



The Way

I See It

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The pro football season is long over. The superbowl thrashing of the Broncos by the San Francisco 49'ers put the last season of the decade to rest. But now it's free agent time. Time for big bucks and big demands.

All across the NFL teams are planning ahead. Teams are laying down the blueprints for the 1990 season. Who will be protected? Who will be traded? What will happen with the free agents?

These are the questions buzzing around the front offices in big league football. So while the offices are buzzing; let's play Jeopardy. See if you know the question to this answer.

No 'Superbowl Shuffle.' No punky QB. An unplugged fridge and a self-declared, mentally unstable football player asking for a one million dollar a year salary.

The question: What is the result of the Chicago Bear's 1989 football season? If you questioned correctly you have made it to final Jeopardy.

The answer to final Jeopardy: The self-declared mental patient.

You are absolutely correct if you questioned: Who is Mike Tomczak?

The last season of the decade for the once dominating Bears was a disappointment for the proud fans of Chicago.

Tomczak, who is also the self-declared number one quarterback of the Bears, led his team to a 6-10 overall record; the six losses were the last six games of the season.

The Bears didn't make the playoffs, had a six game losing streak, chalked up an embarrassing loss to their next-state rival Packers and Tomczak wants a raise. The self-stated number one split the starting duties this season with the green, someday hope to be legitimate starter, Jim Harbaugh.

The only reason Tomczak was a starter in the first place was because of injuries to Jim McMahon. Tomczak also backed into the job because of the ultimate trade of the punky one.

Still Tomczak couldn't hold down the starting position.

Tomczak was paid \$350,000 for the part-time starting job he played for the Bears this year. Agent Jeffery Moorad says Tomczak should be fairly evaluated with existing quarterbacks in the NFL making one million dollars a year.

Tomczak and his agent are asking for a one million dollar a year salary, give or take a hundred thousand.

Let me put this situation in terms you can easily understand or better yet, I can easily explain. Imagine you are a bar owner.

You have in your employment a bartender that has trouble every time he or she works. Let's say at the end of the shift there are cracked glasses, dropped bottles, and there is money missing from the register.

This happens *six times in a row*, say *six Sundays*. Remember, this bartender only works on Sundays, sometimes an occasional Monday night.

This bartender is continually causing you a *loss*. At the end of the month this bartender asks for a raise. The raise is for *one million dollars*, hypothetically speaking.

As a businessman, what do you do?

You put a bartender wanted sign in the window.

Personnel Director Vince Tobin, of the Bears, says that they were not 6-10 because of their quarterbacks. But then again he also said that the Bears might draft a quarterback come June.

If there is any financial transaction, Tomczak should donate money to charity as punishment for this season. He should not demand to be paid more.

If he comes into camp next season, locks down the starting position, and leads the Bears to the playoffs; then give him a raise. He would deserve it.

But until then, Mike, keep the one million dollar conversations between you and your therapist.

And that's the way I see it.