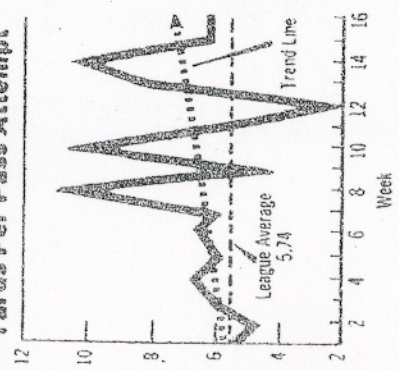


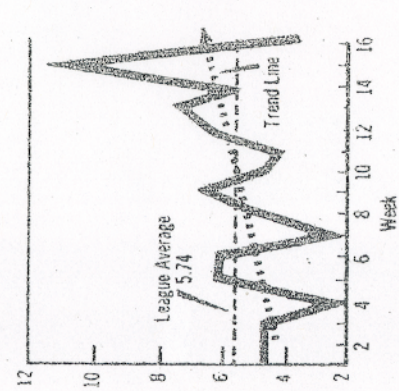
Pittsburgh

Yards Per Pass Attempt



Los Angeles

Yards Per Pass Attempt



Steelers have advantage over the Rams in passing

By Bud Goode
Special to The Inquirer

The most important statistic separating winners from losers in the NFL this year was yards-per-pass-attempt (quarterback sacks counted as unsuccessful attempts). Pittsburgh led the American Conference with 7.04 yards per pass and ranked second in the league to New Orleans (7.08).

Los Angeles gained 5.4 yards per toss and ranked 18th in the NFL. The league average is 5.75, up from 5.43 in 1978. The trend line shows that both the Steelers and Rams improved as the season progressed.

Yards-per-pass-attempt measures the marriage between the quarterback and his receivers. Rams quarterback Vince Ferragamo, who replaced Pat Haden, had very little work with Preston Dennard and Billy Waddy, the two wide receivers who have taken the place of the Rams' duo of Ron Jessie (broken leg) and Harold Jackson (now at New England). With a new quarterback and new receivers, the Rams were six percent weaker in this category this season than in 1978.

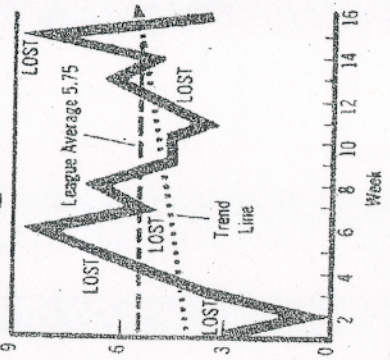
By comparison, Pittsburgh improved 6 percent from last year, when it also ranked second in the NFL with 6.8 yards per pass. Yards-per-pass-attempt, by definition, is a measure of the "bomb," and Pittsburgh, with Lynn Swann (20 yards per completion), has the statistical edge on the Rams' wide receivers.

Since the Univac computer shows that one yard more per pass attempt than the opposition is worth three points in the winning margin, the Steelers enjoy a 4 1/2-point advantage on this one statistic.

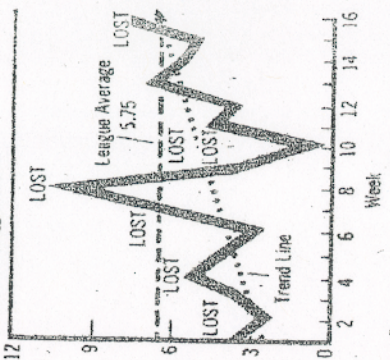
Bud Goode, a Los Angeles computer sports analyst, will evaluate key statistics involving the Super Bowl teams only in The Inquirer, finishing with the probable winner and point difference.

Opponent's Yards Per Pass Attempt

Pittsburgh



Los Angeles



Steelers have tiny edge in yards allowed passing

By Bud Goode
Special to The Inquirer

Against Seattle and quarterback Jim Zorn, Los Angeles allowed a minus 1.3 yards per pass-attempt. This was the NFL's best effort in all 274 league games this year and the only game where the opposition was held to negative passing yardage.

Pittsburgh's best effort was against Houston in Week No. 2. The Steelers allowed less than one yard per pass-attempt. The Steelers' average for the year was 4.84 yards per pass-attempt allowed. The Rams allowed 5.05. The Steelers ranked second in the NFL, the Rams ranked seventh.

The trend line shows that both teams were allowing more yards per attempt as the season progressed, but the trend is not great. In the Rams' case, it simply could be because they didn't play much of a game against New Orleans after they had locked up the championship.

In both games against Cleveland and against Denver and Houston, Pittsburgh gave up big gainers in the air. With the Rams' aerial game improving as the season progressed, it seems realistic that if other teams have passed successfully against the Steelers, an improved Rams team might do likewise.

The Univac computer shows that one yard per pass-attempt more than the opposition is worth one point in the winning margin. The small fractional Steelers advantage on this statistic amounts to one-half-point. After examination of two key statistics, Pittsburgh has a five-point edge in the Super Bowl.

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