

# Sports

The New York Times

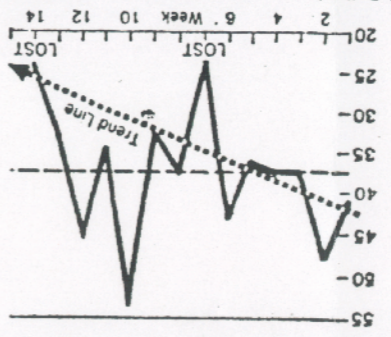
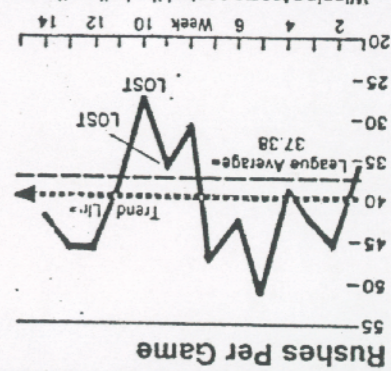
## Bud Goode Assesses the Teams

Bud Goode of Los Angeles is a statistician who began computer studies of professional football teams 15 years ago. Now, 10 National Football League teams use his service. He is the best "best fit" the team's pattern of performance.

Goode has prepared a special comparison for The New York Times of the Super Bowl XII teams, Denver and Dallas. He has matched them up in the statistical areas he feels are the most relevant. (He provides his N.F.L. clients with information based on as many as 140 variables.)

Goode's methodology: He calculates each team's trend in vital statistical areas over the course of the season. The trend lines that appear in the charts below represent what statisticians call "best fits" — the team's pattern of performance.

In the late season Dallas was allowing more pass completions, and Cowboy interceptions fell off. Denver showed a tendency to throw more interceptions. Of such observations are horse races — and Super Bowls — made.

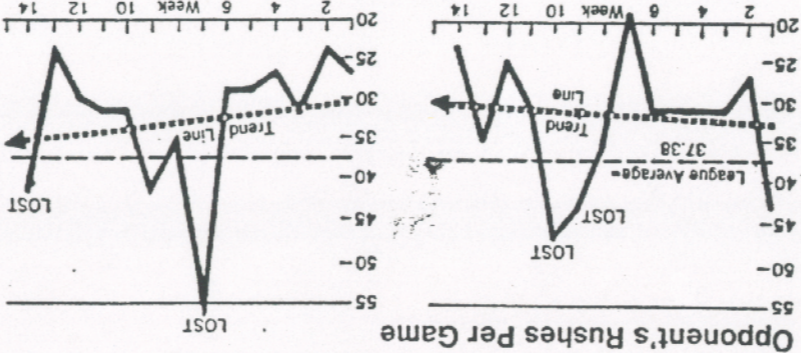
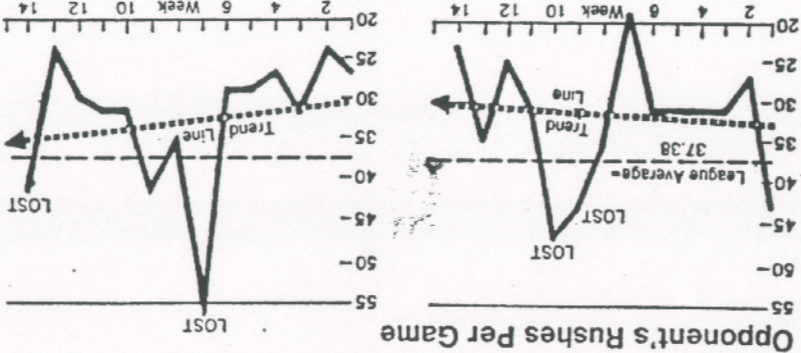


Winning teams control the ball on the ground. Dallas has done this consistently, with 40.3 rushes a game, above the National Football League average. The Cowboys' running suffered in their 10th game, against the Steelers: They ran with the ball only 27 times, and lost. Denver's rushing game weakened as the season progressed. The Broncos opened with two strong games, but these were against the Cardinals and the Bills, notoriously weak against the run. In each of Denver's two losses — to Oakland and Dallas — the Broncos ran only 23 times. Their season's average merely equaled the league's: about 37 rushes a game.

### Dallas

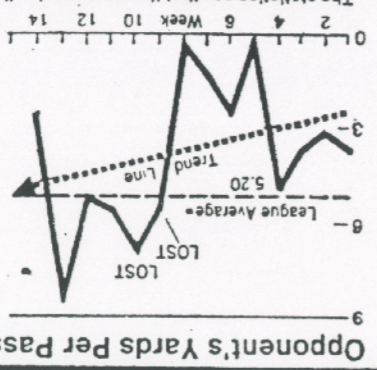
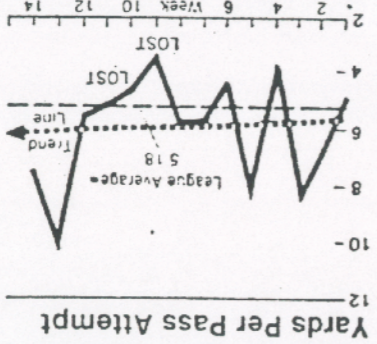
### Denver

EDGE: DALLAS.



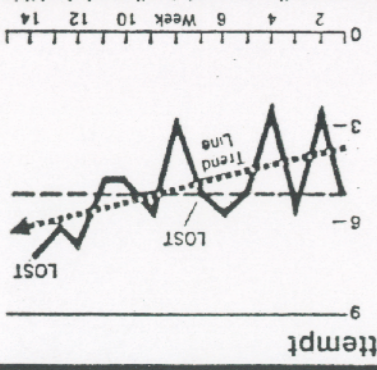
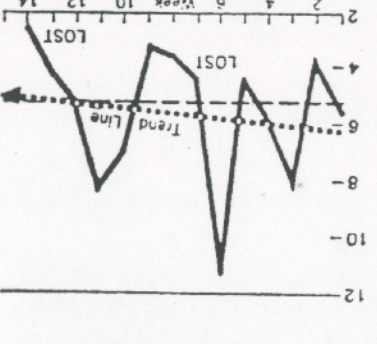
It follows that allowing the opponent to run means losing. Dallas and Denver were among the league leaders in stopping rushes. Dallas was fourth in the N.F.L. in the category, but let down against St. Louis and Pittsburgh in the ninth and 10th games: Dallas lost both. The Cowboys were stronger against the run for the remainder of the season. Denver allowed only 33.6 rushes a game, but there were signs of weakness in the season's second half.

EDGE: DALLAS.



Opponent's Yards Per Pass Attempt

SIGNIFICANT EDGE: DALLAS.



Opponent's Yards Per Pass Attempt

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A powerful team will gain an average of 7 to 8 yards on pass attempts. Dallas reached that level four times this season. Denver three times. Roger Staubach earned 7 yards per pass attempt (calculated by dividing passing yardage by attempts plus sacks) placed him fifth in the N.F.L.; Morton, at 5.12, was below the league average. And Staubach earned 7 yards plus in his one game against the Broncos, while Morton had his worst game against Dallas, gaining only 2.5 yards per attempt. Once again, Dallas got stronger as the season progressed, while Denver got weaker.

The statistics say that the more yards allowed per pass, the more points allowed. And this season, opponents' yards per pass attempt accounted for almost two-thirds of the yardage against the average team's defense. Though the Broncos were among the leaders in stopping the rush, their defense against the pass grew weaker as the season progressed. Their average of 4.87 yards allowed per pass ranks eighth in the league, compared with the Cowboy's league-leading average of 3.68. The Dallas pass defense was also poorer in the season's second half, but the weakening was not so significant as Denver's.

EDGE: DALLAS.