs with his hands, took those precious

hands off the steering wheel, raised them into the air and shouted "Jesus!" for protection.



Isaac Bruce: "I was covered by the blood of Jesus."

(Jerry Naunheim Jr.)
[Stats on Isaac Bruce](#)

The Mercedes-Benz flipped twice before crash-landing upright, on its wheels. Mashed, but standing. Hey, the bump-and-run never could stop Isaac Bruce.

And Bruce, who had escaped death and serious injury, thought of three things.

First, the health of his girlfriend, Glegzette Sharpe, who was seated on the passenger side. She was fine. A little shaken, with a small cut on her forehead.

Next, his own condition. Bruce stretched his arms and flexed his legs. No problem.

And the third thing that came into his mind was pound cake.

Pound cake?

"I didn't even think about dying," Bruce said. "It never hit my mind that, 'I could have died here.' Honestly, I was thinking about getting (Sharpe) out of the car, and how I was going to get my pound cake. I was planning to pick it up that (Tuesday) night."

A star athlete in the prime of his career, walks away from an accident that easily could have left him paralyzed, broken, twisted like a pretzel, bleeding, or in a casket. But he doesn't even chip a tooth, get a bump on his head, or rip his trousers.

A Rams employee who saw the wrecked car would later recount the scene and exhale, shake his head, and whisper that it's a miracle to have Isaac Bruce still among us. And that maybe this was another sign that the Rams really are a team of destiny in 1999.

But in the immediate moments after death took a pass and floated over that Mercedes-Benz and moved on down the highway to visit upon someone else, Isaac Bruce was thinking about . . . pound cake?

"It's pound cake that I buy from this lady in St. Louis," Bruce said. "I love pound cake. Every night, I have a slice of pound cake with vanilla ice cream. It's what I eat. My favorite. I was out of pound cake, and I wanted to get that pound cake. And I had the accident, and I knew I couldn't pick up my pound cake."

To all of this we can only say: Praise the Lord and pass the pound cake.

* * * * *

I know that some readers are turned off by the mention of religion in the newspaper. They don't like quotes from athletes who talk about their faith, Jesus Christ, or scripture. I know this because I have read the letters of complaint on the editorial page, and I have received some caustic e-mails after columns I have written on Kent Bottenfield, J.D. Drew and Kurt Warner.

And that's too bad. I'm going to share this story about Isaac Bruce, and his unshakable belief in God is the foundation. I have no agenda except to tell the story. And Bruce's reliance on a simple command taught to him by his mother -- to call out the name of Jesus when in trouble -- is how the story begins. And there are some amazing aspects to this wreck on the highway.

There's Isaac's mom, Kairethiatic (call her "Kay"), mother of 15 children. She has her own testimony about a terrifying accident on an interstate highway. It happened a little more than 27 years ago, when she was six months pregnant with Isaac.

There's the Bishop G. E. Patterson of the Bountiful Blessings Cathedral of Deliverance Church of God and Christ in Memphis, Tenn. It's where Isaac worships during the off season. Sunday, two days before Bruce's crash, Bishop Patterson asked the congregation to pray for those who needed special help. He mentioned Isaac Bruce. The Bishop did not know why at the time.

There's Isaac Bruce himself: so intense, so gifted but so mysterious that even his friends struggle to know him and explain him. Something seems to be smoldering inside of him.

And of course, there is pound cake.

"You know, this happened to Isaac before," his mom is telling me over the phone from her home in Ft. Lauderdale, Fla. "I was six months pregnant with him. I had all of the children in my station wagon, and I was driving back to Florida from New York. I had a tire blow out, just like he did (Tuesday night). That station wagon went crazy. I couldn't control it. I threw my hands up and shouted, 'Jesus!' And He brought that station wagon under control. God spared our lives."

When Mrs. Bruce lost command of her car, it spun completely around -- facing the wrong way on the interstate. A truck was headed for the wagon and a horrific collision. But at the last instant the truck screeched to a stop.

"That's why I taught all of my children to call out to Jesus if they were ever in danger," she said. "Isaac learned it before he was even born, and then I always reminded him. So when he had the accident the other night, he was not afraid. Other people might be surprised that he walked away from that accident, but I'm not surprised. Jesus protected him in that car, just as Jesus protected Isaac in my station wagon when I carried him. God gave us another miracle."

Isaac takes after his mother. He's quiet, and serious, and wary of strangers. "People think I'm mean, but

"I'm just stern," Mrs. Bruce said. "My husband is a quiet man, too. But we're happy people. Isaac is very serious, but he has a happy heart. People just don't understand him."

Isaac Bruce nods.

"People misinterpret me," he said. "They say I don't smile. I smile a lot. They say I always look mean, and that I'm hard to approach. But how would you know unless you approach me? You don't know a book until you open and see what's in there, on the pages. The reason that I'm quiet is, I like to get to know a person first. I like to see what a person is about before I start opening up to them. I withhold. And I watch. The least said is the best said."

* * * * *

It took Rams quarterback Kurt Warner a while to get an accurate scouting report on Bruce's personality, but now they attend the same Bible study each Wednesday night. Warner is passionate about God, family and football. So is Bruce. A bond has formed.

"Isaac is very self-motivated," Warner said. "He knows what he wants to accomplish and how he's going to accomplish it. He's such a strong individual. I admire him so much. He internalizes a lot of things. His motivation, his determination, his excitement. It all comes from within. It doesn't take people around him to get him pumped up. He can do it internally."

Bruce's emotions brewed during the last two seasons, when he missed 15 of 32 games with a chronic hamstring injury. He used the adversity to learn more about himself and others. Now that he's healthy and thriving again -- with 67 receptions for 979 yards and 11 touchdowns -- Bruce hasn't forgotten those who doubted his character. But he has forgiven them.

"When I was injured, people would see me walking," Bruce said. "And I'd be walking normal. They'd tell me, 'You don't look hurt to me.' That was difficult to accept. But I'm still the same person now. When I score a touchdown, I still give the football to someone in the stands. Just as a way to thank the fans."

"I know how it goes. Everybody wants to ride the high horse. Nobody wants to ride with the goat. I was the goat for two years. It builds character. I humbled myself. I didn't snap at people, or say anything back. I'd just tell myself that I was still the best at what I did, and it just happens that I wasn't on the field at that time because I couldn't run."

"But I tell you what. I get a little joy of walking off the field at the TWA Dome now, and there's a bunch of people who are always there at the railing as we head to the locker room. They're yelling my name. Those are the same people who last year who would holler, 'You're not hurt, you stink.' I wouldn't say anything then. I'd get into my car and go home, knowing that they would be the same people, there again, telling me I was great and asking me for my autograph. And that's how it is again."

This is why Bruce hands out few all-access passes to his life. He knows that he can only trust so many people in the world to really care about him and look out for him.

* * * * *

Which brings us to Bishop G. E. Patterson.

Bruce, who attended Memphis State, joined Bishop Patterson's church two years ago. Obviously, Bruce can't be there during the football season. But something unusual happened during last Sunday's service. Patterson felt moved to request a special prayer for Bruce. It seemed rather odd, even to Patterson.

"Jesus will show you the things to come," Patterson said. "I did not have a premonition of Isaac's accident. I want to make that clear. But we were having our 8 a.m. communion service, and asking for prayers. And suddenly I said to the congregation, 'The Lord has placed it in my spirit to ask you to pray

' for Brother Isaac Bruce. So we ask the Lord to bless him, protect him, be with him.' The people thought it was strange that I would mention Isaac at that time. But the Lord just dropped it into my spirit. God saw what was coming."

There's more. At the same time Bruce and Sharpe were at the Hearn Center in Columbia, watching the Indiana-Missouri college basketball game, Bishop Patterson was in Memphis, participating in a yearly tradition. For the last 20 years, on the first Tuesday night in December, Patterson has offered "Divine Protection Night" at the church.

"We talk about how God shields His people and protects them from danger," Patterson said. "This was the same night that Isaac got in that car to drive home from that basketball game. But we didn't know that. As part of the service, we handed out a gift. Little bottles of blood-red oil, to represent the blood of Jesus."

Thursday, when I asked Bruce about if he had feared dying as the car tumbled over, he wasn't aware of Bishop Patterson's Divine Protection Night, and the vials of blood-red oil -- and how it all coincided with the accident. But this is how Bruce responded:

"I knew what the outcome would be once I spoke the name of Jesus," Bruce said. "Once I got that out of my mouth, I wasn't afraid. I knew I was covered by the blood of Jesus."

The day after the accident, Bruce read his favorite Psalm, 91, which says, in part:

"Because he loves me," says the Lord, "I will rescue him; I will protect him, for he acknowledges my name. He will call upon me and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble, I will deliver him and honor him."

Now we know.

Now we know why Isaac Bruce was so calm as the car flipped over. When your faith is so strong -- and so reinforced by your mother, by Bishop G. E. Patterson, by special prayers, by Divine Protection Night, by vials of blood-red oil -- you have no reason to fear death.

You shout "Jesus" and walk away from a mangled car. And the only thing you worry about is pound cake.

Now that's faith.

Isaac finally picked up his new pound cake on Friday night. He says it never tasted better.



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81 - wide receiver

AZ-ZAHIR HAKIM

ST. LOUIS RAMS

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PLAYER PROFILE

Pro Career

Sure-handed young receiver with big play capabilities, both as receiver and kick returner...explosive speed with ball in his hands...excellent hands and route-running skills...first of the Rams" two fourth-round selections (96th overall) in 1998 NFL Draft.



1998

Played in nine games with four starts at receiver...recorded 20 receptions for 247 yards and one touchdown, rushed two times for 30 yards and one touchdowns...made first start of career versus Carolina 11/22, collecting two receptions for 25 yards...scored two touchdowns (nine-yard TD reception, 34-yard run on reverse for TD) in victory over New England 12/13.

College Highlights

Senior: Played in and started eight games...caught 37 passes for 595 yards (16.1 avg.) and six touchdowns...had 14 kickoff returns for 26.2 avg. and one touchdown and three punt returns for 68 yards...opened season with six catches for 172 yards and two touchdowns and returned a kickoff 85 yards for another score against Navy...recorded seven catches for 108 yards and one touchdown against Washington...made season-high 10 receptions for 107 yards and touchdown versus Wisconsin.

Junior: Started and played in seven games...grabbed 36 receptions for 635 yards and five touchdowns.

Sophomore: All-Western Athletic Conference second-team selection...started 12 games and was fourth in conference with career-high 57 receptions for 1,022 yards (17.9 avg.) and eight touchdowns...returned 21 kickoffs for 491 yards (23.4 avg.).

Freshman: Played in nine games with one start...caught 17 passes for 370 yards (21.8 avg.) and two touchdowns...caught season-high four passes for 143 yards and first two touchdowns of collegiate career versus Wyoming.

Personal

Born Az-Zahir Hakim 6/3/77 in Los Angeles, Ca...pronounced Oz-Za-HERE

Ha-KEEM...All-City selection as defensive back for Fairfax High Lions in Los Angeles...also played flanker and quarterback...as senior, intercepted six passes, threw for 452 yards and rushed for 838 yards...also played basketball and ran track...child development

major...Rams"" offensive line coach Ed White was Aztecs"" line coach while Hakim played at SDSU...single...resides in Los Angeles



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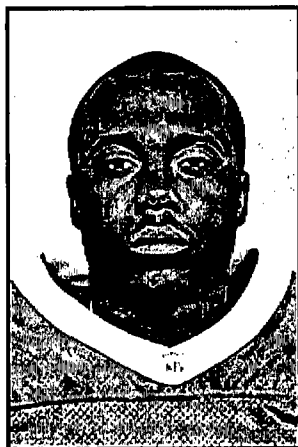


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Player Profile



Marshall Faulk

#28

Position: RB

Height: 5-10

Weight: 211

Birthdate: 2/26/73

College: San Diego State

NFL Experience: 6

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Pro Highlights:

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One of the most exciting players in the National Football League...combination of speed, power and elusiveness...has earned three Pro Bowl invitations in five year career...has four 1,000-yard rushing seasons, and 14 100-yard rushing games in career...traded to the Rams 4/15/99 by Indianapolis in exchange for the Rams' second-round pick (36th overall) and 5th round pick (138th overall) in 1999 NFL Draft...was second overall pick by Indianapolis in 1994 NFL Draft. 1998: Had best season of career...set Colts single-season record and led the NFL with 2,227 total yards from scrimmage, the sixth-highest total in league history, accounting for 43.5 percent of Colts yards...was only player in NFL with at least 900 yards rushing and receiving...was second in the AFC and sixth in the NFL in rushing with 1,319 yards on 324 attempts with six touchdowns...led Colts and all NFL running backs in receptions with a team record 86 catches for 908 receiving yards...had three 100-yard rushing games and a career-best three 100-yard receiving games...rushed for career high 192 yards on 17 carries and one touchdown at Baltimore 11/29, including 68-yard touchdown run...totaled Colts record 267 yards from scrimmage in game (7-75 receiving, 34-yard TD reception). 1997: Had third 1,000-yard rushing season, gaining 1,054 on 264 carries with seven touchdowns...had career-best four 100-yard rushing games...totaled 220 yards from scrimmage 12/7 at N.Y. Jets (23-133 rushing, 1 TD; 5-87 receiving)...rushed for 102 yards on 23 carries in season finale at Minnesota 12/21 to top the 1,000-yard mark. 1996: Led Colts in rushing for the third consecutive season...carried 198 times for 587 yards and seven touchdowns and tied then-career high of 56 receptions for 428 yards...missed only three games of NFL career (9/15 at Dallas, 9/23 vs. Miami, 10/20 vs. New England) due to toe injury...rushed for season-high 101 yards on 16 carries and two touchdowns vs. Philadelphia 12/5. 1995: Ranked fifth in AFC and 12th in NFL in rushing, and third in AFC and 11th in NFL with 1,553 total yards from scrimmage...earned second

consecutive Pro Bowl berth after rushing for 1,078 yards and tied career high with 11 rushing touchdowns (third in AFC, tied for fourth in NFL)...caught 56 passes for 475 yards and scored three touchdowns...had 19 carries for then-career high 177 yards and tied career high with three touchdowns and caught five passes for 45 yards vs. St. Louis 10/1 in earning Miller Lite Player of the Week honors. 1994: Named consensus NFL Offensive Rookie of the Year and Pro Bowl starter after rushing 314 times for 1,282 yards with 11 touchdowns and catching 52 passes for 522 yards and one touchdown...ranked third in the AFC and fifth in the NFL in rushing...rushing yardage total was 10th highest NFL rookie total in league history...1,804 total yards ranked second in AFC and fourth in NFL...posted four 100-yard rushing games and one 100-yard receiving game...earned Pro Bowl MVP honors...exploded onto the NFL scene in regular season opener, rushing 23 times for 143 yards and Colts' rookie record three touchdowns vs. Houston 9/4...was fifth highest NFL rookie debut since 1970...followed with 18-carry, 104-yard effort at Tampa Bay 9/11 in becoming only the seventh player in NFL history to open career with two consecutive 100+ yard rushing outings...totaled 213 yards (22-86 rushing, 8-127-1 TD receiving) vs. Washington 10/23, highest rookie single game total in Colts' history...set four Pro Bowl records in rushing 13 times for 180 yards (14.8 avg.) with one touchdown and catching two passes for 27 yards...set records for rushing yards, highest avg. gain per attempt, yards from scrimmage and longest run from scrimmage (49 yards)...longest run from scrimmage record broke mark set by former Rams' RB Lawrence McCutcheon.

College Highlights:

Three-time consensus all-America at San Diego State...career totals included school record 766 carries for 4,589 yards and 57 touchdowns...rushed for at least 100 yards in 23 of 32 career outings...had seven 200-yard games and two 300-yard games...finished fourth in Heisman Trophy balloting as junior, second as sophomore, and ninth as freshman, the second-highest freshman ranking ever to Herschel Walker's third place finish in 1980...finished fifth in the nation in rushing as junior with 1,530 yards on 300 carries with 21 touchdowns...became just fifth player in NCAA history and first since Cornell's Ed Marinaro in 1970-71 to record back-to-back rushing titles after rushing 265 times for 1,630 yards and 15 touchdowns...caught 18 passes for 128 yards...joined Walker as only players to surpass 3,000 yards rushing after sophomore season...rushed 201 times for 1,429 yards and 21 touchdowns to become first freshman in NCAA history to lead nation in scoring (15.6 ppg) and rushing (158 ypg.)...set career high and then-NCAA freshman record with 386 rushing yards and seven touchdowns on 37 carries vs. Pacific in second collegiate game...set four NCAA freshman records and tied Emmitt Smith for earliest game for freshman to surpass 1,000 yards by doing so in seventh game...public administration major.

Personal Info:

Born Marshall William Faulk in New Orleans, La...saw action as running back, quarterback, wide receiver and cornerback at Carver High in New Orleans...worked at Latham and Watkins law firm in San Diego during summers...Faulk joins Colts' QB Peyton Manning (D1-'98, first overall) and Broncos' DE Neil Smith (D1-'88, second overall) as highest drafted NFL players who are New Orleans natives...has own website,www.marshallfaulk.com... single...resides in St. Louis.

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Player Profile



D'Marco Farr

#75

Position: DT

Height: 6-1

Weight: 280

Birthdate: 6/9/71

College: Washington

NFL Experience: 6

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Pro Highlights:

Explosive player who is a force inside...all-out competitor on every snap...has quickness to beat opponent off the snap...highly productive player who wears down offensive linemen as game progresses...started 64 consecutive games...has 27 career quarterback sacks and three interceptions...one of most popular Rams in St. Louis...made team as undrafted college free agent in 1994. 1998: Started 16 games fourth consecutive year...played in 76.7 percent of defensive plays (771 snaps, second-highest on defensive line...was third on D-line in tackles (49) and second on team in sacks (seven) and quarterback pressures...had a career-high five passes defended while blocking field goal in Week 9 at Atlanta 11/1...made season-high five tackles in Week 13 vs. Atlanta 11/29 and season-high four quarterback pressures in Week 6 vs. N.Y. Jets 10/11...had at least one quarterback pressure in 15 of 16 games this season. 1997: Finished with 34 tackles, three quarterback sacks and 25 quarterback pressures...earned Iron Man award on defense from coaches...recorded two tackles and a third career interception against Seattle (10/19)...season-high four tackles vs. N.Y. Giants (9/21). 1996: Started every game at defensive tackle...registered career-high 6 tackles, 4.5 sacks, 15 quarterback pressures and one interception...tied for team lead with seven stops for losses...posted single-game, career-high eight tackles twice (vs. Green Bay 11/24 and New Orleans 12/21)...notched 1.5 sacks, two quarterback pressures, and one pass deflection against Atlanta 12/15...also forced a fumble and recorded second career interception. 1995: Team leader in quarterback sacks (11.5), quarterback pressures (21) and forced fumbles (4)...second to LB Roman Phifer with 11.5 tackles for loss...sack total ranked fourth in NFC and eighth in NFL...enjoyed best performance of career in Game 13 at N.Y. Jets 12/3...recorded career-high 3.5 quarterback sacks, forced a fumble, added three quarterback pressures and first NFL pass interception...tied Minnesota's Chris Doleman for highest NFL single-game sack total for season...recipient of Carl Ekern Spirit of the Game Award as voted by teammates. 1994: Played in 10 games, starting three...placed on injured reserve 12/7 after season-ending injury to left elbow...made NFL debut at defensive tackle in Rams 16-0 shutout of Kansas City 9/25...first career sack following week versus Atlanta

 **search**



10/2...made first career start against Giants 10/16 in place of injured Gilbert.

College Highlights:

Pac-10 Conference Defensive Lineman of Year as senior at University of Washington...college career included 131 tackles and 17 sacks...started every game as junior and senior...member of Huskies' 1991 national championship team...graduated with degree in society and justice.

Personal Info:

Born D'Marco Marcellus Farr in San Pablo, Ca...lettered in football, wrestling, track and soccer for Eagles of Kennedy High in Richmond, Ca...co-founder of Rams "Rushmen" defensive linemen who have attempted to "sack homelessness" since 1996 with over \$130,000 in performance donations to benefit St. Patrick Center in St. Louis...support of Aim High educational program...captain of Rams Caring Team, benefitting Caring Program for Children...brother, Andre, who played football at UCLA, also is D'Marco's agent...another brother, Mario, played at Cal-State Northridge...second cousin of Mel Farr, former Detroit Lion...he and wife, Cynthia, started the Farr Family Foundation, which benefits families and organizations in the St. Louis area...couple has one son, Grant Marcellus...resides in Wildwood, Mo.

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Player Profile



Ray Agnew

#99

Position: DE

Height: 6-3

Weight: 285

Birthdate: 12/9/67

College: North Carolina State

NFL Experience: 10

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Pro Highlights:

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Versatile and dependable veteran performer who is effective at both end and tackle...combination of size, strength, and intelligence....signed by Rams 2/26/98 as unrestricted free agent...played three seasons with New York Giants (1995-97) and five seasons with New England Patriots (1990-94)...re-signed with New York Giants 8/21/97 after being waived by Carolina 8/19/97...signed by Panthers 6/13/97...signed by Giants 3/10/95 as unrestricted free agent...first round pick (10th overall) by New England in 1990 NFL Draft. 1998: Had career season in first year in Rams uniform...made career highs in total tackles (79), solo tackles (60), and sacks (five)...tied career bests in interceptions (one), and forced fumbles (two)...was fourth on D-line with 16 quarterback pressures...tied career-high with eight tackles at New Orleans 11/15...intercepted pass at Philadelphia 12/3. 1997: Saw action in 15 games in reserve role at both left and right defensive tackle...made 15 tackles, two sacks and one fumble recovery. 1996: Played in 13 games with two starts at right defensive tackle in place of injured Keith Hamilton...recorded 24 tackles, 0.5 sacks, and first career interception, which was returned 34 yards for a touchdown. 1995: Played in 16 games with career-high 15 starts at right defensive tackle...registered career highs in tackles (65) and forced fumbles (2). 1994: Played in 11 games, starting the last three in place of injured Tim Goad...posted 22 tackles...six tackles in playoff game vs. Cleveland 1/1/95. 1993: Played in 16 games with one start...made 45 tackles. 1992: Started and played in 14 games at left defensive end...recorded then-career high 61 tackles. 1991: Played in 13 games with 10 starts at left defensive end...recorded 36 tackles and two sacks. 1990: Started nine of 12 games at right defensive end...named to the All Rookie teams of Pro Football Weekly, Football News, Football Digest and College and Pro Football Weekly...recorded 52 tackles, career-high 3.5 sacks, one forced fumble, one fumble recovery, and career-high three passes defended...made six tackles in first career start vs.

Miami 9/9...recorded first NFL sack against Cincinnati's Boomer Esiason
9/23...recorded single-game career high eight tackles vs. N.Y. Jets 9/30.

College Highlights:

Four-year starter for N.C. State Wolfpack...Atlantic Coast Conference Player of the Year as senior...had 87 tackles and six sacks...earned Associated Press honorable mention All-America honors and first-team ACC honors as junior, recording 72 tackles and five sacks... ACC Rookie of Year in 1986 after making 48 tackles and two sacks as freshman...history major.

Personal Info:

Born Ray Mitchell Agnew Jr. in Winston-Salem, N.C....voted defensive most valuable player as senior for Carver High Yellow Jackets in Winston-Salem after recording 70 tackles and 10 sacks in seven games... member of National Honor Society...studying to be a minister...married (Katherine) with three children, sons Ray III, Malcolm, and Keenan...resides in Wildwood, Mo.

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Kicking the pain

Wilkins boots three field goals despite injury

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ATLANTA (CNN.com) -- Jeff Wilkins' sore left knee got quite a workout in Super Bowl XXXIV, and he'll undergo surgery to repair the damage.



Wilkins' successful attempts of 27, 28, and 29 yards put the Rams up 9-0 at halftime. AP

The kicker was the St. Louis Rams' big question mark heading into the Super Bowl due to chronic tendinitis in his plant leg. And that was with good reason, considering his performance in the Rams' 23-16 victory over the Tennessee Titans.

Wilkins made three short attempts in the first half for the only points in a 9-0 lead. But he also was wide right on a 34-yarder.

"I made it through, and that's all that matters," Wilkins said. "All I needed was one game, and I made it through."

Wilkins said he will undergo surgery in a week or so. The injury has affected his kicking all season.

The Rams needed Wilkins more than usual due to unaccountable breakdowns inside the 20, especially in the first half. Results: mixed. A fifth attempt was botched when holder Mike Horan mishandled the snap and placed the ball on its side instead of a point, and Wilkins never got off a kick.

Both Wilkins and Horan blamed overly slick balls for the kick he didn't get to try.

"The ball boys wouldn't even let us touch them so that we had an idea of what to expect," Horan said. "They're a lot different than practice

balls, and even the new ones we brought out to use this week."

Wilkins had no excuse for the 34-yard miss. He missed only one of 13 attempts inside the 40 in the regular season.

"I just mis-hit it," he said.

He also shrugged it off, despite the magnitude of the game.

"It wasn't a perfect day," Wilkins said. "But in the past, I've let things bother me more than I probably should. This time I didn't let it bother me."

All the work didn't seem to overly affect him. Wilkins forced a touchback after kicking off following his third field goal near the end of the half, and also reached the end zone to open the second half.

The Rams led the NFL in scoring efficiency inside the 20 in the regular season, with 38 touchdowns and 12 field goals in 59 trips. Kurt Warner joined Dan Marino as the only quarterbacks to throw 40 or more touchdown passes.

In the first half, Warner passed for 277 yards and the Rams penetrated the 20 five times. But he never really came close to converting.

"We had some problems in the red zone, but we were trying to get the ball in there," running back Marshall Faulk said. "But we were trying to get the ball in there. We knew eventually we would get in there."

Twice in the playoffs, Wilkins talked the Rams out of signing 43-year-old Nick Lowery, who hasn't kicked since 1996. Lowery came to Atlanta on his own, and brought his kicking shoe just in case.

But during the Super Bowl buildup, Wilkins reasoned it was just "one dang game."

Wilkins was 20-of-28 during the regular season, but has been bothered by the injury much of the time. He missed a mid-range field goal attempt in each of the Rams' previous two playoff games.

Wilkins hurt his right leg against the Titans on his 38-yard miss in the final minute of a 24-21 loss Oct. 31, but he didn't miss any games because of it.

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Man of steel

This Ram wears an 'S' on his chest

Posted: Friday January 28, 2000 11:07 AM

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By Josie Karp, CNN SI.com

ST. LOUIS (CNN SI.com) -- Sitting in a chair at home, coaxing music from his saxophone, Kevin Carter looks gentle. Not being tough enough is a reputation Carter's had to live down since college. You can call him soft at home, because on the field you no longer can.

"I want to clear up something," Carter says. "People say, 'Kevin, are you meaner this year? Do you have more fire?' And I think, someone saying that I'm 'meaner this year' is an insult to me. It's an insult to my intelligence. It's an insult to how hard I've worked."



Kevin Carter has had at least ten sacks in three of his past four seasons with the Rams. Andy Lyons/Allsport

The Rams emerged from obscurity this season as Carter, a 6-5, 280 pound fifth-year defensive end from Florida went from underachieving to overpowering. His league-leading 17 sacks put Carter in position to establish a reputation and pass the burden of comparison on to someone else.

"Right now, if you're talking about complete defensive ends or sacks or whatever category you want to run into, team status, your standard for comparison is me. Not me compared to someone else."

Carter's very real belief that he cannot be stopped is inspired by his insistence that he is actually someone else.

His personal collection of posters, toys, comic books and the like provides an answer to the clue.

"Everything I had from my bed sheets to my posters on the wall, were all of the man of steel. And every memory I've ever had of any kind of



superhero, always was Superman.

"His whole identity, as far as Clark Kent versus Superman, I think really personifies me. I've never been a real 'rah-rah' type of guy to get really overly excited and you know, beat my head against a locker or anything like that. But my focus is clear and it's focused and it's like a burning fire that never stops. " The gentle, music-playing, dog-loving Carter turns himself into a quarterback-crazed lineman on Sundays the same way Clark Kent morphs into the man of steel.

"When I walk in with my suit on, I take it off, hang it up," he said. "When I put on my pads, my jersey, and my cleats, those are my cape and tights and boots. So it's just as easy as doing that. The transformation is made."



After a Rams blowout, Kevin Carter usually would chill out at home by blowing on his sax. CNN.com

What do his teammates think of all this?

"He thinks he is Superman," say defensive tackle and D'Marco Farr. "If you tell him he's not, he gets upset. He gets really upset. He'll chase you from one end of the building to another to explain to you that he is Superman."

Carter takes his Superman devotion so far, he even has his own version of Lois Lane, his wife Shima.

"Like Lois Lane, she's very capable. I mean, my wife can do anything that she wants to do," Carter said looking at his wife who was sitting beside him. "Anything."

"There are two very clear-cut, definite sides of him," says Shima. "But the factor that's the same regardless of whether he's Clark, Kevin or Superman man of steel is his passion."

"That about says it right," he said smiling at his wife. "That about says it right."

Come Sunday, Carter already knows what his game plan will be.

"Superman goes and you know leaps over tall building and stops locomotives on a daily basis. So that's what he always does. And that's what I would go out and do on Super Bowl Sunday. Just be consistent. Be who I am all the time."

A super performance in the Super Bowl would not be out of the



question.

Or out of character.

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Rocking rookie

Rams' Holt comes up big on the biggest stage

Posted: Monday January 31, 2000 08:36 AM

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By Ryan Hunt, CNN.com

ATLANTA -- Mike Martz could see this coming a mile away. He sensed Torry Holt was about to do something special.

Hey, they don't call him an offensive genius for nothing.

"We were talking going into the game that Torry might have eight to 10 catches," said Martz, the Rams' offensive coordinator. "We knew he'd be a big factor with the slants and the quick routes."

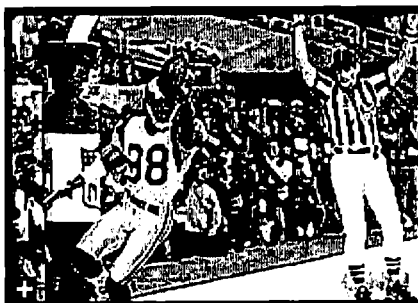
And Holt was just that -- catching a game-high seven passes for 109 yards and a touchdown in the Rams' 23-16 win over Tennessee in Super Bowl XXXIV. It set the record for most receiving yards in the Super Bowl by a rookie.

"I was just in the rhythm of the game," Holt said. "I was able to use some of my athletic ability and some of my technique that I learned over the course of the season to get open. Coach [Martz] said if I was able to get open against the single coverage that I would have a big day."

Then again, it was another week, another standout game for one of the more lesser-known cogs of the Rams' offensive arsenal. In the NFC Championship Game, Ricky Proehl caught Tampa Bay by surprise.

The fact that Holt, the Rams' first-round pick this year out of N.C. State, made such an impact wasn't that much of a shock.

But what Martz didn't anticipate was the Rams' troubles in the red



In addition to his third-quarter touchdown, Holt's first-half receptions were crucial in the Rams' scoring drives. AP

zone.

St. Louis doesn't leave points on the field very often. So the fact that the Rams failed to score a touchdown in their first five trips inside the 20 -- the first team in Super Bowl history to achieve the dubious feat -- was particularly disturbing.

CNN.com's Trev Alberts
 "Halfway through the season, coach Dick Vermeil's press conferences showed a change. It wasn't a cockiness. It was a confidence. He had his guys believing they could get it done."

"The Rams are an aggressive offensive team. They want to throw the football down the field. With the Titans starting free safety, Marcus Robertson, out with an injury, they challenged the safeties. And the result was Isaac Bruce's 73-yard touchdown."

So, fittingly, it was Martz's hunch that finally brought an end to their red zone woes. It was Holt's 9-yard touchdown catch on a quick slant that got St. Louis into the end zone for the first time, giving the Rams a 16-0 third-quarter lead.

"The play was a sight adjustment, actually, just like last week," said Martz, comparing Holt's touchdown to Proehl's game-winning reception

against the Bucs. "They blitzed the safety on the back side, so we went to the slant. We had a lot of misfires, but that one clicked"

Warner, in fact, missed his first 12 pass attempts inside the red zone.

In the first half alone, he was 19-of-24 for 277 yards between the 20s, but 0 for 11 deep in Titans' territory. Holt's touchdown was his only red zone completion of the day.

"They did a good job down there," Warner said. "We had a couple of shots, but they brought a lot of pressure and didn't allow me to scan the field and find that one-on-one guy."

He did, however, find Holt when it counted.

Holt, who earlier had a touchdown pass batted out of his hands, beat Titans cornerback Dainon Sidney clean off the line of scrimmage, and Warner found Holt in-stride in the end zone.

"I was able to juke him out and make my move," Holt said. "Kurt was patient enough to find me for a touchdown. It something you always dream of. And to have it happen is overwhelming."

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