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Sean Petty

**Crime watch**

I don't think there is anything much worse than watching a crime being committed, especially on national television. What is even worse than watching the crime is sitting there listening to the criminals admit that they committed the crime and got away with it. Even worse than that (if that is possible) is that the law enforcers let the confessors get away with it.

What was this grand crime that was on national television? You say you didn't hear about it? It happened Sunday when the San Diego Chargers had a game stolen from them in the last ten seconds by none other than the black-clad Oakland Raiders.

It was the perfect scenario. The bad guys wearing black and riding away with the booty, which in this case turned out to be a National Football League victory. Without the victory, the Raiders would have been 0-2 on the season and tied with Seattle for last place in the Western Division of the American Conference. On the other hand, with the victory the Chargers would have been in sole possession of first place in the same division.

Return you now to the scene of the crime. It is the last play of the game, the Raiders have the ball on the Chargers 10-yard line. There are ten seconds left in the game and the Chargers are winning 20-14. Oakland quarterback Ken Stabler gets the ball, rolls right and is grabbed by San Diego's Woodrow Lowe. While going down Stabler pitches the ball forward in hopes that a Raider will pick the ball up and score. Oakland running back Pete Banaszak scoops the ball up and pitches it forward again where tight end Dave Casper kicks and bobbles the ball into the end zone for a touchdown tying the score. Oakland's Errol Mann comes in to kick the extra point with no time left winning the game for the Raiders.

Some may say that's just the way the ball bounces. Well, sometimes it is but not in this case. After the game Stabler admitted he pitched the ball forward, which is illegal. Then to add insult to injury, Casper admitted that he intentionally pushed the ball into the end zone and then fell on it.

There is an NFL rule that says a touchdown counts in the final two minutes of an NFL game only if it is recovered in the end zone by the man who fumbled it. Stabler was not the man who fell on his own fumble in the end zone.

Chalk a couple of ridiculous calls up to the referees, although the referees follies did not stop with that one game.

But where does all this leave the San Diego Chargers? About the same place the Houston Oilers ended up after a referee blew a call which would have given them a victory over Cincinnati last year. The referee admitted he made a mistake on the Oilers' call and NFL Commissioner Pete Rozelle apologized to the Oilers. They still lost the game. That is where San Diego stands, with a loss that could deeply affect them later in the season.

Another hit-and-run crime nearly took place on Monday night when the Minnesota Vikings were almost robbed of victory by the Denver Broncos. Of course, the law enforcers, the referees, had a hand in the decision once again.

Just as in the Oakland game, it was the last play of the game, supposedly. Denver quarterback Norris Weese rolled right and was sacked by the Minnesota defense. The clock should have kept running because it can only be stopped if the passer was intending to pass. Weese admitted that he never intended to pass. With the clock stopped and the ensuing mayhem that developed, Denver's field goal unit had time to run on the field and kick a field goal to send the game into overtime.

Fortunately, the Vikings got the ball in overtime and former Rice quarterback Tommy Kramer guided them down the field to set up a field goal and eventually win the game.

Once again it was a decision by a referee that caused Minnesota coach Bud Grant to run on to the field protesting and rightfully so.

What is the answer to all these referee's bad calls that can wreck a team's season in a matter of seconds? Maybe they should experiment more with instant replay on the sidelines. There should be nothing wrong with a referee reversing a decision, especially when it involves a team winning or losing a game. A team works out all season, plays 16 regular season games yet the referees have the power to wipe out a victory by one man's call. Something must be done to improve professional football's law enforcers.

**Underclassmen dominate opening weekend in SWC**

Freshmen and sophomores wasted no time in letting folks know they were around as the Southwest Conference opened its 64th football season last Saturday.

Underclassmen were involved in 71 of the 124 points scored by SWC teams in four games played Saturday, and they lead in five of the ten individual statistical categories.

Freshman Maury Buford of Texas Tech is the SWC's leading punter with a 45.8-yard average on ten kicks in the Red Raiders' narrow 17-9 loss to heavily favored Southern California in Los Angeles. And another freshman, SMU linebacker Jerry Kovar, is tied for the pass interception lead with his 70-yard

touchdown return in the Mustangs' 45-14 victory over TCU.

Two other SMU youngsters hold the lead in three other categories in the first SWC statistical accounting of the season.

Quarterback Mike Ford, the SWC total offense leader last year as a freshman, is back on top this time around. Ford leads the conference in both passing and total offense with his 280 yards on 17 completions in 26 attempts against the Frogs.

And running back Derrek Shelton leads in tandem offense on 84 yards rushing and eight yards receiving.

Shelton also ranks second in rushing to Texas A&M junior Curtis

Dickey, who was called on 25 times in the 37-10 victory over Kansas and responded with 128 yards. Shelton gained 84 yards in 26 tries, while fellow sophomore David Beal of Texas A&M picked up 82 yards in just three carries.

A look at some of the other outstanding performances by freshmen and sophomores in Saturday's openers:

Rice sophomore defensive end Dennis Barry recovered two fumbles and threw an Iowa State runner for a fourth-down loss deep in Rice territory to thwart three scoring drives as the Owls were nipped by heavily-favored Iowa State, 23-19.

Rice sophomore Randy Hertel threw two touchdown passes, completed 15 of 27 for 149 yards.

TCU sophomore Bobby Stewart caught a 27-yard touchdown pass to cut SMU's margin to 21-14 just before the half.

SMU freshman Eddie Garcia kicked six extra points and his only field-goal attempt, a 34-yarder, to rank second in SWC scoring with nine points.

And Beal, backing up fellow sophomore Mike Mosley, broke an 80-yard touchdown run to seal Kansas' defeat. Mosley, incidentally, completed 63.6 percent of his passes for an average gain of just under 14 yards per completion.

In fact, the only senior to lead the SWC in anything this week is SMU's Harold (D.K.) Perry. He returned the game's opening kickoff 94 yards for a touchdown and averaged 47.3 yards on three returns, while also leading in punt returns with three for an average of 24.7 yards.

**Ags host softball tourney in Bryan**

Texas A&M will host the Fifth Annual Invitational Softball Tournament Friday and Saturday at Travis Park in Bryan.

The tournament features two of the top teams in the state, Texas Woman's University and Stephen F. Austin State University, along with St. Mary's, Trinity, West Texas State, Baylor, the University of Texas at Arlington, Sam Houston State University, and Texas A&M University.

TWU, the defending state and regional champion, finished fourth in nationals. Many of TWU's players are back, including All-America pitcher Kathy Arendsen who played on the national women's championship team this past summer. During competition at nationals, Arendsen pitched two no-hitters in one day.

SFA, another top competitor, placed second in regionals and 13th nationally. UTA will also shoot for the championship as they feature All-America Brenda Marshall.

Returning lettermen for Texas A&M are Rhonda Reese, Toni Porter, Tony Hymel, Liz Zemanek, Nancy Sullivan, Cindy Gough and Sami Evans. These lettermen will

be joined by Glorian Motal, freshmen Dana Thiessen, Shannon Murray, Mary Lou Wargo, Karen Guerrero and walk-ons Debra Takacs and Vicky Markowsky.

Outstanding players for Texas A&M are Gough, one of the top stopstoppers in the Southwest and the Aggies' leading hitters, Rhonda Reese (.379) and Liz Zemanek (.316). Gough and Reese are also captains for the team.

Texas A&M, the defending title holder for the tournament, placed sixth in state and seventh in regionals last season. The Aggies claimed the tournament championship with a 5-2 win over SFA.

"This tournament offers the opportunity to see some of the people who have been chosen for the Pan-American games in San Juan, Puerto Rico next summer," said Texas A&M coach Bill Calloway. The games are a preview for Olympic-bound athletes in the Western Hemisphere.

Tournament play begins at 10 a.m. Friday. The Aggies play at 11:30 a.m., 2:30 p.m. and 8:30 p.m. Friday.

**Gervin doesn't show for preseason physical**

United Press International  
SAN ANTONIO — Lanky George Gervin, a converted guard who led the National Basketball Association in scoring, was the only San Antonio Spurs veteran not to show up for his physical Wednesday in preparation for preseason training camp.

However, team officials discounted the significance of Gervin's absence despite the fact he has been embroiled in a re-negotiation with the team all summer.

Gervin's agent, Pat Healy of Tacoma, Wash., has said Gervin was hurt that he made less money than some other San Antonio players although he led the league with a 27-point average last year and made considerably less money than most other all-pro selections, who average \$500,000 to \$600,000.

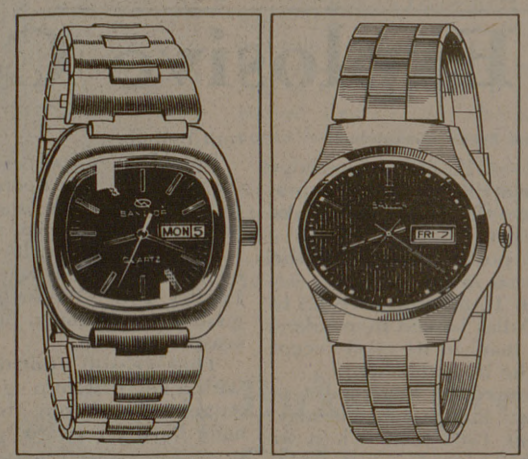
The Spurs reportedly offered to more than double Gervin's current salary of more than \$150,000, but the Detroit native was not satisfied with the long-term pact.

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