Spurs shoot for playoffs despite record

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — Despite 11-28 record more than halfway nto the season, the San Antonio purs can still make the NBA playffs, first-year Coach Bob Weiss said

"I think we got a good shot at the st playoff spot," Weiss said. "We're games behind Denver and we ve a favorable schedule. I think if e play ball and they slip, we'll have

"I think we can make a run with hat we got now, but we need peo-le playing at the top of their "Weiss said.

The Spurs, who have 33 games reaining on their schedule, host the ouston Rockets tonight.

Weiss, former assistant coach with e Dallas Mavericks, had high ex-ectations for his rookie year. He



Johnny Moore, who was recuperating from a rare illness, would be playing at 90 percent of his peak. Weiss also had plans for guard Johnny Dawkins, the team's firstround draft choice

Moore remains on the injured reserve list as he recuperates from a form of meningitis that sidelined him for most of last season.

Dawkins, meanwhile, has not produced effectively, Weiss said.

"Those are the biggest things that we didn't have that I thought we ad hoped that veteran guard would have," Weiss said. "The big-

gest frustrations have been playing well in games and losing by two. We spent a lot of good efforts ending up on the short end of the stick.'

Weiss said he has taken some of the pressure off of Dawkins and

hopes to activate Moore soon.
"I think we're making progress,"
Weiss said. "But I'm still disappointed with our record. I would have liked to have won more games

Weiss said a poor training camp was part of the reason for the slow

"Coming out of training camp, we were definitely not where I wanted to be. I thought they would learn quickly. We had people out of shape that were holding us back," Weiss

Weiss said he may have pushed

"One of my faults early on was trying to teach too much too soon, not breaking it down in simpler terms," Weiss said. "I knew that would be one of my tendencies going in.

Weiss said team management is pleased with the Spurs' perfor-

Broncos' Kay faces tough

COSTA MESA, Calif. (AP) — In the view of many Super Bowl observers, the Road to Pasadena narrows at the feet of Denver Broncos

Kay will be blocking against two of the most feared outside linebackers in the game — Lawrence Taylor and Carl Banks of the New York Giants. If Kay can neutralize them at the point of attack, Denver quarterback John Elway will be able to work his magic. If not, Elway and the Broncos figure to be in for a long afternoon in Sunday's Super Bowl.

During interviews at Orange Coast College on Tuesday, Kay was asked repeatedly about his thoughts on going against Taylor, the NFL player of the year whose 201/2 sacks led the league and whose blitzing

The fact is, Kay will more often be blocking Banks, who generally lines up on the strong side, across from the tight end, while Taylor is on the weak side. But that doesn't mean

"Those are two great linebackers," Kay said. "Taylor may be a little quicker, and Banks may be a little more overpowering. They both

of Banks. "If there's such a thing as an underrated player on their defense, Banks is it," Reeves said. "All you hear about is Taylor, but Banks makes dominating plays, too. I think he's playing as well as Taylor right

the Giants 19-16, Kay went against Banks almost exclusively. He recalls facing Taylor on only two or three plays. "I cut-him once (with a cut block) on a screen pass," Kay recalls.

outstanding linebackers, such as New England's Andre Tippett, and

anybody as far as blocking is con-cerned," said Reeves, who has gone so far as to call Kay the "best blocking tight end in the NFL.'

That was before his bout with drugs, which caused him to miss four games while undergoing drug rehabilitation. Kay returned for the AFC championship game against Cleveland, and although he admits his skills are still somewhat rusty, he

expects to be close to 100 percent.
"How about 88 percent?" he says.
"That's my number."

Simms and Elway overcame tough times in early careers

PASADENA, Calif. (AP) — When il Simms was chosen by the Giants the first round of the 1979 NFL aft, the New York fans booed udly. Some didn't stop booing un-

When the Denver Broncos traded r John Elway three days after he as the first pick in the 1983 draft, e state of Colorado cheered en sse. Some didn't cheer again until

Simms, who had a day off from ctice Tuesday along with the rest the Giants, has taken eight years dismal teams, injuries and nenever the Giants were home oing from 76,000 participants in a me of Pin The Tail on the Quar-

Elway, who took just four years to ach the Super Bowl, has also heard the boos — in part because his ad-ance notices were almost impossible

live up to.
"People in Denver were expecting to walk on water. They expected Super Bowl right away," Elway "Denver is so hungry for a orld champion, the patience wasn't

Elway came out of Stanford eralded as the best quarterback rospect to enter the NFL in a dede. He was drafted by Baltimore th the first pick in the 1983 draft, en was traded to Denver when he id he would opt for professional seball rather than sign with the

He was an immediate starter, but

COSTA MESA, Calif. (AP) -

an engineer. A third is studying

to become an attorney. There

An odd collection for the Su-

"I've got a bunch of guys block-

ing for me named Bradley (Ben-

son), William (Ard) and Christo-

pher (Godfrey)," Giants Coach Bill Parcells said. "They come from schools like Wake Forest

and Brigham Young. They're the

stockbroker types who, after practice, head to their suburban

per Bowl. An even odder group to form the New York Giants of-

dealer

exa /an, 779 fensive line.

went just one for 8 for 14 yards in 1979 draft and the second quar-his first regular-season start before terback chosen — the first, Jackie leaving with an injured elbow. After five games, he was benched in favor of Steve DeBerg, then returned as a starter after four games on the

He played in 11 of Denver's 14 games his rookie season, but com-pleted just 47 percent of his passes and threw just seven touchdowns and 14 interceptions as the Broncos

In 1986, Elway was good one game and bad the next, until that dramatic 98-yard march in Cleve-

"People in Denver were expecting me to walk on water. They expected a Super Bowl right away. Denver is so hungry for a world champion, the patience wasn't there."

— John Elway

land. But Elway's adherents say that

Little known outside Kentucky, where he played at Morehead State, he was the seventh choice in the

Giants offensive linemen share

That's very true. And it's also

ites can be the key Sunday when

the Giants meet the Denver Bron-

And the Broncos know it.

"They are a pretty good group," Broncos linebacker Tom Jackson said. "They also know their role. The Giants have a

great, great defense and the role

of the New York offense is to

make the big play when it can and not turn the ball over."

Most of the Giants big plays come on either Joe Morris runs

or passing plays set up by Morris'

"The key to their offense is the

odd occupations off the field

One's a stockbroker. Another is true that this group of suburban-

also is the banker and the auto cos in Pasadena, Calif. for the

NFL title

Thompson, is now out of football. New York fans who had never heard of Simms viewed the move as another in a long line of wasted draft

He became a starter in the sixth game of his rookie year and quarterbacked the Giants to four straight wins in what was to end as a 6-10 season. In his second year, the Giants went 4-12 and in his third they made the playoffs for the first time in 18 years, although Simms sat out the last five games with a shoulder in-

He missed the whole 1982 season with a knee injury and when he returned in 1983, he had lost his job to journeyman Scott Brunner. When he finally played, his season lasted 13 passes before he broke his thumb on the helmet of Dennis Harrison of the Eagles.

But even after leading New York to the playoffs in 1984 and 1985, Simms still heard boos this year. The fans didn't care that he was playing with most of his receivers either out with injuries or playing hurt.

Where Elway is known for his mobility and his ability to improvise, Simms' forte is hanging in the pocket and throwing even while get-ting hit. Two of his four touchdown passes in the 49-3 playoff win over San Francisco were thrown just as he

run," Jackson said. "You stop the

running game and you can control the offense."

Jones said stopping the Giants'

running game is difficult because

the offensive line rarely lets itself

The left side of Benson and Ard are power blockers, while the right side of Karl Nelson and

Godfrey play a more finesse-type

isn't overly physical, even though they are big," Broncos' linebacker Jim Ryan said. "I think their tech-

nique is very good. They get in the way of you all the time and

cut off your pursuit angles.

"As a whole, the Giants' line

be isolated.

Broncos defensive end Rulon

was nothing more than a nationally televised version of what he had been doing all along. Denver is 40-19 in games he started. It took even more time for Simms.

mance despite the poor record.

"The fans, press, management pretty much had the same perspec-tive where this team was, in terms of age, what the draft picks might contribute, what Johnny Moore's condition was like," Weiss said.

"If management expected this team to be five games over .500 by now, then you might have prob-lems," he said. "I think we all pretty much saw the same picture. They expected young talent to develop and they see improvements there.

tight end Clarence Kay.

style gives quarterbacks nightmares.

Kay's job any easier.

make big plays.' Denver Coach Dan Reeves is a fan

In a regular-season game won by

Kay has gone up against other

fared well.

blocking task



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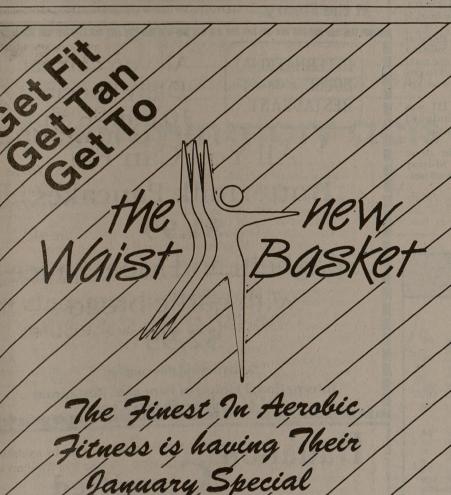
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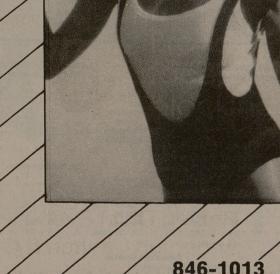
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