

# Sports

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SATURDAY

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## Oliphant makes it big after coin flip

By DAVID GINSBURG  
AP Sports Writer

HERNDON, Va. — Mike Oliphant's pathway to the NFL started with the flip of a coin. Had the quarter not landed heads up, the Washington Redskins' rookie running back might still be making a living as a welder.

Oliphant has caught four passes during the preseason, three for touchdowns. Should he survive the final cut next week, he will become one of few players to successfully make the transition from an NCAA school to the NFL.

Four years ago, when he was working as a welder in Auburn, Wash., Oliphant could never have envisioned his life would turn out this way. He was waiting for a pizza with a friend when the sponsor of a local semipro football team walked through the restaurant door.

Oliphant's pal told him to ask the guy for a tryout. Oliphant refused.

"I wasn't too hot on the idea," recalled Oliphant. "But then my friend says, 'I'll flip a quarter. If it ends up heads, you try out and I'll pay for the pizza. If it's tails, you pay and skip the tryout.'"

The flip came up heads, and Oliphant got a free pizza. And, even though he didn't particularly care for football when he tried out for — and quickly quit — his high school team, Oliphant took a shot at joining the Auburn Panthers.

It was a drizzly morning on May 19, 1984, Oliphant's 21st birthday. Because he was wearing long underwear under his sweat pants, he was too embarrassed to take off the sweats for the 40-yard dash.

Oliphant ran a 4.4 anyway and joined the team, playing for free. A few weeks later, a former player from the University of Puget Sound approached Oliphant to find out whether he might want to go to (Continued on Page B7, Col. 1)



Redskins' quarterback Doug Williams was rewarded yesterday with a new three-year contract for guiding Washington to last January's Super Bowl victory against the Denver Broncos.

## Cooke rewards his starting QB

Says he will finance new stadium

By DAVID GINSBURG

WASHINGTON — Redskins' owner Jack Kent Cooke invested some money in his starting quarterback yesterday and said he intends to finance the construction of a new open-air stadium for the NFL club, preferably in Washington.

The Redskins gave quarterback Doug Williams a new three-year contract yesterday as a reward for his performance last season, when he helped guide Washington to a Super Bowl victory.

Williams, 33, was to receive \$550,000 this year, a figure well below that of most of the league's other starting quarterbacks. He was entering the final year of a three-year contract.

Terms of the new pact were not disclosed.

As for a new stadium, Cooke said it is his intention to ultimately donate the stadium to the jurisdiction that leases him the land to build it on.

"At this time I have no idea who will provide it," he said. "But I would prefer to keep the Redskins in the District of Columbia. I'd like to keep the team in the nation's capital."

Cooke has long expressed his displeasure over the team's current home, Robert F. Kennedy Stadium, which was built in 1962 and originally designed for baseball.

Citing the 55,000 capacity, the second-lowest in the NFL, and the 22,000 people on the waiting list for tickets, Cooke has spent nearly two years lobbying for a local jurisdiction to build the team a new stadium.

Yesterday, however, he changed his approach and volunteered to finance the project himself.

"My family and I plan to build and pay for the entire cost of a new football stadium for the Redskins," he said at the team's annual preseason luncheon. "We'll have a new stadium without a penny cost to you citizens, and it will be built sooner as a result of private enterprise."

Cooke said the facility would have a capacity of 78,000 people and feature "seats with fabulous sight lines." He said the stadium would be located "within spitting distance" of the subway and would house a field made of natural grass.

In the early 1970s, when Cooke owned the Los Angeles Lakers of the National Basketball Association, he financed the construction of The Forum, the arena which still houses the club. Cooke likened his current project with that undertaking.

"I built The Forum to avoid the red tape, the bickering and the arguing," he said. "It is the quickest, most economical way to do it."

Cooke said he hoped to have the new stadium finished when the Redskins' current lease with RFK Stadium expires.

"Is this a pipe dream? Not a bit," he said. "It's as inevitable as tomorrow but perhaps not as imminent. All I ask is a realistic agreement with (a jurisdiction) to lease me the land."

Previously, jurisdictions in northern Virginia and suburban Maryland had approached Cooke with ideas for building a stadium. He has not ruled out any site, but clearly would prefer keeping the team in Washington, where it has operated since 1937.

"We are historically the Washington Redskins," he said, with emphasis on the word Washington.

Williams was signed by the Redskins in August 1986. He spent most (Continued on Page B7, Col. 1)

## Beathard's drafts usually turn out topsy-turvy

Everyone knows Bobby Beathard is a genius. Football people say it every day.

The general manager of the Washington Redskins sloughs off such talk with a grin and swish of his thinning graying hair.

Beathard is right. He is not a genius. He is not the greatest when it comes to drafting players out of college.

The truth is that a number of Beathard's top draft choices during his 10 years with the Redskins have not made the grade.

Don't take this as a knock on Beathard. He built the Redskins' Super Bowl championship team. But the genius doesn't come out as much in his first picks as it does later in later rounds.

### SPORTS COMMENT



By JOE GROSS

A couple of Beathard's recent first picks have been Bob Slater and Tory Nixon, neither of whom ever played a down for the Redskins.

Then you can look at some of the second or third picks like

Wally Kleine, Walter Murray, Richard Williams and Carl Powell. If you aren't one who keeps the closest of tabs on the Redskins, you know very little about any of these guys, save for Kleine who was cut this week before ever playing a regular season game.

Certainly, making these guys top draft selections cannot begin to be correlated with genius.

Of course, Beathard did latch onto such players as Don Warren, Art Monk, Mark May and Darrell Green with some of his first picks.

Other than this year, the real genius of Beathard has come through year after year in the later rounds of the draft. Some of the players not considered National Football League timber

by most teams were chosen by Beathard when all of the real talent was supposedly sponged up.

Take a look at some of Beathard's late-round steals.

He got Dexter Manley in the fifth round of the 1981 draft. Later in that same day he picked up Charlie Brown, who became an all-pro receiver, in the eighth round, and Darryl Grant in the ninth. Clint Didier was taken in the last round of that same draft.

In 1985 Beathard took Dean Hamel in the 12th round. Not much before that he got Terry Orr in the 10th and Raleigh McKenzie in the 11th.

Mark Rypien was a sixth-round selection and Kurt Gouveia an eighth-round pick in the 1986 (Continued on Page B7, Col. 1)



By David W. Truzzo — The Capital

Bobby Beathard has been far more successful with later round draft picks than with early round selections.

## Local 10-mile run expected to draw 3,500 participants

By JOE GROSS  
Associate Sports Editor

The Annapolis 10-Mile Run is one of the most colorful spectacles held in this area.

The start, which will be bigger than ever this year since the field limit has been increased to 3,500, is great fun to watch. That has to be why many hundreds of local people unrelated to any of the runners turn out to the east parking lot of the Navy-Marine Corps Memorial Stadium very early on a Sunday morning to watch the event being held for the 13th consecutive year, get under way.

This year's run will be held tomorrow morning, with the gun set to go off at 8 a.m.

The usual crowd will be on hand. That will include many friends and relatives of the runners. Even more spectators arrive at the stadium as the run progresses so they can be on hand to watch the finish, which is another spectacular sight.

The run starts with a turn around the stadium and out onto Taylor Avenue. Although the time and distance is relatively short, the field strings out to more than a quarter of

a mile by the time it reaches Taylor Avenue.

From there the course heads into downtown via Rowe Boulevard. The course goes down Main Street, which is another hot spot for spectators, down Randall Street and into the Naval Academy grounds. After running through the academy the runners exit through Gate 8, turn right and head across the old Severn River bridge and into St. Margaret's.

After a loop in that area, the field heads back toward Annapolis and the stadium where the finish line will be on the grass in front of the west stands.

A number of runners could be among the first to arrive to get the standing ovation from the crowd. Last year's winner, Jim Hage, and second-place finisher, Jerry Clapper, are favored to be close to their same positions tomorrow. Both are members of the Washington Running Club, which is also favored to repeat its team championship.

The No. 3 seed is Richard Ferguson of Charlottesville, Va., while local fans will be watching for Annapolis' own Stan Fletcher, a fixture among the top runners in every run

in this area. Also listen for such names as Paul LaFortune, Tim Gavin and Dave Barardi as the runners are announced on the public address system.

The leading women in the event include Patty McGovern, Sue Crowe, Liz Wilson, Kathleen Meyer, Pam Briscoe and Karen Doetschman, all of whom have run 10 miles in less than an hour.

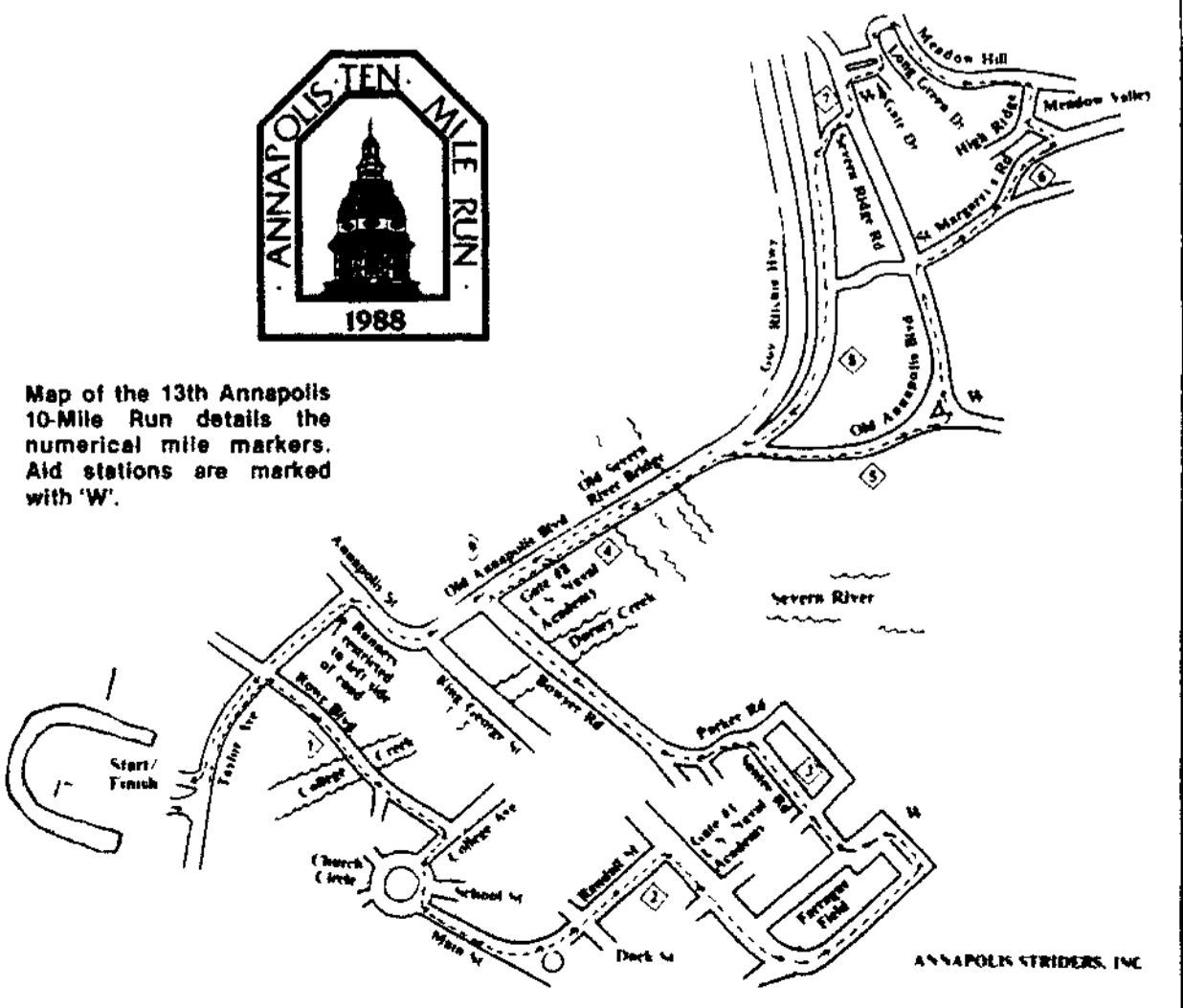
Others in the field are likely to take upwards of 90 minutes to complete the course. The back-of-the-pack runners will have the startling experience of meeting the leaders before they reach the midway point of the course.

Well after the leaders reach the finish, which is likely to be within 50 minutes of the start, the bulk of the runners will stream into the stadium for the better part of an hour.

If the weather is the way it has been this week, the times will be better and the list of finishers will be longer. It's normal for just over half of the field to finish the race. If the temperature and humidity increase, the number of finishers will be down.



Map of the 13th Annapolis 10-Mile Run details the numerical mile markers. Aid stations are marked with 'W'.



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