

Vermeil's Eagles should be better

United Press International
PHILADELPHIA — The Philadelphia Eagles had more yards of total offense, more first downs, more yards rushing and more offensive plays last year than did their Super Bowl squad of 1980. But those numbers were overshadowed by two great big ones — 10-6, the team's regular season record, and 0-1, marking the shocking loss to the New York Giants in the NFC wild card game. And immediately, the fingers pointed to the offense.

"We were a better football team than we were last year in terms of total yardage and everything else," Eagles Coach Dick Vermeil said. "But what brought us down was that we were not very efficient passing offense-wise. We just weren't as

efficient throwing the ball as we were two years ago. Actually, I thought Ron (Jaworski) was a better quarterback than the year before."

As a result, Vermeil made some changes in the off-season. He released a pair of veterans, wide receiver Charlie Smith and tight end Keith Krepfle, coaxed 70-year-old offensive guru Sid Gillman out of retirement and rewrote the playbook to feature more short passing.

He also drafted three wide receivers, including top pick Mike Quick, and opened camp with a staggering total of 18 wide-outs. With all these bodies, Vermeil hinted that veteran All-Pro Harold Carmichael did not have a starting job sewn up.

But Carmichael, who has gotten off to the fastest start of his career, and Ron Smith, whom

Vermeil says "gives us more talent than we've had there before," will be the wide receivers. John Spagnola inherits the starting tight end job from Krepfle amid stiff competition.

The engineer of the new attack is Jaworski, who went from NFC Player of the Year in 1980 to a less-than-happy 1981. Included in that stretch was a crucial 4-game losing streak late in the season that saw the Eagles score just 43 points and left Jaworski at the mercy of the dormant but never extinct Veterans Stadium boobirds.

"I felt from a personal standpoint I had the same kind of year last year as I did in 1980," said Jaworski, entering his sixth season as Philadelphia's No. 1 quarterback. "But I guess I went into a slump the same time the team did. No question we're all

disappointed over what happened. We all came back ready. This is the best camp we've ever had."

The reliable Wilbert Montgomery, who rushed for 1,402 yards and caught 49 passes for 491, always is a threat. A logjam at fullback includes 1981 rookie starter Hubie Oliver, Leroy Harris and Perry Harrington, both of whom missed the season with injuries, and veteran Booker Russell.

Tackle Jerry Sisemore, whom Vermeil calls "the best pass protector in football," anchors the offensive line which includes two other potential All-Pro's in tackle Stan Walters, who had a subpar year last season, and center Guy Morriss.

Defensively, the decision by All-Pro middle guard Charlie Johnson to leave camp and de-

mand a trade, plus the retirement of end Claude Humphrey left a pair of holes but Vermeil expects to fill them with little problem.

Five-year vet Ken Clarke finally will get his big break at middle guard. At end, 6-foot-8 Dennis Harrison has to fend off Leonard Mitchell, the 1981 top draft pick who was hampered by injuries last year, to start opposite Carl Hairston, possibly the league's most underrated player.

Residing in the NFC's toughest division could make any improvement from a 10-6 season pretty difficult but the Eagles are a hungry team again, according to Jaworski.

Sutton says he's not the answer

United Press International
MILWAUKEE — Don Sutton Tuesday rejected the theory he's the "missing link" the Milwaukee Brewers need to make it

Series. "I'll try to earn my ticket," Sutton, a 37-year-old right-hander, is 13-8 this season with 254 career victories and 2,895 strikeouts.

"I didn't go banging on the walls and demand they trade me," he said. "They (the Astros) initiated it. It was one of those happy circumstances where both sides benefited. They needed some young players and

Milwaukee needed another pitcher."

The Brewers, who lead the American League East, have devastating hitting and excellent defense. Pitching is considered their weakness. But with the acquisition of Sutton and Doc Medich of the Texas Rangers a few weeks earlier the club feels it has enough to go all the way.

"I think getting a pitcher of

his caliber (Sutton) definitely gives us an edge," said Manager Harvey Kuenn.

He has already slated Sutton — who was scratched from a start Monday night because of the deal — to pitch one game of a double-header at home Thursday against the Cleveland Indians.

The Brewers designated reliever Jerry Augustine for reassignment to make room for Sutton. Augustine could be sent to a minor league club, traded or released as a free agent.

Sutton, who has a 2-2 World Series record, and was in three postseason championship series with the Los Angeles Dodgers, said his goal "is to win another World Series and win 300 ballgames. Then I'll look for a real job."

He downplayed his importance to the Brewers.

"You can't help but be impressed with the club just by looking at the box scores in the newspapers everyday," he said. "They're a great offensive club. What's overlooked is their defense. I don't know if you could drive a golf ball through their infield."

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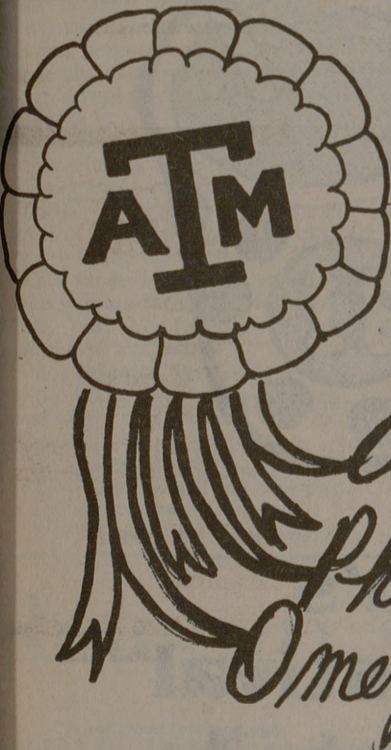
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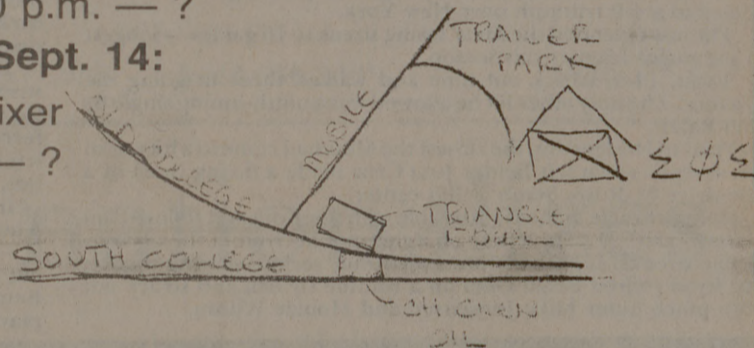
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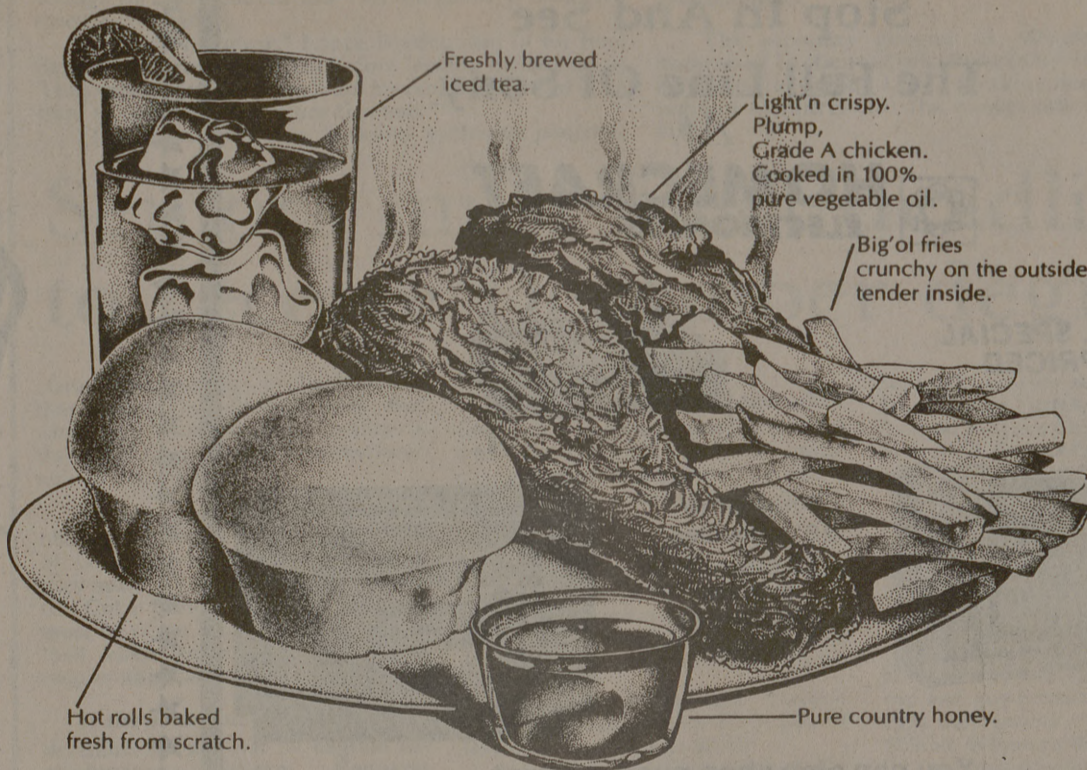
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