Former Pro Lineman Now Calls Own Plays

George Seals Calling Plays on CBOT

By Nick Gregory

George Seals listened to quarterbacks call signals for 10 years while playing as a lineman in the National Football League. Today he calls his own plays as a trader on the Chicago Board of Trade.

Seals became the first black person to trade on the 126-year-old *CBOT*, world's largest commodity exchange. He bought a $40,000 membership last February, along with a $10,000 seat on the *CBOT's*. Options Exchange.

"I thought for a while I'd be back with the Kansas City Chiefs for this season, possibly a few more, when I left after last season," said Seals, 32, a 6-foot-3 260-pounder.

But I changed my mind. I didn't want to get to a point where I'd have to play football to survive — you know, hang around too long, then make a desperation decision. I'm in good shape now and I feel I'm leaving while at the top of my game."

Seals, a one time All-Big Eight lineman from the University of Missouri, admitted the move from the brawny, banging, physical atmosphere of the gridiron to the business world of split-second decision-making didn't come easy.

"There are a lot of expressions that are used in both places, like 'going along,' 'going short,' 'spreading,' 'charting,' — but they have different meanings," Seals said.

"In this business it means you're usually making a big bet on the direction a community will move. If you guess right, you profit. Hit it wrong, you lose."

Seals is what the trade calls a "scalper." "That means I make lots of trades, one right after another. All the action is quick. I must make hundreds of trades daily. The action is unbelievable.

'This business means you're usually making a big bet on the direction the community will move.'

I'm hooked. I love this better than football."

'A big difference here is that you've got to generate the enthusiasm on your own. There's no coach prodding you.'

The physical shoving around might be over for Seals, but the fatigue from the trading pits is more severe, he said, than it was on the football field.

"It's no accident that trading lasts only four hours and 15 minutes," the articulate former athlete said. "The pace is too exhausting to go beyond that. Eight hours daily will kill a guy well before his time."

For Seals each trading day is like the day of a football game. "You got to be 'up,' every day. It's like having a kickoff every day, instead of only once a week as it was in the NFL.

"A big difference here is that you've got to generate the enthusiasm on your own. There's no coach prodding you, trying to get you emotionally charged for the pit."

Seals' coaching came from Hank Shatkin, president of a trading company bearing his name.

"Shatkin hung over me like a shadow, getting me started," Seals said. "He guided me through the early days, and still counsels me almost daily. Without his help, I'd have a lot more difficulty."

One thing Shatkin taught Seals is that the market often acts inconsistently "so when I get in the pit, the important thing is to be ready to move when the opening bell sounds, just like in football, because the market does not discriminate. There's no character about it."

But for Seals, who knows what trading means, having been shuttled from the New York Giants to the Washington Redskins to the Chicago Bears and finally the Chiefs, one trade he wouldn't make is the action around the wheat pit for the action of the gridiron. —(UPI)

Quick Quotes

By David M. Warren

"With the cost of living at an all-time high, never before in the history of this great nation has the American housewife paid so much and took home so little."

—

"The best way to judge a society, is to judge it by the way that it is willing to take care of those who cannot take care of themselves."

—

"The next time you are wondering about what to give to a man who has already got everything, try considering that maybe he's already got everything except a brain."

—

"Although most people fear it, death is nothing more than a gateway that leads to another life that lies beyond."

—

"The cheapest thing about a cheap hotel is usually the service."

—

"No matter how gross the lie, a liar always feels that he has deceived you."

John Brown: 115 Years Later

By Carroll Greene Jr.

Famed black Abolitionist Frederick Douglass wrote of John Brown . . . "who although a white man, is in sympathy a black man, and is deeply interested in our cause as though his own soul had been pierced with the iron of slavery."

Last December 2 marked the 115th anniversary of the hanging of the revolutionary Abolitionist John Brown at Charles Town, Va., now West Virginia, for his daring raid on the federal arsenal at Harper's Ferry.

The nearby Maryland farmhouse where Brown and his army of 16 white men and five black men lived for four months while planning their attack may soon see a new life as a National Historic Landmark.

The writer of this article, Carroll Greene Jr., is director, Special Projects, Maryland State Commission on Afro-American and Indian History and Culture.

The old Kennedy Farmhouse at Sample's Manor was officially dedicated as such on Oct. 19, almost 115 years to the day that the Brown Raiding party under cover of darkness departed from the humble farmhouse to strike their intended mortal blow against slavery.

This is an artist's drawing of the John Brown hanging at Harpers Ferry, W. Va., on Dec. 2. The original is a 24 x 30 oil on canvas, by Horace Pippin, famed black artist, entitled "John Brown Going to His Hanging."

Permission to use the photo was granted Carroll Greene Jr. by the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts in Philadelphia.

JOHN BROWN

On a clear, brisk October, 1974 afternoon, the distinguished historian, Dr. Benjamin Quarles, offered an impressive dedicatory address.

Said Dr. Quarles of John Brown, his 'army' and the farmhouse:

"We might question their methods and procedures but we can hardly fail to acknowledge their deep sense of social concern.

"Their devotion to the high ideals of their country, as proclaimed in the Declaration of Independence, would seem to have an especial relevance to our nation as it approaches the celebration of its bicentennial.

"For assuredly, this is one of the historic places in our land

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Now a historic site is the Maryland farmhouse where John Brown and his army of 16 lived for four months while planning their ill-fated attack 115 years ago. The house in Samples, Md. near Harpers Ferry, W. Va., is now eligible to be restored through government funds.