

Natrone Means Business for Chargers

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS
SAN DIEGO — Anyone who thinks Natrone Means is in his element when he's stampeding over tacklers should have seen him after the San Diego Chargers won the AFC championship.

Of course, when you're a 245-pound clapper of thunder with a lightning bolt on your uniform, you can be the life of the party anytime you want.

As the celebrants around him in the visiting locker room at Three Rivers Stadium danced, screamed, even rapped a little as they mockingly waved Terrible Towels, the 22-year-old Means summoned up all of his accumulated wisdom, took a long puff on a huge cigar and asked, "We're pretty good. Where are we going?"

Had his teammates heard him, they would have responded as a chorus, "To the Super Bowl." But none of Means' buddies were close enough to know what he said.

They all know what the "Natrone Bomb" has done for the Chargers this season. He detonated at just the right time, finishing second in the AFC with 1,350 yards rushing, scoring 12 TDs and making the Pro Bowl in his second NFL season.

In the playoffs, he led the Chargers back from a 21-6 halftime deficit to a 22-21 win

over Miami. Then he helped wear down Pittsburgh's staunch defense, flattening Steeler defenders who strayed into his path.

Means is as self-assured as a grizzled veteran. Not necessarily cocky or boastful, but certainly aware of his importance to the Chargers and his ability to live up to the organization's demands.

"Once they made the Butts trade, I knew I was going to be the man," said Means of Chargers general manager Bobby Beathard's decision to deal top running back Marion Butts on draft day to New England. All Butts had done was lead the team in rushing five straight years as the focal point of a power attack.

"After the draft, coach Ross came to my house in North Carolina—I think it showed a little something that he stopped there—and he was talking to me and my mom. He said I'd have the opportunity, that my role

would pick up in the offense and I would have the opportunity to start.

"I knew the chance was there, but he didn't hand me the starting job. I think it kind of boosted my confidence, though, and it showed he would give me the chance to be the back.

"The training was rough, but I knew what it was all for. I could sacrifice for a couple of months to get everything right. It was worth it."

As was making room for Means, a second-round pick from North Carolina. Neither Beathard nor coach Bobby Ross worried about Means taking over.

"He's a big strong guy who has breakaway speed and is not afraid to take a hit, because he knows he's usually going to come out of it OK," Ross said. "He's also a pretty good receiver and a smart football player and a pretty good blocker."

And a terrific talker. Means isn't afraid to stir up controversy or give frank answers to tough questions.

Such as on the matter of respect: "It's time to start giving ourselves some credit, because the way it's been going, nobody else is going to give us credit until we start. It's time we start pumping ourselves up a bit."

Or on his quick NFL success: "I think other people are more surprised by it. I'm not. I felt if I could get the ball 20-25 times, I could put up some numbers. I feel like in order for us to be a success, the running game has to be successful, and that means me."

Or on taking off his helmet to celebrate a 20-yard TD run, his longest of the year, in the regular-season finale against Pittsburgh: "I wanted to show everyone my face. I wanted to show them the man behind the mask."

Means might not be a Jim Carrey, but he's certainly headed for stardom.

He was a standout at UNC, rushing for more than 1,000 yards as a sophomore and junior before leaving school for the NFL.

But Means wasn't taken in the first round of the draft, mainly because teams feared he had a weight problem.

The Chargers had no such worries. Reasoning that Means was always heavy—he was 230 when he entered college—and wasn't slowed by it, San Diego traded its 1994 No. 1 choice to grab him.

Although he fared well as Butts' backup in '93, the Natrone Bomb didn't go off until this season.

"I never doubted myself," Means said with a smile and a puff on the cigar. "I always felt I could play here from the first day I got here."



Natrone Means, shown here with his "mask" on, has exploded onto the NFL scene and will lead the San Diego Chargers into the Super Bowl Jan. 29.

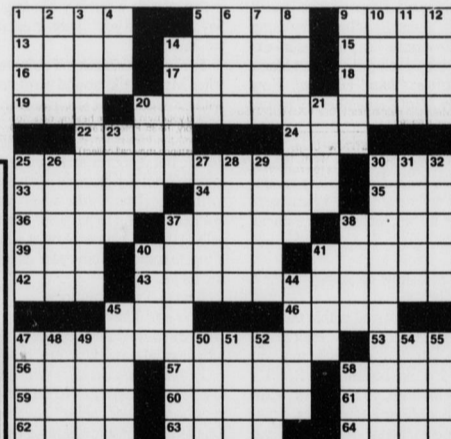
Calvin and Hobbes



THE Daily Crossword by Gerald R. Ferguson

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|---|--|--|--|---|---|---|
| ACROSS
1 Deep red hue
5 Gilda of Israel
9 Money hole
13 Asian land
14 Alliance acronym
15 Egyptian cotton
16 Credit —
17 Centers
18 Greenspan
19 Mountain peak
20 Legislative assembly
22 Ample, to poets
24 Spelling or quilting
25 Dude
30 Prohibit
33 Regal wear
34 Arenose
35 I love: Lat.
36 Coup d'—
37 Has a meal
38 — uproar (tumultuous)
39 Hammar-skjold
40 Synthetic fiber
41 Supplement
42 Old spy gp.
43 Urban behemoth
45 Family member
46 Stratagem
47 Florida college town
53 Offshoot
56 Aircraft starter
57 Sky pad | 58 Together, in music
59 Clod
60 Mill fodder
61 Pain in the neck
62 A wife of a Henry
63 Toward the rising sun
64 Banyan, e.g. | DOWN
1 12-point type
2 River into the Caspian
3 Old-fashioned luggage
4 Extremity
5 Cat sound | 6 Gain
7 Short news piece
8 Certain flower plots
9 Freshet
10 Leslie Caron role
11 Arabian gulf
12 Piquancy
14 Express anger
20 Ready the greens
21 Macabre
23 Red Square negative
25 Ideology
26 Smidgens
27 "Of Thee —" | 28 Crete capital
29 Peal
30 Basie or Welk
31 Cremona artisan
32 They are off-limits
37 Horsemanship exhibition | 38 Superstar
40 French friend
41 "Baked in —"
44 Baby hooter
45 Wading bird
47 Bonkers
48 By and by | 49 Lay — the line
50 Miles or Falston
51 Eye feature
52 Catalogue
54 Stratagem
55 Dole out
58 Fitting |
|---|--|--|--|---|---|---|

Thursday's Puzzle solved:



600 Pounds of Perrys Released for Expansion Draft

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS
 The list includes a Super Bowl MVP, a Heisman Trophy winner, a six-time Pro Bowl selection and more than 600 pounds of Perry brothers.

Mark Rypien, Desmond Howard, Chris Doleman and William and Michael Dean Perry are among the players who will be available in the NFL expansion draft.

Thursday, the league released the list of players who can be picked in the Feb. 15 draft by the expansion Carolina Panthers and Jacksonville Jaguars, who will both begin play next season.

Each of the 28 established teams must make six players available in the draft.

Fourteen former Pro Bowl players and 12 first-round draft picks were on the list. They included: Rypien, Doleman, Arizona's Gary Clark, Karl Mecklenburg of Denver, Rodney Holman of Detroit, Chris Miller of the Rams, Max Montoya of the Raiders, Johnny Johnson of the Jets,

Ferrell Edmunds of Seattle, Pierce Holt of Atlanta, Mark Carrier of Cleveland, Ethan Horton and Leonard Marshall of Washington, Terrell Buckley of Green Bay, Derek Brown of the Giants, Gerald Robinson of the Rams, Jon Hand of Indianapolis, and Rod Bernstine of Denver.

Each team was permitted to include only one player with at least 10 years' experience and one player who was placed on injured reserve after the start of the 1994 season.

Ram Triple
 NationsBank Plaza 967-8284
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Nell (PG-13)
 Nightly at 7:00-9:30
 Sat & Sun Matinee 2:00-4:30

Far From Home (PG)
 Nightly at 7:00 - 9:00
 Sat. & Sun. Matinee 1:30 - 3:20 - 5:10

Dumb & Dumber (PG-13)
 Nightly at 7:00 - 9:15
 Sat. & Sun. Matinee 2:00 - 4:15
 Matinees on Weekends Only

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 EAST FRANKLIN 967-8665

CAROLINA THEATRE
 Chapel Hill Columbia Street beside The Ackland Museum 933-8464

SOMETHING MAGICAL HAPPENS! NEWMAN'S RICH, UNDERSTATED, DELIGHTFUL PERFORMANCE IS SEAMLESS -David Ansen, NEWSWEEK

BEST ACTOR - PAUL NEWMAN
 NEW YORK FILM CRITICS CIRCLE AWARD

NEWMAN HAS MY VOTE FOR BEST ACTOR OF 1994 AND 'NOBODY'S FOOL HAS MY VOTE AS BEST PICTURE' Andrea Sarris, New York Observer

NEWMAN'S PERFORMANCE IS THE SINGLE BEST OF THIS YEAR AND AMONG THE FINEST HE HAS EVER GIVEN - Caryn James N.Y. Times

7:00, 9:30, weekends 2:00, 4:30

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Reward: 914-2238.</p> <p>ALPHA PHI OMEGA (APO) campus Lost & Found located in the bottom of the Union or call 962-1044.</p> <p>FOUND: AT CORNER of Rosemary and Columbia Silver and Gold watch. Call 942-2087</p>	<p>Services</p> <p>NOTARY PUBLIC ON CAMPUS BY APPT ONLY. \$2 per signature 962-3999.</p> <p>PREGNANT? NEED HELP? Free pregnancy tests and counseling, all services confidential call PSS 942-7318.</p> <p>Word Processing</p> <p>ON THE FLY. Typing and Editing Service. Fast & Experienced!!! 12-16 pages/hour. 24-48hr turnaround. Accuracy guaranteed! Call 967-5255.</p> <p>APPLICATIONS, SF-171'S, RESUMES/cover letters, term papers, theses/dissertations, data entry, Scientific, medical, foreign language expertise. Copying, binding, scanning, send/receive faxes. Call Do-it-Write, 967-3786.</p>	<p>Personals</p> <p>Need Xtra Cash for Spring Break? Sell your old, used, too big, too small STUFF in the DTH Classifieds 962-0252. You can use your UNC One Card over the phone!</p> <p>COME ONE COME all to Teague for Brian and Stuart's Hot Sex Night! Satisfaction Guaranteed or we pay you! Safe sex enforced.</p> <p>ATTENTION FRATERNITIES: LOOKING for a sexy lesbian stripper to perform during rush week. I'm professional and I'm available and cheap. Call Princess Kelly anytime.</p> <p>KELLIE & Lance- Welcome home to 503A! Love-the Girls!</p>
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