

## Glanville's at it again

# Falcons are on the move

Who would have thought that when the Australian rock band AC/DC recorded their phenomenal album *Back in Black* (with a single of the same name) in 1980, that the title would be the focal point surrounding the resurgence of a tired NFL franchise a decade later?

Although the album or song are not directly involved the resurrection of the Atlanta Falcons, "Back in Black" fever is running rampant through the NFL.

For 1990, the Falcons' red helmets and jerseys have been scrapped in favor of a sleek-looking all-black attire. But why all this fuss for a team that could do no better than 3-13 the previous year?

It just so happens that the Falcons move to the all-black look coincided with the arrival of new head coach Jerry Glanville, the crazy old soul who leaves game tickets for Elvis at the ticket gate, wears black clothes and a black hat, dons a leather belt with a buckle that makes Buster Douglas' heavyweight title look like a strip of dental floss, and drives a 1950 Mercury dubbed the "James Dean Special." (Guess what color the Merc is).

Glanville, who 11 years ago, created the famous Gritz Blitz while defensive coordinator for these same Atlanta Falcons, returns after a four-stint as head coach of the Houston Oilers, whose "House of Pain" program became one of the most despised institutions in the NFL. Like them or not (I've never really cared for Houston), Glanville turned the hapless Oilers into winners almost overnight.

Glanville has been called upon to perform the same magic in Atlanta. However, black uniforms, clothes and vintage automobiles do not a playoff contender make. While there is a new look in Atlanta, there is also a new era in Falcon football. One that breeds an air of cockiness, one of invincibility. Glanville knows how to win, whether you approve of his methods or not. Glanville can

**Chip Lupo**



now instill this attitude into a program that for once, is loaded with talent.

Chris Miller could have easily achieved premier quarterback status under an established program. Miller now has protection - linemen Bill Fralic and newcomer Chris Hinton anchor the mammoth offensive line; running back John Settle is joined in the backfield by Steve Broussard, a 5'6" 200 pound speedster, the Falcons number one draft pick from Washington State. The most explosive weapon in Miller's revitalized arsenal are the receiving tandem of Shawn Collins and superstar-to-be Andre Rison. Rison, incidentally, came to Atlanta with Hinton from

Indianapolis in the deal that sent the Falcons 1990 draft pick to the Colts.

Atlanta will score a lot of points this season. But is up to the defense - Glanville's forte, to ensure that the high scoring offensive scheme doesn't get outscored. Glanville's presence should be the boost that oft-troubled linebacker Aundray

Bruce needs to emerge as a bona fide superstar. Then of course, there's Deion Sanders, one who needs no one to boost his trash-talking, showboating game. In fact, with Glanville on the sidelines, Sanders' antics are likely to intensify (Heaven help us).

All that glitters is not jet black, however. The ever-improved Falcons (4-0 in preseason and fresh from a 47-27 thumping of Glanville's former team, the Oilers) are stuck in the precarious position of competing in the NFC West, the toughest division in football. Having to face the 49ers, the Rams and the Saints twice this season should prove to be a learning experience and will probably put "Jerry's Kid's" playoff celebration on hold for at least a year or two. The Falcons will not be taken lightly, though. They could easily pose threat as a spoiler during the latter stages of the season while scatching and clawing (literally) to an 8-8 record.

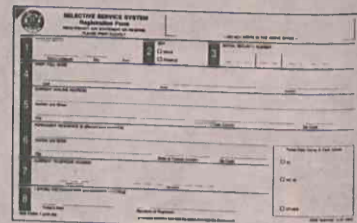
All of this hype for a lousy .500 record? Remember, the Braves play in this city too. 8-8 should be more than enough for Atlanta fans to cheer about.

**EXTRA POINT:** Hats off to the Maryland Terrapins football program for being the only ACC team not to adopt the new conference policy of scheduling creampuffs for the first week or two of the regular season. The

Terps did well, knocking off Virginia Tech (6-4-1 record in 1989) and upsetting 25th ranked West Virginia (8-3-1) in their first two outings. Maryland must still contend with the likes of Michigan on September 29 and Penn State on November 10, plus the traditional ACC schedule that includes outings with Clemson and Virginia.

The Terp's schedule is not entirely creampuff free, however, but not by choice. There is a date with North Carolina on October 27.

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