

# DAYNE'S DAY

Ron Dayne runs into history books with record day

by Anthony L. Gargano  
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MADISON, Wis. -- In his mind, he could have been back in South Jersey again, running over an uncut hedge, mud stains on his sweat pants, announcing another make-believe touchdown - by Ronnie Dayne!

The University of Wisconsin's Ron Dayne used to do that sort of thing as a child back in Berlin Township. He could envision playing college football but not a day like this. On Saturday, he was on the grand stage of history, and so he didn't know what to do when he made that history at 3:48 p.m., Badger time.

Dayne had just tracted for 31 yards to pass Ricky Williams and become major-college football's all-time leading rusher, and all of Camp Randall Stadium detonated in celebration. The tuba hollered. Flashbulbs blinked. The crowd of 79,000 screamed in tribute to him. And he ran left, then right, before finally falling limp into the arms of his linemen as a streaker ran the length of the field into the arms of the police.

His speech to the Wisconsin faithful after the game was short and especially sweet. "Thank you so much for your support," he said. "I love you."

The record belonged to the offensive line, too, said Dayne, ever humble. He had entered the game needing 99 yards to break Williams' mark of 6,279. His line punched enough holes in the Iowa defense to help him gain 216 yards on 27 carries. He wound up the day with a total of 6,397.

Dayne's historic run past Williams came with 4 minutes, 32 seconds left in first half of what would be a 41-3 win by the Badgers.

On it, Dayne powered off right guard at the Wisconsin 17. Iowa defenders, their arms flailing, splattered off him like raindrops. He broke three tackles and zoomed upfield before his legs were finally taken out from under him.

On that run, which came in his last game at Camp Randall, he once again took advantage of his amazing girth. A running back who weighs more than 250 pounds running the way Dayne does is something to see.

"Should he win the Heisman?" Wisconsin coach Barry Alvarez had said earlier in the

week. "I'm biased, but I think he should - certainly if he breaks the record. I know this: There's no one who's done more for a program than what he's done for our program."

Indeed, Dayne now has led the Badgers to the Big Ten Conference championship and a berth in the Rose Bowl for the second straight season. That bowl spot was, in effect, sealed when Penn State lost to Michigan. Iowa was merely a speed bump.

By nightfall in Madison, there was a ceremony at midfield. The Badgers retired Dayne's No. 33, and fans rhythmically chanted his name the way they had after every one of his carries: "Ronnnnn DAYNE!"

Imagine that - the boy his mother, Brenda, used to call "Thick Man" enjoying this type of night.

Twelve members of Dayne's family, including his mother, had flown in from New Jersey to witness it.

Now all that's left is the Heisman Trophy. Wisconsin has produced only one Heisman winner. Alan "The Horse" Ameche, a bullish fullback, won the award in 1954.

Now, with Florida State's Peter Warrick most likely out of the race and with the record broken, Dayne must be considered the favorite over the likes of quarterbacks Drew Brees of Purdue and Joe Hamilton of Georgia Tech.

If you ask Dayne, he will still say that Warrick is the choice.

Where would he rank?

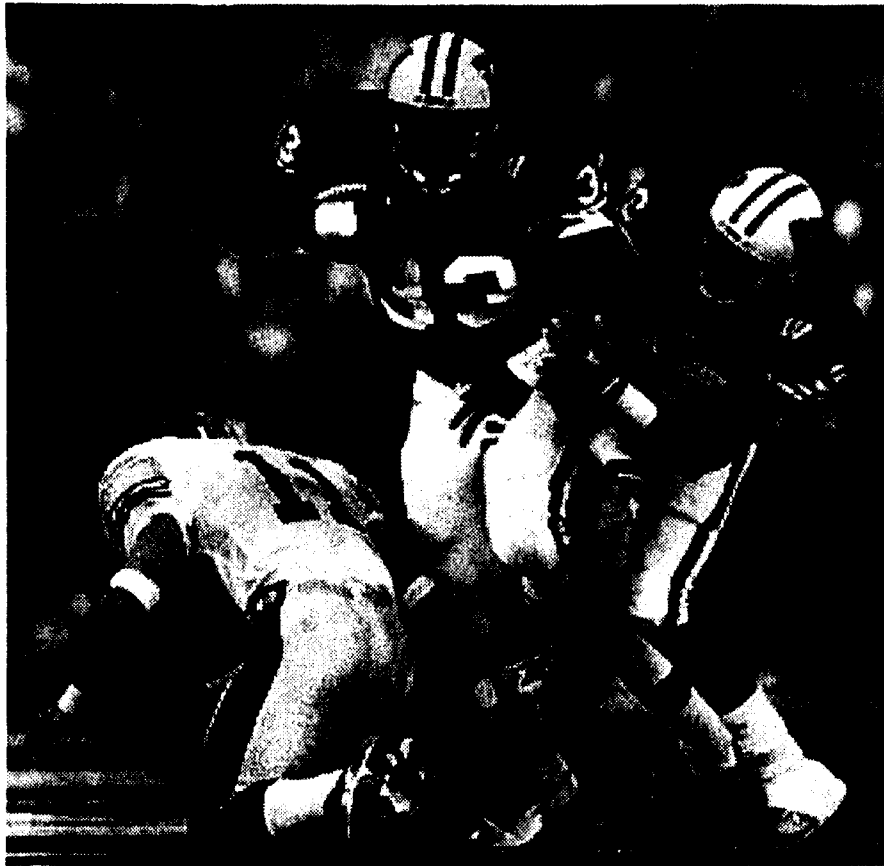
"Probably 2," he said.

That is Dayne being modest again. He is a young man of few words. While he would cherish the Heisman, he is nervous about the possibility of winning it, because he would have to make a speech.

After his postgame news conference, he stepped off the podium and ran to the locker room with his teammates amid the trumpets of the Wisconsin fight song.

Ron Dayne ran all day. It was what his mother had taught him: Run, Ron, run, and always be yourself. Don't ever be a follower.

"I remember, on his first day of junior high," Brenda Dayne said, "all the kids had those new Jordans. I couldn't afford to buy him those. So we went to the Echelon Mall, and I bought him a pair of Etotics for \$55. 'Whatever you do,' I told him, 'your friends will



Wisconsin running back Ron Dayne gets a little help from receiver Chris Chambers, right, as he runs past Iowa's Joe Slattery to set the NCAA all-time rushing record in the second quarter Saturday. He gained 31 yards on the play to go ahead of Ricky Williams, who set the previous record last season.

want to do.' Then I said, 'Lord, please.'

"Well, he comes home from school and said three of his friends said they were going to get the same sneakers.

"See? I said. Then I said, 'Thank you, sweet Jesus.' When it comes to Ron, I thank Jesus how he turned out."

Dayne turned out to be the best runner in college football. On his path to the record, Dayne he gained 2,109 yards in his freshman season, 1,457 in his sophomore year, and 1,525 in his junior year. He has ended the regular season of his senior year with 1,834 yards, including 981 in the last five games.

In midseason, Sports Illustrated had ranked him among its top 10 disappointments the season.

"I'm not going to lie about that," said Dayne, who cut out the article and taped it to his

locker. "That really motivated me to go out and play harder."

He spoke quietly during his press conference. He wore a Wisconsin baseball cap and a gray T-shirt cut at the shoulders. Ron Dayne is a big man in many ways.

"Johnnie Cochran called recently, I guess to represent him for the pros," Brenda said. "He lied and said he was Ronnie's uncle. Jeez, just because we're black, that doesn't mean we know each other. I didn't like that. Besides, I think O.J. was guilty."

So much commotion over "Little Ronnie" from Berlin, N.J.

"This is great," said Ron Dayne, whose 2-year-old daughter is named Jada. "But my baby's probably sleeping. That's how I would like to celebrate it all. With her in my arms."

## Trinidad decides to put off rematch with De La Hoya

by Steve Springer  
Los Angeles Times

LAS VEGAS - Promoter Don King got the message Saturday morning from both rival promoter Bob Arum and Time Warner Sports: Sign with us. Agree to a Felix Trinidad-Oscar De La Hoya rematch because you have no place else to go.

Will they never learn? King, who always seems to have another option in his playbook, pulled off an end-around Saturday evening, turning his back on De La Hoya, Arum and Time Warner by signing his fighter, Trinidad, to a title fight against World Boxing Association, super-welterweight champion David Reid, the

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- Bob Arum, promoter

1996 U.S. Olympic gold-medal winner. The fight, which unites King and promoter Dan Goossen, another Arum rival, will be shown on Showtime pay-per-view on March 4 from an arena to be constructed outdoors at Las Vegas' Caesars Palace. Trinidad, though the challenger, will get \$4 million; Reid, the champion, \$3 million in this battle of unbeaten fighters.

In the never-ending chess game between boxing's two major promoting forces, Arum countered Sunday by claiming that any hope of De La Hoya-Trinidad II have been dashed and that his fighter now will face either Ahmed Kotiev, the World Boxing Organization's 147-pound champion, or Derrell Coley, the World Boxing Council's No. 1 contender at 147, on Feb. 26.

Arum wants that match to be at Los Angeles Staples Center, along with a co-main event featuring WBC super-featherweight champion Floyd Mayweather. The problem is, the Los Angeles Clippers are scheduled to play that night at the arena. But negotiations are under way with the Clippers and the NBA to move that game.

If the details can't be worked out, the De La Hoya fight will be held at New York's Madison Square Garden.

"A De La Hoya-Trinidad rematch is dead," Arum said. "It's over, finished. They pulled out. Oscar will stay at 147 pounds. That was always the plan."

Not quite. On Saturday, Arum said that De La Hoya would move up to fight Javier Castillejo of Spain, the WBC 154-pound champion. But when Trinidad decided to move up, Arum reversed his field.

Arum was quick to point out that, by not fighting De La Hoya, Trinidad is passing up a purse estimated at \$18 million-\$20 million.

"You could say the same thing about Arum and Oscar," responded Goossen.

Events moved quickly Saturday after the Arum-King meeting ended in a stalemate before noon. King, who had been talking with Goossen for 10 days about a Reid fight, reestablished contact and the two pounded out a deal in about seven hours.

The alliance between King, whose favorite expression is "Only in America," and Goossen, whose promotional organization is America Presents, has given King a new slogan for Trinidad-Reid.

"Now," said King, "it's Only in America Presents."

# What's up with Jordan?

by Fred Mitchell  
Chicago Tribune  
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Jumper from the top of the key. Yes! Drive to the left of the basket, pump fake and a soft shot off the glass. Swish!

Head fake, fadeaway, rimming . . . good. Posts up, backs in, quick turnaround, deft release . . . nothing but net.

Hard drive to the basket, spin underneath along the baseline, reverse layup goes.

Yes, Michael Jordan, approaching 37, still has game.

A one-on-one session against Corey Benjamin at the Berto Center Wednesday livened up an otherwise brooding Bulls team, losers of all four games this season.

Jordan made his first five shots against Benjamin in an animated game, opening a 10-3 lead. Slightly winded, he settled for an 11-9 victory.

"Playing halfcourt and I'm worn out," Jordan said. "The good thing about it is he's more worn out than I am."

Jordan emphasized he was merely paying a visit to the Bulls, that he has no intention of ending his retirement and cautioned reporters not to "read too much" into his presence at the team's practice facility. He also visited the Bulls' locker room after Saturday's 113-97 loss to the Hawks when he was in Atlanta for a charity golf tournament.

Jordan wore a black sweat suit and talked trash throughout Wednesday's exercise, which was the result of a challenge from Benjamin, a second-year swingman who's on the injured list with a sprained ankle.

"It was probably the best one-on-one game I ever had in my life," Benjamin said. "I was excited to play against him, ready to go at him. I just wanted to see what he can do, and he still has it."

Like Craig Ehlo and Bryon Russell before him, Benjamin learned that Michael usually has things his own way on the court.

"I think he cheated a couple of times," Benjamin said. "There were a lot of flagrant fouls. If it hadn't been for the flagrants, I would have



had a couple of more baskets." Jordan recently said the gnarled index finger on his right hand--the result of an acci-

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- Michael Jordan

dent with a cigar cutter several months ago--would preclude his playing basketball even if he wanted to.

"It limits me. I can't do much," Jordan reiterated on Wednesday. "I just came out to have a good time. (Benjamin) talked a little trash in Atlanta and I had to come here."

Benjamin acknowledged issuing the challenge. "I've been sending messages probably for the last year and a half," he said. "I really didn't think they would get back to him. They did get back to him and he came at me. I sent

messages that I could beat him. He said he was going to play me on Wednesday and he came down here."

Many Bulls players lingered after practice to watch Jordan back in his familiar environs.

"I knew he was coming," General Manager Jerry Krause said. "It's great to see him in the building. I'm glad our kids can watch him and understand what it took and understand some of him. I have no problem with that. He's welcome any time."

Jordan, returning to the Berto Center for the first time since his retirement, said he felt comfortable there, even though he and Krause have a strained relationship.

"I don't have to come around Jerry. I can come around and see some of the players," Jordan said. "I don't have to report to him or any of the Jerrys (including chairman Jerry Reinsdorf). I know

this is their facility, this is their team. But I still have friends on this team that I relate well with and I stay in contact with. I come back to support them.

"In essence, I'm supporting the Chicago Bulls. I don't have to ask them if I can come back around. I am entitled to do that without asking."

The Bulls renounced their rights to Jordan because he has been retired for a season. Is there any chance he could return as a free agent?

"None at all," he said. "Today was just break a sweat, see some of the guys, try to help the morale a little bit. No one asked me. Tim (Floyd) asked me if I could stop by sooner or later. I just got back in town and I decided to stop by. No one else has asked. I came by to see Dickey (Simpkins) and some of the other guys. Please, don't take it any further than that."

"I don't sit back and second-guess my decision," Jordan said. "When I made the decision, there was never going to be a second-guess. When I think about basketball, I think about the talent that's playing right now. I may reminisce about some of the players I played with--Toni (Kukoc) and some of the guys. I miss playing the game. But the only uniform I see is a Bulls uniform. I have never seen myself in another uniform."

Including a Lakers uniform, playing for Phil Jackson?

"Phil asked if I was done with basketball," Jordan said. "He didn't try to entice me to come to L.A. He knows that basketball is over for me. He just wanted to hear it, confirm it, right before the season."

Jordan said he would consider working out with the Lakers as he did with the Bulls.

"If I'm in the area, I don't mind stopping by," he said. "But it doesn't mean anything. I play pickup games sometimes in the (Chicago) neighborhoods. You know, South Side, West Side. No one takes anything from that. I never said I was going to stop playing. I still love the game of basketball. It's still fun for me."

Still, as Jordan keeps popping up in NBA arenas--Saturday he was in Atlanta, Monday he was in New York to watch the Knicks play the Bucks--he has to know he's fueling speculation about a comeback.

"Just coincidence," Jordan insisted. "I was in New York, Patrick (Ewing) asked me to come to the game. I was in Atlanta. Lenny (Wilkins) I know very well. Then the Bulls came down. A couple of guys called me last year to come by and I never got the chance to come down. Traffic is not as bad in Atlanta as it is in Chicago. It was easy. Don't take anything out of this."