

Monday, January 27, 1991

The Battalion

Sports Editor

Alan Lehmann

845-2688

This bowl truly Super; Giants, Bills do it right

Finally, a Super Bowl.

After six blowouts in the last seven contests, it was nice to see a game live up to the Super moniker.

In an upset, the Giants outlasted the Bills 20-19. But it wasn't the score that mattered, it was the way that the game was played.

It was a battle from start to finish, featuring everything that makes professional football worth watching: hard hitting, tough running, long passing and a last-second finish.

One thing that was not a surprise was the quality of both offenses. Each moved the ball well in spurts, but neither turned the ball over.

That's right, for the first time in Super Bowl history, there was a turnover-free game.

In fact, Giants' quarterback Jeff Hostetler turned in the play of the night when he was sacked for a safety but didn't fumble.

Down 10-3 in the second quarter, the Giants were backed up to their own five yardline by a holding penalty. Hostetler took the snap and dropped back to pass, but tripped over his own blocker and stumbled into the endzone.

Buffalo got a strong rush on the play and Bruce Smith caught up with Hostetler in the endzone. Reaching out, Smith grabbed Hostetler's arm and tried to strip the ball.

But the cagey quarterback from West Virginia somehow felt the heat coming and covered the ball in the nick of time. Knowing that he was sacked, Hostetler fell to the ground and took the sack rather than changing a fumble.

Although the momentum was squarely with the Bills at that point, the Giants were down by nine points rather than 14, a margin that would prove to be the difference.

Pulling no Punches

The level of play in the Super Bowl has typically been anything but super.

This one was different. Both defenses hit ferociously, leaving no doubt that they were playing for the championship of the National Football League.

The underrated Giants' secondary hit Jim Kelly's receivers early and often (as well as late). How tough was the Giant defense?

Even Buffalo's highly-touted receiver Andre Reed dropped several passes, some because of New York hits, others because he heard the footsteps and acquired a sudden case of butter-fingers.

Although the Bills didn't do a good job of stopping the Giants' running game, they were zeroed in on Hostetler. Smith and Cornelius Bennett hit the Giant quarterback so hard and so often that I wondered how much longer he would stay in the game.

But Hostetler showed the grit of a coal miner picking himself up after every play and going back to the huddle. No doubt the thought of Matt Cavanaugh, his back-up, facing the Buffalo defense gave Hostetler inspiration.

And speaking of inspired play, what more can you say about Otis Anderson and Thurman Thomas?

The two, so different in age and style, played their hearts out.

Anderson, the gnarled, 33 year-old veteran, ran over and through Bills on his way to 102 yards on 12 carries. For his efforts, he was named the MVP of Super Bowl XXV, a fitting tribute to a man who was twice all but abandoned by the Giants.

Thomas, a budding superstar from Oklahoma State, put on a show of his own. The youngster, who juiced and outkicked Giant defenders every bit as adeptly as he bulldozed them, was the key to the Bills' running and passing games.

Living up to the name

Almost as impressive as the running games was the passing of Hostetler, who was starting for only the seventh time in his pro career. He braved the Buffalo pass rush to complete 20 of 32 for 222 yards and a touchdown pass.

Kelly, playing on a battered knee, did everything that he could for his team.

When his receivers were covered, and they often were by a Giant defense that rushed only two men most of the night, he scrambled several times without regard to his health to pick up key first downs.

But even these tremendous individual efforts got lost in the culmination of this great game.

Like every Super Bowl should, this one came down to the final seconds.

Unlike two years ago when Joe Montana led his 49ers on a last-ditch drive and a victory over Cincinnati, this one ended in frustration for the offensive team when Scott Norwood missed a 47-yard field goal attempt.

Bills fans have nothing to hang their heads about, this game was a classic and will be remembered as such for as long as the Super Bowl is played.

Bills' last-second field goal misses mark Giants eat up clock, hold on for win

TAMPA, Fla. (AP) — The New York Giants left the Buffalo Bills no time for the no huddle.

Controlling the ball on touchdown drives at the end of the first half and the beginning of the second, the Giants won their second Super Bowl by beating the Bills 20-19 when Scott Norwood missed a 47-yard field goal with 8 seconds left.

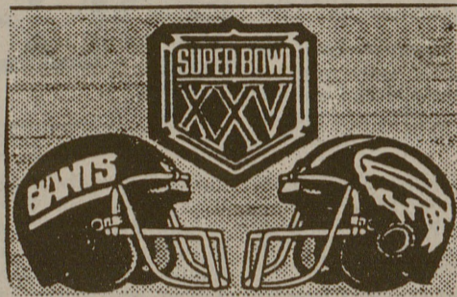
The winning points in the closest Super Bowl in history came on Matt Bahr's 21-yard field goal with 7:20 left in the game.

But the game was really won by New York's ball control offense, which moved the ball 87 yards to a touchdown just before the half to cut a 12-3 deficit to 12-10, then held the ball for nearly 10 minutes to start the second half to take a 17-12 lead.

The Giants had the ball for 40:33, leaving the Buffalo offense on the field for only 19:27.

One hero of a game in which the lead changed hands four times was 33-year-old Otis Anderson, who picked the most important game of his career to notch his first 100-yard game this season — 21 carries for 102 yards. He went in from the one for a touchdown to cap the third quarter drive.

Another was Jeff Hostetler, the backup quarterback who directed the New York offense almost impeccably, running his career



record to 7-0 as a starter. He completed 20 of 32 for 222 yards and a 14-yard touchdown pass to Stephen Baker.

In fact, seven was the number of the day — it was the seventh straight win by the NFC in the Super Bowl. It was also the most exciting — only San Francisco's 20-16 win over Cincinnati two years ago was close.

It was also a victory for the New York defense against an offense that had scored 97 points in two playoff games. Challenging the Bills to run, the Giants went most of the game with six defensive backs and two down linemen, blanketing Andre Reed and James Lofton and shutting down the Bills

offense that had scored 95 points in two previous playoff games.

"Every swing of the leg is critical and this one didn't work out," Norwood said. "You don't get a second chance on a kick like that."

Six of the last seven Super Bowls had been blowouts, but this one was decided by a toe. And for the Giants was it was much more difficult than their 39-20 rout of Denver in the 1987 Super Bowl.

"This one was a lot better," Lawrence Taylor said. "We just sort of sailed through the last one. This one we had to play as a team."

Anderson was named the game's Most Valuable Player.

"In 1987, I was nominated for the 'Where-is-he-now' trophy," said Anderson, who, after an outstanding career in St. Louis, was obtained to back up Joe Morris on the Giants' last Super Bowl team. "No one gave me a chance in hell."

"He was supposed to be washed up before our first Super Bowl in 1986," said center Bart Oates. "He certainly wasn't washed up today."

Giants general manager George Young praised Hostetler.

"However frustrated he was, he hung in there," said Young, Hostetler's strongest

advocate as he waited to take over for Phil Simms, who injured a foot Dec. 13 in a 17-13 loss to Buffalo.

The Giants took the kickoff to start the second half and mounted a touchdown drive that covered 75 yards and consumed 14 plays and 9 minutes, 29 seconds.

The score, on Anderson's 1-yard run, gave New York a 17-12 lead.

The drive included four third-down conversions. Hostetler hit Meggett with an 11-yard pass on third-and-8 to get the march started.

Hostetler also hit Mark Ingram for 14 yards on third-and-13 to move the ball to the Buffalo 18. And on third-and-4, he hit Howard Cross for nine yards to the 3.

The Bills marched 63 yards to take a 19-17 lead early in the fourth quarter. But New York's patient, deliberate offense responded again, moving 74 yards in 14 plays to set up Matt Bahr's 21-yard field goal with 7:20 left.

During that drive, Hostetler hit Mark Bavaro for gains of 17 and 19 yards. The 20-19 score marked the closest margin of victory in Super Bowl history.

The previous closest score was Baltimore's 16-13 win over Dallas in Super Bowl VIII.

Hapless Aggies fall to Owls 98-76

By DOUGLAS PILS
Of The Battalion Staff

HOUSTON — For the second weekend in a row the Texas A&M men's basketball team brought out the very best in its opponent.

Saturday, it was the Rice Owls' turn to shoot the lights out as they poured on the points in the second half to take a 98-76 victory over the 5-13 Aggies.

Two Owls, Chase Maag and Marvin Moore, helped Rice, (7-10 overall and 2-5 in Southwest conference play) finish the game with a 62.5 shooting percentage. Both came away with career highs in points.

Maag, junior college transfer from Colorado, scored 29 points, 21 of which came from hitting seven of eight three-point shots. He was nine of 11 overall and he made all four free throw attempts.

Moore, a sophomore from Killeen who averages seven points per game, busted the A&M defense for 23 points.

Last week it was Baylor's David Wesley who scored a career-high 33 points as the Bears took a 90-85 win in G. Rollie White Coliseum. Wesley's efforts against the Aggies earned him SWC Player of the Week honors.

A&M head coach Kermit Davis Jr., who displayed a calm demeanor despite watching the Aggies match their worst SWC start since 1957 (0-7), said too much emphasis is being placed on the losing streak.

"I think it's time we stopped talking about it getting worse," Davis said. "We're definitely not playing as well as we can play. We've just got to pull ourselves together with a more positive outlook."

Davis said that while it might be hard to see a light at the end of the tunnel, he is confident that the team and the coaching staff is having that difficult year that a lot of programs go through in the first year.

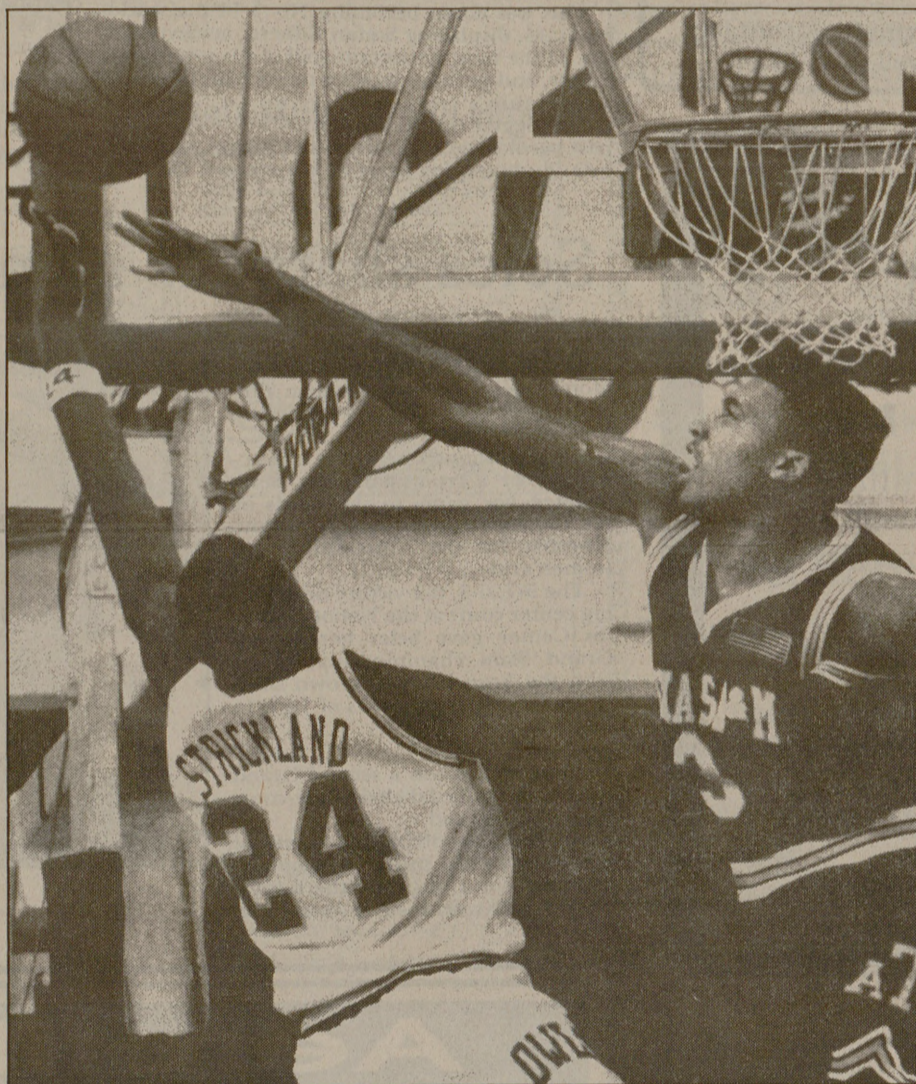
"You take a look around the country with new coaches going into a new program and it's a big struggle," he said. "It's been tough for the new coaching staff, losing the people we've lost."

Davis pointed out that Rice played an exceptional game.

"Give Rice a lot of credit," Davis said. "They played extremely well. Today they played the way people thought they would play at the beginning of the year."

"They played like a team that was picked to finish third or fourth in our league."

Offense doesn't seem to be a problem for the Aggies as they shot 54 percent for the game and 57 percent from three-point range. It's on defense that A&M seems to falter the most.



HUY THANH NGUYEN/The Battalion

Texas A&M forward Shedrick Anderson tries in vain to block Rice forward Will Strickland's layup in the Aggies' 98-76 road loss Saturday afternoon.

Sophomore guard Brooks Thompson, who led the Aggies with a career-high 22 points, including a school record for three pointers and percentage in a SWC game, agrees.

"Our defense is struggling really bad," Thompson said. "Offensively I think we're fine. Right now we just have to stay positive and keep practicing hard and maybe it'll all come together."

Davis was most upset with the team's perimeter defense. Every time that A&M would put the clamps on Brent Scott, Rice's

6-9 center, Maag and Moore would burn the Aggies from outside.

Once again free throws continue to hamper A&M. The team shot 46 percent from the charity stripe, hitting only seven of 15.

Other Aggies scoring in double figures were Rashone Lewis and Isaac Brown with 15 each and senior captain Lynn Suber chipped in 11.

A&M's next outing will be Tuesday night in G. Rollie White as they take on the Houston Cougars (12-6, 4-3) who were upset by Southern Methodist Saturday night. Tipoff is at 7:30 p.m.

Foyt trying to make one more comeback

FORT WORTH (AP) — Two months into rehabilitation from an accident, race car driver A.J. Foyt has made agonizing progress toward his goal of starting in one last Indianapolis 500.

His original goal was to be healthy enough to attempt to qualify for a record 34th consecutive Indy 500 in May.

But in true Foyt fashion, he now hopes to drive in the Autoworks 200 Indy-car oval-track race in Phoenix on April 21.

"I'm going to set it up," said Foyt, whose first 1991 Lola chassis cleared customs from England on Tuesday, when he lowered his barrel-sized chest and fragile feet into the Lola's tub for the first time.

It was a noteworthy moment, because 1991 is Foyt's self-proclaimed last year of driving in any race.

"They were all laughing at the shop, but I've got to be careful with my legs and feet," said Foyt, 56. "I sat there 10 or 15 minutes kind of messing with the pedals."

Foyt's career almost ended last year when he slammed into an embankment on the

26th lap of the Texaco-Havoline 200 at Road America.

He asked rescue personnel to hand him a tool so he could help them cut him from the wreckage.

He underwent three surgeries for a variety of injuries, including fractures in his legs and feet.

In mid-November he began his comeback with Steve Watterson, strength and rehabilitation coach for the Houston Oilers.

"I study biomechanics, and I'm an exercise physiologist, but I didn't know anything specific to racing," Watterson said. "I'm visiting Foyt's shop to learn all he could about the cars and conferring with Foyt's doctor, he was confident."

"I told him, 'This time, I'm the driver. You're the car,'" Watterson told the Fort Worth Star-Telegram. "After that we had a good relationship."

Foyt suffered a severe dislocation of his right ankle and still has sensory deprivation in that foot.

He cannot fit his feet into his pre-accident size 10½ D shoes and boots. "My kids are standing in line, seeing which one gets these alligator boots and ostrich boots..."

Foyt was permitted to put weight on his right foot in mid-November. But his left foot and leg require a crutch.

He suffered a compound fracture of the left tibia. The impact fractured the bone at the joint line, and the bone shot out the side of his leg. The main artery was twisted, prompting immediate surgery.

"That was the leg they were talking about taking off at the hospital," Foyt said. "At least they're both still there. I could take a lot of things, but I don't know if I could take that."

Foyt said the pain has diminished but hasn't left him.

"You know how your feet will go to sleep and feel like pins and needles? That's how they are constantly."

Foyt is an auto racing legend. He has been racing professionally for over 34 years.

Raycom will show A&M-UT

DALLAS (AP) — The Southwest Conference, Raycom Sports and HSE-Prime Network announced Friday their men's basketball telecasts for Sunday, Feb. 3 and Tuesday, Feb. 5.

Texas A&M (5-13 overall and 0-7 in SWC play) will host the Texas Longhorns (12-5, 6-1) at A&M's G. Rollie White Coliseum on Sunday, Feb. 3, on Raycom Sports.

The Longhorns, who find out today if they've cracked the Associated Press Top 25, are still in the hunt for a conference title as they are only one game behind league leading Arkansas.

Airtime is scheduled for 1 p.m.

The game, moved from Saturday, Feb. 2, will be syndicated on Raycom's 20-station Southwest network throughout Texas, Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and New Mexico.

TCU (12-4, 4-2) and SMU (9-9, 4-4) will be featured on Tuesday, Feb. 5, on the SWC's mid-week package with HSE-Prime Network. Airtime is set for 7:30 p.m. from SMU's Moody Coliseum.

The game will be shown live throughout six states in the Southwest on Home Sports Entertainment (HSE) and selected areas nationally through Prime Network.

Additional games on the Raycom and HSE-Prime Network schedules will be released on a 12-day advance by the Southwest Conference office.