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Nightmare: Barons win

By **BARON von BUTTERBRAIN**
TFL Today Senior Correspondent

BALTIMORE -- Now it is written; now it is done. Let the horns honk and the celebration detonate in Maryland.

The Baltimore Barons, everybody's most hated team, are the T. Rex winners for 1997: the Sweeney Bowl champions. Baltimore 23, Flint 16.

While others yearn for a league in which luck isn't as strong an influence in determining who wins either games or the championship, Barons owner Steve Katz just yearns for Boston. It's there, at the 1998 convention, that he'll become the first champion to actually have the league's beloved trophy handed to him before his peers.

"Leading by six measly points going into the Monday night game was too much for my nerves," Katz said amid the spraying champagne in the winning lockerroom. "It was the third or fourth game we've won this year and in the playoffs with no points from either one of our running backs.

"Even the pillars of our team, Brett Favre and Antonio Freeman, did barely enough on Saturday. When Favre misfired on two straight attempts at his third touchdown pass before the end of the first half, I got nervous. When he got pulled for the second half, I started worrying big-time."

It took some heroic defense Monday night to hold Flint's Karim Abdul-Jabbar and Ben Coates to but a single point combined, even though Baltimore's Adam Vinatieri mustered

only two extra points himself in New England's victory over Miami.

A tie would have given the championship to Flint on the tiebreaker using reserve points. It was not to be. The fantasy Gods gave Katz the glory this time.

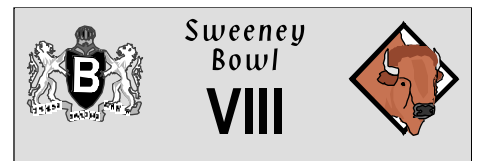
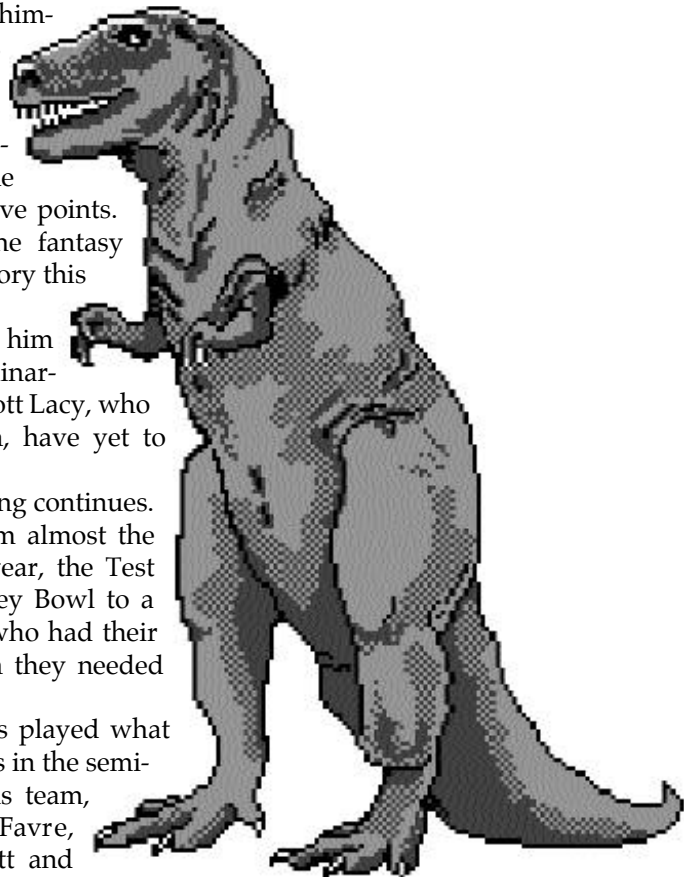
They bestowed up him a glory that such luminaries as Ken Sain and Scott Lacy, who mailed in this season, have yet to see.

For Sain, the suffering continues. Last year, with a team almost the same as Katz's this year, the Test Tubes lost the Sweeney Bowl to a team of lesser lights who had their best games just when they needed to.

This year the Tubes played what looked like themselves in the semi-finals -- Katz's Barons team, studded with Favre, Freeman, Mike Alstott and Adam Vinatieri - and naturally, came up short.

When things had settled down at the post-game press conference, a still champagne-soaked Katz swatted away question after question about the sniping he endured.

"The differences between the accomplishments of last year's Tubes and this year's Barons may have to do more with luck than anything," he said, "but a point-by-point comparison



Baltimore	23	Flint	16
Favre	12	K. Stewart	0
Alstott	0	Abdul-Jabbar	1
Morris	0	M. Allen	7
Freeman	7	Coates	0
Thigpen	2	K. Johnson	1
Vinatieri	2	Stoyanovich	7
Baltimore	0	Dallas	0

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Barons: Baltimore gets very lucky

of the teams isn't very long.

"One: The year's Barons won the championship.

"Two: Last year's Tubes didn't. Next question."

Reporters tried to get Katz to admit last year's Tubes were the stronger team.

In addition to those four players, the Experiments also had Terrell Davis starting at running back.

Katz refused comment, proving reporters right.

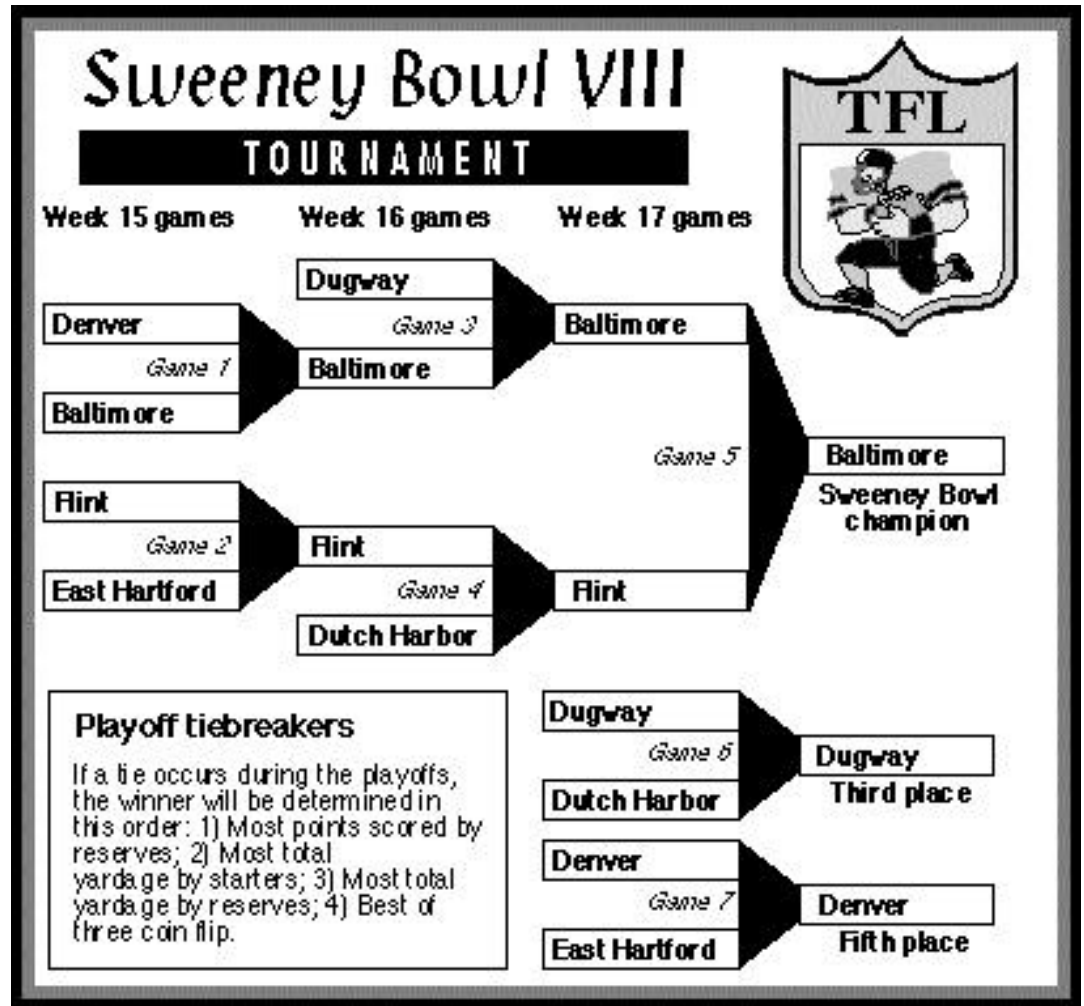
What about the lucky vs. good debate?

"Being good enough when you need to be is what matters. Next question."

What about being a two-man team?

"You mean Mike Alstott didn't really score 10 touchdowns? Yancey Thigpen wasn't really the best receiver in the AFC, or one of them, the second half of the year, and Adam Vinatieri didn't really score over 100 points?" Katz shot back. "Let the 13 teams who didn't win cast their stones. We are through being defensive about it," Katz said, with almost no voice, or fingernails, left.

"I liken this situation to when Pat Riley left the Lakers to coach the Knicks and people said sure, anybody could win with Magic and Kareem, now let's see you coach. I guess I'll just have to win next year without all that Packer power." The questioners went on,



incredulous at the Barons' championship, but Katz just enjoyed the moment and then left grinning ear to ear. The T. Rex is coming to Baltimore, where jubilation engulfed the town.

While Baltimore and Flint were playing the lowest scoring game in Sweeney Bowl history, the real excitement took place in the third-place game, where the two best teams during the TFL's regular season did battle.

Dugway, the regular sea-

son champion, defeated Dutch Harbor, the points scoring champion, 52-49.

Both teams had a rare off week in the semifinals, allowing inferior opponents to advance to the title game.

"Well, all four teams played to their true potential in Week 17," Sain said. "What you saw was the two best teams in the league this year play a great third-place game while the two lucky teams stunk of the Sweeney Bowl with their perfor-

mances.

"I hear the T. Rex on top of the John Sweeney Trophy asked for a blindfold at halftime of the Sweeney Bowl, so sick he was of their play.

"It's unfortunate that this league is still 75 percent luck and only 25 percent skill. Of course, that's what it is now. If Chris Reidy gets his way, the league will become 100 percent luck and skill will have absolutely nothing to do with the outcome of the games."

Can you say 0-11?

Bagdad blows

By **SCOOP BIAS**
TFL Today

Consider the worst teams in TFL history. No, we're not just talking this year's Sweeney Bowl champion Baltimore Barons, we're talking teams that really stink.

The 1990 Arctic Gators? True, Mark Dolan's team did score a TFL low 331 points. But that was a different era, when points were very difficult to come by.

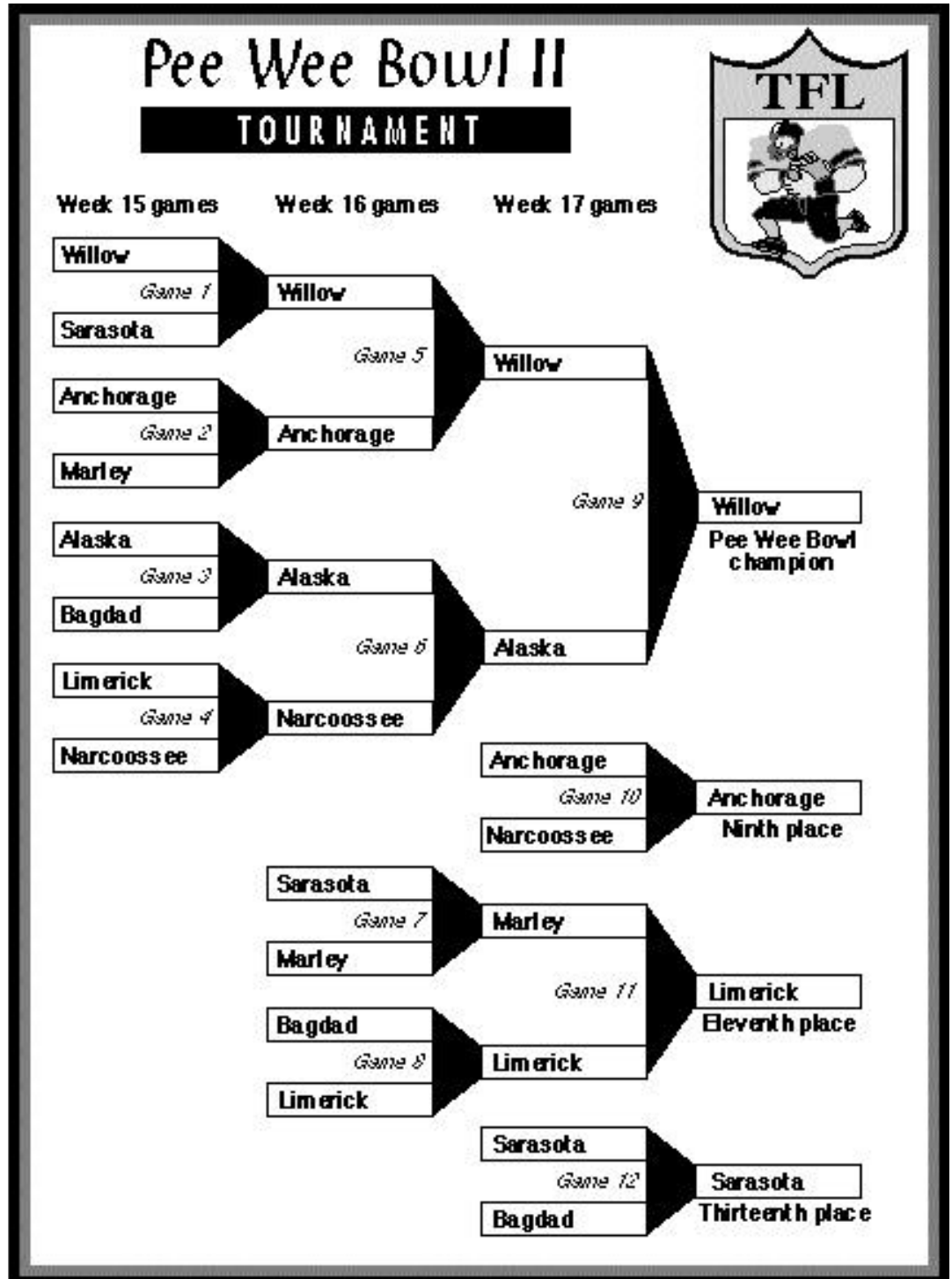
In the modern era, the 1997 Sarasota Sharks have to be considered the worst team to ever compete in the TFL. So, surely, Bagdad would finally end its 0-10 postseason streak and get a victory, right?

Wrong.

The Newts lost yet again, proving that Scott Lacy just doesn't have a clue how to pick a team that can compete in postseason, even when you sink to the depths of the Pee Wee Bowl tournament.

We tried to get a comment from Lacy, but he was unable to speak.

"Hey, My Best Friend's Wedding just came out on video," he said.



WEEK 17 RESULTS

Third-place Game

Dutch Harbor 49		Dugway	
McNair	2	Elway	28
Sanders	12	George	0
Levens	1	Means	2
Irvin	0	Rod Smith	13
Galloway	15	Emanuel	8
Longwell	7	Cunningham	1
Green Bay	12	New England	

Fifth-place Game

East Hartford 20		Denver 56	
Mitchell	0	Marino	26
A. Smith	12	T. Davis	0
G. Brown	0	Stewart	0
J. Smith	2	Sharpe	17
Proehl	0	R. Moore	8
Hall	4	Stover	2
Carolina	2	Denver	3

Pee Wee Bowl II

Alaska		Willow 44	
Bledsoe		Brunell	12
Dillon	1	E. Smith	6
J. Moore	3	Dunn	3
Martin	0	C. Carter	20
J. Reed	0	Owens	0
Hollis	8	Nedney	3
Tampa Bay	0	Kansas City	0

Ninth-place Game

Anchorage		Narcoossee 16	
R. Cunningham	24	Young	0
C. Martin		Rob. Smith	5
Hoard	6	Kaufman	2
Rison	0	H. Moore	0
Morton	0	Dudley	6
Boniol	6	Kasay	0
Minnesota	0	Jacksonville	3

Eleventh-place Game

Limerick 25		Marley 24	
J. George	6	Hostetler	6
Watters	0	Bettis	0
Lane	2	Barber	2
McCardell	9	Jackson	2
A. Reed	0	McCaffrey	6
Blanchard	8	Elam	8
Indianapolis	0	San Francisco	0

Thirteenth-place Game

Sarasota 34		Bagdad 24	
Moon	24	Kramer	0
J. Anderson	5	Carter	0
T. Thomas	0	Zellers	0
Bruce	0	T. Brown	11
Chrebet	1	Miller	0
Pelfrey	4	Del Greco	10
Oakland	0	Tennessee	3

MONEY MATTERS

The pot

Here's a breakdown of how much money is in the pot and how it will be split as of this date:

Income

Franchise fees	\$1,400
Transactions and fines	\$435
Interest from CD	\$45
Total	\$1,880

Expenses

Web site (Lacy)	\$150
Media guide, faxes, trophy (Sain)	\$150
Total	\$300

The Split

Sweeney Bowl champion	\$632.00
Second place	\$237.00
Third place	\$173.80
Fourth place	\$142.20
Fifth place	\$110.60
Sixth place	\$79.00
Pee Wee champion	\$47.40
Regular season champion	\$79.00
Points scoring champion	\$79.00
Total	\$1580.00

How much you get

Here is a breakdown of how much each owner can expect to have sent to them on Feb. 23 (money is a combination of winnings and refund owed to you):

Team	Prize	Ref.	Total
Alaska	\$0.00	\$40	\$40.00
Anchorage	\$0.00	\$25	\$25.00
Bagdad	\$0.00	\$20	\$20.00
Baltimore	\$632.00	\$ 5	\$637.00
Denver	\$110.60	(-\$5)	\$105.60
Dugway	\$252.80	\$25	\$277.80
Dutch Harbor	\$221.20	\$ 5	\$226.20
East Hartford	\$79.00	\$ 0	\$79.00
Flint	\$237.00	\$20	\$257.00
Limerick	\$0.00	(-\$5)	(-\$5.00)
Marley	\$0.00	\$20	\$20.00
Narcoossee	\$0.00	\$35	\$35.00
Sarasota	\$0.00	\$30	\$30.00
Willow	\$47.40	\$50	\$97.40

TRANSACTIONS

Dec. 22, 1997

Dutch Harbor fined \$5 because QB Dave Brown played while on the I.R. list.

Dec. 20, 1997

East Hartford activates QB Glenn Foley off I.R., waives QB Paul Justin (who was on I.R.) and QB Boomer Esiason.

Dec. 18, 1997

Limerick activates WR Terry Glenn off I.R., waives WR Shawn Jefferson.

Dec. 17, 1997

Anchorage activates RB Curtis Martin off I.R., waives RB Donnell Bennett.

Dec. 12, 1997

Anchorage puts RB Curtis Martin on I.R., adds RB Donnell Bennett.

Dec. 11, 1997

Flint activates WR Jerry Rice from I.R., waives WR Jermaine Lewis.

Dec. 10, 1997

Marley places QB Gus Frerotte on I.R., adds QB Jeff Hostetler.

Marley activates WR Curtis Conway, waives WR Mark Chmura.

Limerick failed to activate RB Tim Biakabutka, so he becomes a free agent.

Dec. 9, 1997

Marley fined \$5 because WR Curtis Conway played while on the I.R. list. Marley must activate him by 11:59 p.m. today or he becomes a free agent.

Alaska fined \$5 because QB John Friesz played while on the I.R. list. Alaska waives QB John Friesz.

Limerick fined \$5 because RB Tim Biakabutka played while on the I.R. list. Limerick must activate him by 11:59 p.m. today or he becomes a free agent.

East Hartford places QB Paul Justin on I.R., adds QB Boomer Esiason.

Dugway places RB Raymont Harris on I.R., adds RB Tommy Vardell.