

Sporting View

Do the Reds have a chance? Well...

by John Musser
The Collegian

Look at this year's World Series and one might get the impression that this is baseball's version of last January's San Francisco-Denver Super Bowl. And we all remember what a hotly contested game that was.

There is no doubt that the Oakland A's have the advantage at almost every position, from starting pitching to managing to ownership. Perhaps the Cincinnati Reds have the edge in the bullpen, sporting three heat masters in Randy Meyers, Rob Dibble, and Norm Charlton, against Oakland's one-man gang, Dennis Eckersley. Of course, a bullpen is only effective if it has a lead to protect.

The American League champs also have another advantage over Cincy. The A's play every facet of the game well. They can beat you with the running game or with home runs. As they did in the AL championship series, Oakland can even beat you with bunts, sacrifices, and singles.

And let us not forget their defense. Oakland's defense is almost like having eight Shop-Vacs in the field: they suck up everything.

So the Reds may as well pack, get their golf bags, and head for Florida, right? Well, before everyone starts saying "See ya next year," consider this: The Los Angeles Dodgers faced the same task in 1988, and they were able to climb Mount Oakland.

While the Reds don't have a pitcher like Orel Hershiser, they do have Jose Rijo, Tom Browning, and Danny Jackson. In case you have already forgotten, these three kept the Killer B's from Pittsburgh quiet. In fact, the most noise made by any of the B's was made off the field when Barry Bonds questioned third baseman Jeff King, who let a back injury keep him from playing. (Actually, Manager Jim Leyland pulled King from the lineup, despite King's desire to play.)

And the Reds have a solid defense to back up their pitching. The outfield demonstrated in the NLCS that they are one of the best in either league. The infield isn't exactly made of swiss cheese, either.

But the offense is suspect, which may be the key to who wins this series. And the only way the Reds can win is if left fielder Eric Davis can get his bat to come alive and drive in some runs. Without Eric the Red producing, the Cincy attack won't be enough to challenge the A's pitching. And with no offense, the Reds bullpen will be meaningless.

So will Davis get hot and give the Reds' bullpen a chance? Will the A's club Cincy like a dead horse? Yes and no. Take the NL winners in six over Oakland.

• I couldn't believe my eyes when I watched the fourth quarter of last Sunday's Cleveland Browns-New Orleans Saints game. It wasn't the tenacity of the Browns cutting a 19 point deficit to five in 2:21 that amazed me. The near-choking ability of the Saints offense and their head coach did.

Not only were the Saints paralyzed on offense, but coach Jim Mora almost lost the game by taking points off the board. With 1:58 remaining in the game, Morten Andersen kicked a field goal that put the Saints up by eight points. The Browns' chances of scoring two touchdowns, while possible, were not very good.

But Mora was apparently feeling generous, because when Cleveland was flagged for an offside penalty on the kick, he decided to accept the penalty and keep his lead at five. After running some time off the clock, Mora sent Andersen out to kick again. This time he missed. Cleveland tried to take advantage of the opportunity, but they were only able to get off a couple of ill-fated pass plays.

• Mora also committed another boner just moments before his decision to nullify his own kicker's field goal. Well within field goal range, Mora had quarterback Steve Walsh throw the ball instead of safely handing off to one of his running backs. Walsh threw a perfect strike -- into the hands of Browns linebacker Mike Johnson. Johnson pretended that the ball was an annoying insect or something and promptly swatted the ball, and the Browns' hopes, to the ground.

• I wonder if Chuck Noll still thinks that first-round draft choice and contract holdout Eric Green still won't make a contribution this year? The "ineffectual" Green has scored five TD's in the last two games. If this is a lack of contribution, I pity the opposing defenses once Green gets the hang of things.

• Green, a tight end, has been so impressive the past two Sundays that he has earned a nickname from Steelers' broadcaster Jack Fleming. Fleming has dubbed Green the "U.S. Steel Building", after Pittsburgh's U.S.X. Building.

Cross country race to be held on campus

Event sponsored by ROTC

The Behrend 8,000 meter cross country run, sponsored by ROTC will be held on Oct. 27.

Starting time for the race is 1 p.m.

Awards will be presented to the top overall male and female finishers, plus to the top two finishers in men's and women's categories in six age groups. The awards will be presented at the Wilson Picnic Pavilion following the run.

Starting time for the race is 1 p.m. The race is open to all Behrend faculty, staff, and students, as well as anyone else who wishes to participate.


For more information about entry fees and a map of the course, contact Captain Jim McCarthy at 898-6218.

IN THE BLEACHERS


by Steve Moore



Louie forgets to moisten the needle before inserting.



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