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# SPORTS

## THEY JUST DON'T DIVE ANYMORE - WHY?

W.G. Ramirez

It used to be back in the days of Lynn Swann and John Stallworth of the Pittsburgh Steelers, and even before that with Fred Biletnikoff of the Oakland Raiders, that wide receivers made the game of football alot more exciting.

Just think about it. 3rd-and-9, time ticking away, and the game on the line. Terry Bradshaw would approach the center. Rocky Blier and Franco Harris lined up accordingly. Bradshaw would fake the hand-off, dropback, scramble just a bit and then unleash a 50+-yard bomb that seemed to be on its way past Swann's fingertips. But then somehow, the lanky and flexible Swann would gracefully dive in mid-air and produce the

reception.

That is what is supposed to be about!!! Receivers leaving their feet.

One-handed snares while flying parallel to the ground across the middle.

These days though, if a ball is going to be overthrown, a receiver will actually slow up and watch the ball fly by. No more diving.

It could've only been two or three years prior that the same player was lighting up his alma mater's stadium on homecoming night in front of 80,000 crazed football fans. Yet now that he is in the NFL, making millions, there are no spectacular receptions. Cornerbacks and safeties are the ones coming up with more of the big plays.

Don't get me wrong, there are those receivers that put forth 200% effort, such as: Dallas' Michael Irvin, Atlanta's Mike Pritchard, 'Frisco's Jerry Rice, Green Bay's Sterling Sharpe, Denver's Shannon Sharpe and the Raiders' Tim Brown (sometimes).

Yes, only six receivers that come to mind off the bat, out of approximately 168 (assuming there are six per team).

It just doesn't seem right that these players are getting paid to do a job that isn't exactly being done right.

Forget those footsteps you keep hearing, take the hit and make the catch. Which brings us to another point. Take a closer look to the game you'll be in tuned with this Sunday. See how many receivers drop perfectly thrown passes because they hear those dreaded footsteps of an oncoming defender. It is the receiver's job to make that play. The result may be painful, and he may see stars, but this is the pros.

The NFL. Big time. CBS Game Of The Week - with John Madden and Pat Summerall in the booth.



Photo: SI

Desmond Howard is seen here diving for an outstanding catch while playing for Notre Dame. Howard now plays for the Washington Redskins in the NFL. The Redskins are currently 3-10 and sit in last place in the NFC East.

Last Sunday, Buffalo was visiting Philadelphia. Eagles quarterback Bubba Brister only completed 28-for-48 passes (.368 pct), but I distinctly remember him grasping his helmet a number of times after watching his receivers drop dead-on at-

tempts.

There are some very talented quarterbacks in the NFL, yet there are also many receivers that do no justice for the offensive drive.

Is it asking too much for accuracy in the receiving de-

partment. It's not so much the accuracy in catching the ball, but how about towards the effort of attempting to catch it.

I don't know, I could be wrong and maybe it's just me...

...but they just don't dive anymore!!!

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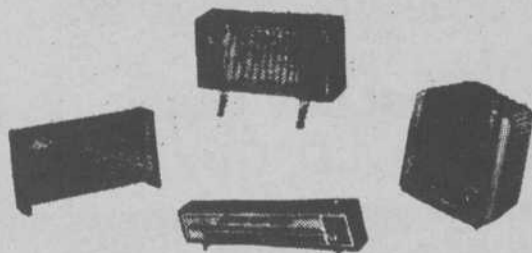
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These activities are sponsored by The City of Las Vegas

## LOCAL LEAGUE ANNOUNCEMENTS

★★★★

### PERSONALIZED WEIGHT TRAINING

Personalized weight training programs are available through the Mirabelli Community Center, 6200 Elton Ave., for \$2 per day, or \$10 per month. Qualified City personnel will work with you to develop a program catered to your individual needs.

Call 229-6359 for an appointment.

★★★★

### HOT SHOT BASKETBALL PROGRAM

A hot shot basketball program began Friday, November 12 at the Chuck Minker Sports Complex, 275 N. Mojave Rd. Play begins at 3 p.m., each Friday thereafter.

The program is designed for ages 8-15, and will concentrate on networking local youth in hopes of developing future leagues. The cost is \$1.

Call 229-6563 for more in-

formation.

★★★★

### YOUTH HOOPS CLINIC

December 18, 1993 at the Doolittle Community Center, a basketball clinic will be held for children ages 5-14 years old. Participation requires a donation of \$2.00 or 2 canned goods to be given to a local food bank. The clinic runs 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

Call 229-6374 for more information.

★★★★

### COED VOLLEYBALL

Coed volleyball competition begins Jan. 18 at the Johnson Community School, 7701 Ducharme Ave. Beginners take the court Monday's and Wednesday's, while intermediate players play Tuesday's and Thursday's. Action begins at 6:30 p.m., nightly.

The cost is \$110 per league, plus official's fees. Registration takes place Jan. 3-14. All leagues are designed for adults.

Call 229-6175.

★★★★

### ATTENTION ALL GIRLS

City of Las Vegas, Doolittle Community Center 1901 North "J" Street, is currently accepting interest cards from young ladies 10-14 years old interested in participating in an all girls basketball league. No previous experience required. Just the desire to play basketball is needed. Call 229-6374 for more information. Coaches are needed also.

★★★★

### ROLLER HOCKEY LEAGUES

A pair of roller hockey leagues are now being organized by the City of Las Vegas Department of Parks and Leisure Activities. Registration takes place Dec. 27-Jan. 7 at two locations; the Robinson Community School, 825 Marion Dr., and the Johnson Community School, 7701 Ducharme Ave. The cost is \$50 for the 16 and younger league, and \$60 for the 17 and older league. Team rates are available.

Play takes place at 9 a.m.

Saturdays, beginning Jan. 15 at the Wet'n Wild Water Park parking lot, 2601 Las Vegas Blvd. Roller hockey is the latest form of the traditional game, using roller blades rather than roller skates.

For more information, call 459-0201 or 229-6175.

★★★★

### WINTER HOOPS LEAGUES

The City of Las Vegas Robinson Community School, 825 Marion Dr., is now organizing winter basketball programs. A teen league for ages 13-16 begins play Jan. 28 and continues each Friday thereafter, at 5 p.m. The cost is \$10 per game.

A men's "over 30" league begins Jan. 24. Competition takes place at 6:30 p.m. Monday's and Tuesday's. The cost is \$200 per team plus a \$6 per game official's fee.

Registration for both leagues takes place Jan. 3-13, and is on a first-come, first-serve basis. Call 459-0201.