Q-RATINGS
FOR THE NFL

By Bob Carroll

I've been meaning to bring this up for a while. Those of you who have been reading these pages for a few years may remember that I think all-pro, all-league, all-whatever teams are important.

Lots of people sneer at them, pointing out – correctly, I believe – that it's presumptious for some *watcher* to even suggest that Player A is superior to Player B. Even the Player C's who play against A and B can't have the last word. Old C seldom lines up opposite A more than twice a season, and if his team isn't scheduled against B's team, he may not see B in action at all. Coaches usually have a good idea who is the best left guard or defensive tackle on their own teams, but coaches aren't in a great position to rank players on other teams.

So, when critics maintain that All- teams don't necessarily pick the best players at their positions, I am in complete agreement.

What they actually do is pick the players who the largest number of their informed experts THINK are the best. By "informed experts" I'm assuming that most people who vote on these things give their decisions some conscientious investigation.

But, in effect, they are giving something like a popularity vote. Only instead of likeability, substitute plain ability – or at least the opinion of it. In many ways, All- teams are like those "Q" ratings that TV performers get. Having a high "Q" rating doesn't mean a guy can act; it means the audience likes to *see* him act. In both "Q" ratings and All- teams, the perceptions are in the minds of the selectors. Of course, with football players, those selections will last and eventually a player may get perceived right into the Hall of Fame.

If you care to follow this perception stuff to its logical end, a players' whole career is based on perceptions. How well he is perceived by the scouts will determine his place in the draft (which may determine how many chances he gets to screw up in his first training camp). The coach's perception will determine whether he starts or subs. The general manager's perception is the basis for how much he's paid. When he files for free agency . . . . Well, you get the picture.

Although scouts, coaches, and G.M.'s would deny it, the media's perceptions have some influence, especially when they pick an All- team. If the AP says a guy is the best center in the world, he's not likely to get benched or released. And, to be honest, the AP ain't going to be THAT far off. Maybe the guy is only the third-best center, but he's still pretty darned good.

With all that in mind, I decided to try to find "Q" ratings for football players. I picked the 1990 season for no better reason than the major All- teams were available. Remember, I'm looking for who was *perceived* as the best, not who *was* the best.

I started with what I call "Simplified Q's." I assigned 10 points to a player each time he was named a first team All-Pro and 5 points to any second team selections. Each first team All-Conference selection received 5 points; second teams 3. The Pro Bowl was treated as an All-Conference team with starters receiving 5 and reserves 3. Then I added up the players' points and divided by the total possible points. In 1990, a player chosen on every All- team and starting in the Pro Bowl could get 65 points. The percentage grades players received ranged from 100 down to 4.6. That, I felt, was a misleading spread. So I assigned each player 70 points just for being on a major league roster. Being a starter (and I assumed all the players on All- teams usually started) was worth ten more points. Finally, I applied the players' percentage grade to a 20-point range and got his "Q" rate. The results are on the next page.

Am I satisfied? No. There were a number of worth-looking-at teams not included in my survey. Some teams are more influential than others. (Perhaps the AP should be worth up to 12 points and *The Sporting News* only 9.) I think I low-rated Pro Bowl selections. What about special awards like Defensive Player of the Year? Should that be worth bonus points? Should players lose points for games missed? I'm 'twixt and 'tween on these questions.

So, what I'm really doing here is tossing out a challenge. The system needs to be refined. Care to give it a try?

1990 NFL "Q" RATINGS

1990 ALL-NFL OFFENSE		All-NFL					CONF		Pro	Q
		AP	FW	NE	SN	PW	UP	PW	Bowl	RATE
Jerry Rice, SF	WR	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	100.0
Andre Rison, Atl	WR	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	100.0
Andre Reed, Buf	WR	2	-	2	-	-	1	1	1	87.7
Ernest Givins, Hou	WR	2	-	-	-	-	1	-	2	84.0
Anthony Miller, SD	WR	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	1	84.0
Sterling Sharpe, GB	WR	-	-	2	-	-	2	-	2	83.4
Gary Clark, Was	WR	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	2	81.8
Drew Hill, Hou	WR	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	2	81.8
Keith Jackson, Phi	TE	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	100.0
Rodney Holman, Cin	TE	2	-	2	-	-	1	1	1	87.7
Ferrell Edmunds, Mia	TE	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	80.9
Eric Green, Pit	TE	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	80.9
Steve Jordan, Min	TE	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	80.9
Jay Novacek, Dal	TE	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	80.9
Jim Lachey, Was	T	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	100.0
Anthony Munoz, Cin	T	1	1	1	-	1	1	1	#*	96.3
John Alt, KC	T	2	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	86.2
Bruce Armstrong, NE	T	-	-	2	-	-	-	1	1	84.6
Lomas Brown, Det	T	-	-	2	-	-	1	-	2	84.0
Jackie Slater, LARm	T	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	1	84.0
Richmond Webb, Mia	T	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	1	82.5
Luis Sharpe, Pho	T	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	81.5
Howard Ballard, Buf	T	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	80.9
Jimbo Covert, ChiB	T	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	80.9
Will Wolford, Buf	T	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	80.9
Bruce Matthews, Hou	G	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	100.0
Steve Wisniewski, LARd	G	2	1	2	1	1	1	1	2	96.3
Randall McDaniel, Min	G	1	-	2	-	-	1	1	1	89.2
Mark Bortz, ChiB	G	-	-	1	-	-	2	1	#*	84.9
Mike Munchak, Hou	G	2	-	-	-	-	2	-	1	84.0
Guy McIntyre, SF	G	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	83.1
Tom Newberry, LARm	G	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	80.9
Jim Ritcher, Buf	G	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	80.9
William Roberts, NYG	G	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	80.9
Kent Hull, Buf	C	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	100.0
Jay Hilgenberg, ChiB	C	2	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	86.2
Don Mosebar, LARd	C	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	2	82.5
Bart Oates, NYG	C	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	80.9
Rand. Cunningham, Phi	QB	-	1	-	-	1	1	1	1	90.7
Warren Moon, Hou	QB	2	-	-	1	-	1	1	1	89.2
Joe Montana, SF	QB	1	-	1	-	-	2	-	#*	88.0
Jim Kelly, Buf	QB	-	-	2	-	-	2	-	2	83.4
Jim Everett, LARm	QB	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	80.9
Barry Sanders, Det	RB	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	100.0
Thurman Thomas, Buf	RB	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	100.0
Neal Anderson, ChiB	RB	2	-	2	-	-	1	1	#*	87.1
Marion Butts, SD	RB	2	-	2	-	-	1	1	#*	87.1
Earnest Byner, Was	RB	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	1	82.5
James Brooks, Cin	RB	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	2	81.8
Bo Jackson, LARd	RB	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	#*	81.8
Bobby Humphrey, Den	RB	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	81.5
Keith Byars, Phi	RB	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	80.9
Johnny Johnson, Pho	RB	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	80.9

		AP	FW	NE	SN	PW	UP	PW	Bowl	RATE
Emmitt Smith, Dal	RB	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	80.9
John L. Williams, Sea	RB	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	80.9

UPI did not choose a 2nd Team center

1990 ALL-NFL DEFENSE

		All-NFL					CONF		Pro	
		AP	FW	NE	SN	PW	UP	PW	Bowl	RATE
Bruce Smith, Buf	DE	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	100.0
Reggie White, Phi	DE	1	1	1T	-	1	1	1	1	96.9
Greg Townsend, LARd	DE	2	-	1	1	-	1	1	1	88.6
Richard Dent, ChiB	DE	2	-	-	-	-	1	1	2	84.0
Chris Doleman, Min	DE	-	-	2	-	-	2	-	1	84.0
Jeff Cross, Mia	DE	-	-	2	-	-	2	-	2	83.4
Kevin Fagen, SF	DE	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	80.9
Howie Long, LARd	DE	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	80.9
Michael Dean Perry,Cle	DT	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	100.0
Ray Childress, Hou	DT	2	1	2	1	-	2	-	2	91.1
Jerome Brown, Phi	DT	1	-	-	-	-	1	1	#*	87.1
Jerry Ball, Det	DT	2	-	-	-	-	2	1	1	85.5
Dan Saleaumua, KC	DT	-	-	2	-	1	-	1	-	86.2
Erik Howard, NYG	DT	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	80.9
Pepper Johnson, NYG	ILB	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	100.0
John Offerdahl, Mia	ILB	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	#*	100.0
Mike Singletary, ChiB	ILB	2	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	86.2
David Little, Pit	ILB	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	84.6
Shane Conlan, Buf	ILB	2	-	-	-	-	2	-	1	84.0
Vaughan Johnson, NO	ILB	-	-	2	-	-	2	-	2	83.4
Byron Evans, Phi	ILB	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	81.5
Jeff Herrod, Ind	ILB	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	80.9
Eugene Lockhart, Dal	ILB	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	80..9
Derrick Thomas, KC	OLB	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	100.0
Charles Haley, SF	OLB	1	1	1	-	1	1	1	1	96.9
Darryl Talley, Buf	OLB	-	-	-	1	-	2	1	2	86.5
Lawrence Taylor, NYG	OLB	2	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	86.2
Leslie O'Neal, SD	OLB	-	-	2	-	-	2	-	1	84.0
Pat Swilling, NO	OLB	2	-	-	-	-	2	-	2	83.4
Cornelius Bennett, Buf	OLB	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	2	82.5
Mike Cofer, Det	OLB	-	-	2	-	-	2	-	-	82.5
Mike Johnson, Cle	OLB	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	80.9
Chris Spielman, Det	OLB	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	80.9
Rod Woodson, Pit	CB	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	100.0
Albert Lewis, KC	CB	1	1	1	1	-	1	1	1	96.9
Darrell Green, Was	CB	2	-	-	-	1	1	1	1	89.2
Kevin Ross, KC	CB	2	-	-	-	-	2	-	2	83.4
Wayne Haddix, TB	CB	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	82.5
Tim McKyer, Mia	CB	-	-	2	-	-	2	-	-	82.5
Gill Byrd, SD	CB	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	81.5
Mark Collins, NYG	CB	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	81.5
Carl Lee, Min	CB	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	81.5
Don Griffin, SF	CB	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	80.9
Issiac Holt, Dal	CB	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	80.9
Joey Browner, Min	S	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	100.0
Ronnie Lott, SF	S	1	1	1	1	-	2	-	1	94.7
Mark Carrier, ChiB	S	2	-	-	-	1	1	1	2	88.6
Steve Atwater, Den	S	-	-	2	-	-	1	1	1	86.2
David Fulcher, Cin	S	2	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	86.2
Tim McDonald, Pho	S	-	-	2	-	-	2	-	-	82.5
Carnell Lake, Pit	S	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	80.9
Louis Oliver, Mia	S	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	80.9
Dennis Smith, Den	S	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	80.9

1990 ALL-PRO SPECIALISTS

		All-NFL					CONF		Pro	
		AP	FW	NE	SN	PW	UP	PW	Bowl	RATE
Nick Lowery, KC	PK	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	100.0
Steve Christie, TB	PK	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	83.1
Pete Stoyanovich, Mia	PK	2	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	82.5
Morten Andersen, NO	PK	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	81.5
John Carney, SD	PK	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	81.5
Chris Jacke, GB	PK	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	80.9
Sean Landeta, NYG	P	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	100.0

Rohn Stark, Ind	P	2	-	2	-	-	1	1	1	87.7
Rich Camarillo, Pho	P	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	80.9
Mike Horan, Den	P	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	80.9
Mel Gray, Det	KR	1	1K	x	1K	1K	1K	1K	1	100.0
Dave Meggett, NYG	KR	2	1P	x	1P	-	1P	1P	-	92.7
Clarence Verdin, Ind	KR	-	-	x	-	1P	1P	1P	1	89.1
Rod Woodson, Pit	KR	-	-	x	-	-	1K	1K	-	83.6
Reyna Thompson, NYG	ST	x	x	x	x	1	x	1	1	100.0
Steve Tasker, Buf	ST	x	x	x	x	-	x	1	1	90.0