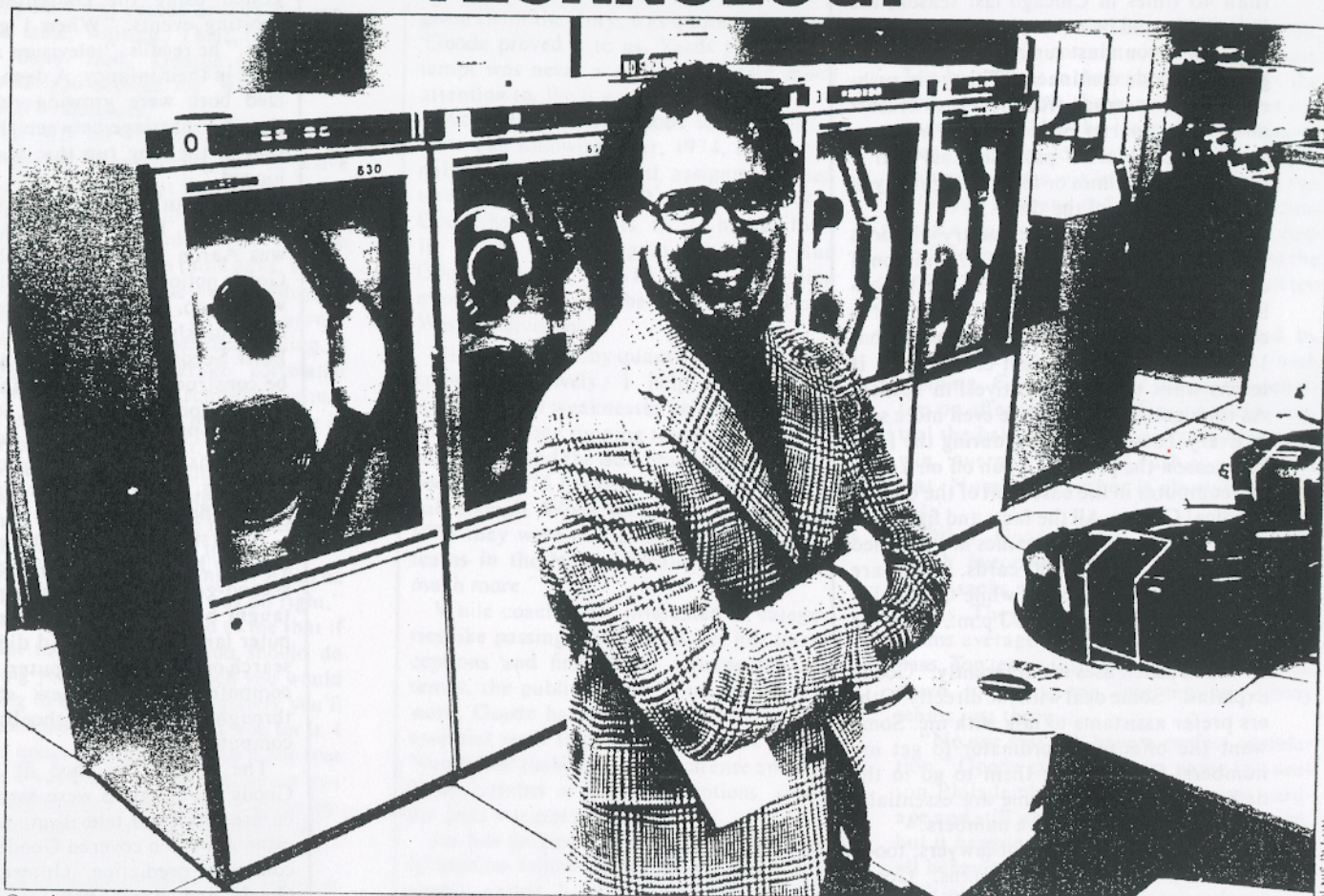


# TECHNOLOGY



Goode: His computers can call everything from a touchdown to a Supreme Court decision.

## From Football to Law, It's All in the Numbers

By Stu Black

And statistician Bud Goode's has finally come up

Football is a lot like network television: What is successful for one team is copied by virtually everyone else. For instance, when Vince Lombardi's teams won championships in the '60s with two "big backs," every team made huge young men runners. In that same era, Tom Landry devised the successful "four-three" defense, copied by nearly everyone. But in recent years injuries hit the front four on a number of teams, forcing a change in the ratio of linemen to linebacker to "three-four." And when that turned out to be successful, a spate of healthy teams quickly switched their ratios.

This year, NFL teams have been lining up behind a man named Bud Goode. Goode is a statistician, a man who feeds a myriad

of football statistics into his computers and comes up with trends and information that have proved so successful in the past few seasons that 14 teams are now using his service. The *New York Times* called him the best in his field, and many credit him with dragging football into the computer age.

Each week Goode ships a thick sheaf of computer-printout pages to his coaches around the country. The pages dissect the weekend's games into 130 statistical categories, though eventually each coach receives an edited version with only the 42 most meaningful variables. These 42 are not the same classifications that Goode prints in his syndicated weekly newspaper reports; rather, they are esoteric columns of

hard figures and percentages. The headings include such obscure items as opponents' rushes to opponents' pass attempts (also known as variable 92), opponents' average yardage per rush (variable 53) and points per pass attempt (variable 84).

This all means something to the 14 teams which buy the expertise of this 54-year-old, five-foot-seven, 145-pound, friendly faced man. "What I do for football teams is measure, analyze and predict human behavior. I can, by looking at my numbers, tell coaches which way to go and what to stay away from. For instance, if you pass more than 40 times a game you're a loser. No team that passed 40 times or more last season won a game. Joe Namath passed more