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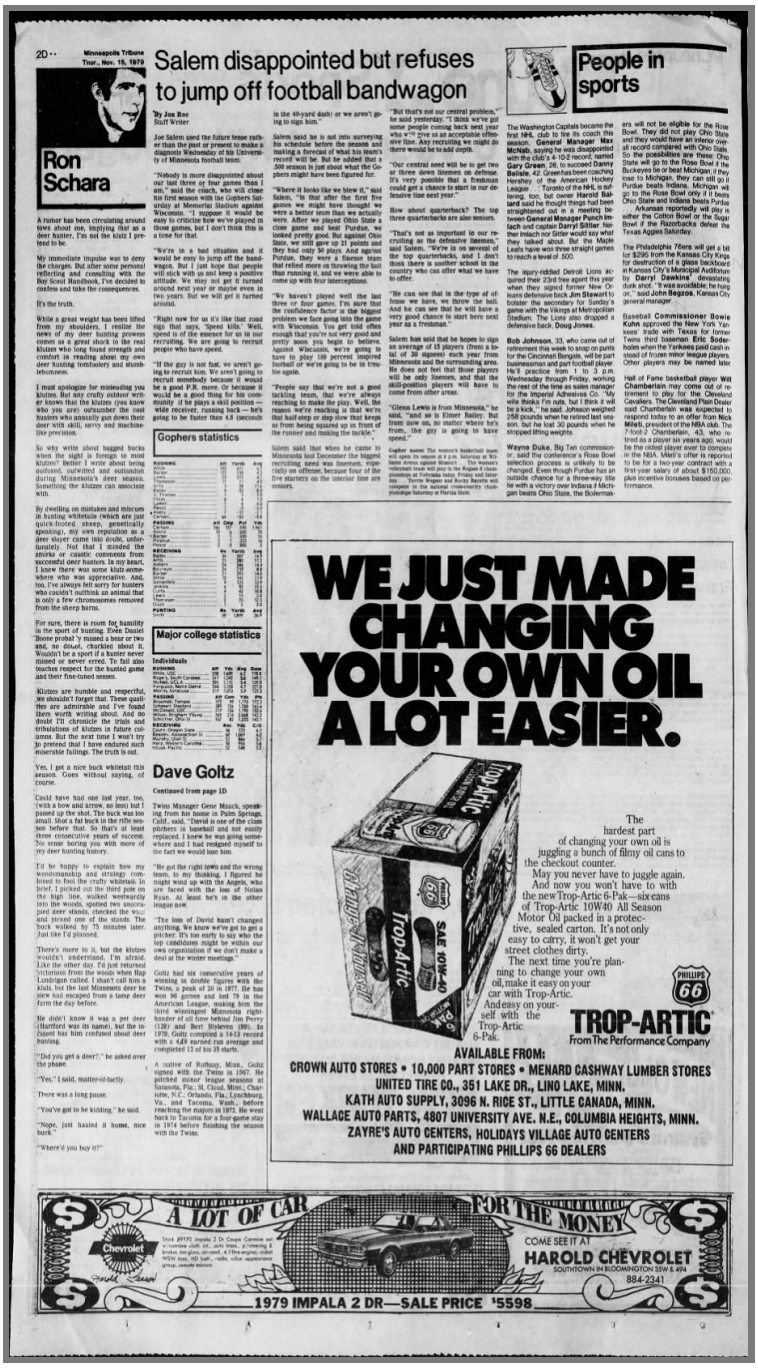

2D·· Minneapolis Tribune Thur., Nov. 15, 1979

Ron Schara

Salem disappointed but refuses to jump off football bandwagon

By Jon Ree
Staff Writer

Joe Salem used the future tense rather than the past or present to make a diagnosis Wednesday of his University of Minnesota football team.

"Nobody is more disappointed about our last three or four games than I am," said the coach, who will close his first season with the Gophers Saturday at Memorial Stadium against Wisconsin. "I suppose it would be easy to criticize how we've played in those games, but I don't think this is a time for that.

"We're in a bad situation and it would be easy to jump off the bandwagon. But I just hope that people will stick with us and keep a positive attitude. We may not get it turned around next year or maybe even in two years. But we will get it turned around.

"Right now for us it's like that road sign that says, 'Speed kills.' Well, speed is of the essence for us in our recruiting. We are going to recruit people who have speed.

"If the guy is not fast, we aren't going to recruit him. We aren't going to recruit somebody because it would be a good P.R. move. Or because it would be a good thing for his community if he plays a skill position — wide receiver, running back — he's going to be faster than 4.9 (seconds in the 40-yard dash) or we aren't going to sign him."

Salem said he is not into surveying his schedule before the season and making a forecast of what his team's record will be. But he added that a .500 season is just about what the Gophers might have been figured for.

"Where it looks like we blew it," said Salem, "is that after the first five games we might have thought we were a better team than we actually were. After we played Ohio State a close game and beat Purdue, we looked pretty good. But against Ohio State, we still gave up 21 points and they had only 50 plays. And against Purdue, they were a finesse team that relied more on throwing the ball than running it, and we were able to come up with four interceptions.

"We haven't played well the last three or four games. I'm sure that the confidence factor is the biggest problem we face going into the game with Wisconsin. You get told often enough that you're not very good and pretty soon you begin to believe. Against Wisconsin, we're going to have to play 100 percent inspired football or we're going to be in trouble again.

"People say that we're not a good tackling team, that we're always reaching to make the play. Well, the reason we're reaching is that we're that half-step or step slow that keeps us from being squared up in front of the runner and making the tackle."

Salem said that when he came to Minnesota last December the biggest recruiting need was linemen, especially on offense, because four of the five starters on the interior line are seniors.

"But that's not our central problem," he said yesterday. "I think we've got some people coming back next year who will give us an acceptable offensive line. Any recruiting we might do there would be to add depth.

"Our central need will be to get two or three down linemen on defense. It's very possible that a freshman could get a chance to start in our defensive line next year."

How about quarterback? The top three quarterbacks are also seniors.

"That's not as important in our recruiting as the defensive linemen," said Salem. "We're in on several of the top quarterbacks, and I don't think there is another school in the country who can offer what we have to offer.

"He can see that in the type of offense we have, we throw the ball. And he can see that he will have a very good chance to start here next year as a freshman."

Salem has said that he hopes to sign an average of 15 players (from a total of 30 signees) each year from Minnesota and the surrounding area. He does not feel that those players will be only linemen, and that the skill-position players will have to come from other areas.

"Glenn Lewis is from Minnesota," he said, "and so is Elmer Bailey. But from now on, no matter where he's from, the guy is going to have speed."

Gopher notes: The women's basketball team will open its season at 6 p.m. Saturday at Williams Arena against Iowa State. The men's basketball team will play in the Rogers-Hatch Invitational at Nebraska today, Friday and Saturday. . . . Terrie Wagner and Rocky Racette will compete in the national cross-country championships Saturday at Florida State.

Gophers statistics

Major college statistics

Individuals

Dave Goltz

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Twins Manager Gene Mauch, speaking from his home in Palm Springs, Calif., said, "David is one of the class pitchers in baseball and not easily replaced. I knew he was going somewhere and I had resigned myself to the fact we would lose him.

"He got the right town and the wrong team, to my thinking. I figured he might wind up with the Angels, who are faced with the loss of Nolan Ryan. At least he's in the other league now.

"The loss of David hasn't changed anything. We know we've got to get a pitcher. It's too early to say who the top candidates might be within our own organization if we don't make a deal at the winter meetings."

Goltz had six consecutive years of winning in double figures with the Twins, a peak of 20 in 1977. He has won 96 games and lost 79 in the American League, making him the third winningest Minnesota right-hander of all time behind Jim Perry (128) and Bert Blyleven (99). In 1979, Goltz compiled a 14-13 record with a 4.69 earned run average and completed 12 of his 35 starts.

A native of Bethany, Minn., Goltz signed with the Twins in 1967. He pitched minor league sessions at Sarasota, Fla.; St. Cloud, Minn.; Charlotte, N.C.; Orlando, Fla.; Lynchburg, Va., and Tacoma, Wash., before reaching the majors in 1972. He went back to Tacoma for a four-game stay in 1974 before finishing the season with the Twins.

People in sports

The Washington Capitals became the first NHL club to fire its coach this season. General Manager Max McNab, saying he was disappointed with the club's 4-10-2 record, named Gary Green, 26, to succeed Danny Belisle, 42. Green has been coaching Hershey of the American Hockey League . . . Toronto of the NHL is suffering, too, but owner Harold Ballard said he thought things had been straightened out in a meeting between General Manager Punch Imlach and captain Darryl Sittler. Neither Imlach nor Sittler would say what they talked about. But the Maple Leafs have won three straight games to reach a level of .500.

The injury-riddled Detroit Lions acquired their 23rd free agent this year when they signed former New Orleans defensive back Jim Stewart to bolster the secondary for Sunday's game with the Vikings at Metropolitan Stadium. The Lions also dropped a defensive back, Doug Jones.

Bob Johnson, 33, who came out of retirement this week to snap on pants for the Cincinnati Bengals, will be part businessman and part football player. He'll practice from 1 to 3 p.m. Wednesday through Friday, working the rest of the time as sales manager for the Imperial Adhesives Co. "My wife thinks I'm nuts, but I think it will be a kick," he said. Johnson weighed 258 pounds when he retired last season, but he lost 30 pounds when he stopped lifting weights.

Wayne Duke, Big Ten commissioner, said the conference's Rose Bowl selection process is unlikely to be changed. Even though Purdue has an outside chance for a three-way tie with a victory over Indiana if Michigan beats Ohio State, the Boilermakers will not be eligible for the Rose Bowl. They did not play Ohio State and they would have an inferior overall record compared with Ohio State. So the possibilities are these: Ohio State will go to the Rose Bowl if the Buckeyes tie or beat Michigan; if they lose to Michigan, they can still go if Purdue beats Indiana, Michigan will go to the Rose Bowl only if it beats Ohio State and Indiana beats Purdue. . . . Arkansas reportedly will play in either the Cotton Bowl or the Sugar Bowl if the Razorbacks defeat the Texas Aggies Saturday.

The Philadelphia 76ers will get a bit for $295 from the Kansas City Kings for destruction of a glass backboard in Kansas City's Municipal Auditorium by Darryl Dawkins' devastating dunk shot. "It was avoidable; he hung on," said John Bezjos, Kansas City general manager.

Baseball Commissioner Bowie Kuhn approved the New York Yankees' trade with Texas for former Twins third baseman Eric Soderholm when the Yankees paid cash instead of frozen minor league players. Other players may be named later.

Hall of Fame basketball player Wilt Chamberlain may come out of retirement to play for the Cleveland Cavaliers. The Cleveland Plain Dealer said Chamberlain was expected to respond today to an offer from Nick Mileti, president of the NBA club. The 7-foot-2 Chamberlain, 43, who retired as a player six years ago, would be the oldest player ever to compete in the NBA. Mileti's offer is reported to be for a two-year contract with a first-year salary of about $150,000, plus incentive bonuses based on performance.

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