

ing the playoffs one year, I jotted them down, handed them to him in an envelope the following spring and said cheerfully, "Don't ever accuse me of asking a stupid question again." He never did.

Baseball's not the same without Reggie Jackson. There's no attraction like him. Not Bonds. Not **Jose Canseco**. No one.

Which is why he deserves to be on Cooperstown's stage. All by himself.

The toughest back-to-back pitching combo in the American League is Seattle's **Randy Johnson** and **Chris Bosio**, according to several hitters and scouts.

"There's such a huge contrast between them," says Red Sox outfielder **Mike Greenwell**. "First you get Johnson, a tall, lanky left-hander who throws 95 miles per hour and has a big, sweeping [breaking pitch]. Then you see Bosio, a smaller, husky guy who doesn't throw hard but never

gives you a meat pitch and keeps everything on the corners. He invents pitches as he goes along." No wonder Bosio no-hit Boston the night after the Red Sox faced Johnson. "I still can't believe we didn't get a hit off that guy," says one Red Sox. "He didn't throw anything over 84 [mph]. That shows how difficult it is adjusting to a guy like Bosio after seeing 95-mile-an-hour fastballs the night before." Says Angels scout **Moose Stubing**: "The only one-two that compares with Johnson and Bosio is **Roger Clemens** and **Frank Viola**, but Johnson and Bosio are more difficult to face back-to-back because they're completely different pitchers with completely different stuff. If they're on, you just can't adjust in a 24-hour period." ... Add Randy Johnson: "He's really turned his career around," says Greenwell. "He's become dominant because he's been ag-

gressive and has more confidence in his breaking stuff. He struck me out three times [earlier this season], and that's only the second time that's ever happened to me in my life." The other was in Little League. "Johnson had me 0-2 three straight times," says Greenwell. "The old Randy Johnson used to fall behind 2-0."

The question isn't why the Kansas City

Chiefs altered their 4-3 defense to turn sack specialist **Derrick Thomas** loose by making him a pass rusher exclusively. The question is why it took so long. Thomas, an outside linebacker, is perhaps the best sack artist in the business, yet the Chiefs confined him by allowing him to work exclusively as a pass rusher only on passing downs. Now, in the new "Chief" formation, Kansas City has Thomas lined up as a defensive end outside the offensive tackle, who'll have no chance against Thomas.

"Ever since I heard [about the change], I haven't been able to contain my excitement," says Thomas. Quarterbacks beware. "Thomas could get 20 to 25 sacks in that system," says an AFC West defensive coach.

The next hot coaching commodity in the NFL, according to new Broncos coach **Wade Phillips**, is Cowboys offensive coordinator **Norv Turner**. "I still can't believe that guy didn't get an interview for some of the vacancies after what he did last year," Phillips says. "That won't happen next year. He'll be a head coach somewhere in the NFL." Phillips just hopes it isn't in a place known for high



Derrick Thomas

elevation and Rocky Mountains. Watch for Turner to wind up in either Atlanta or Detroit, where **Jerry Glanville** and **Wayne Fontes** are in better-win-or-else situations. Turner won't take the Cardinals' job, if it opens, for the same reason **Dave Wannstedt** snubbed the Giants and accepted the Bears' job: You don't want to coach in the same division as Jim-

my Johnson.

One of the harshest critics on the state of baseball today is Angels manager **Buck Rodgers**. He's ripped the quality of talent ("There are at least two or three guys on every team that should be in the minors"), he's ripped high-salaried players who don't hustle or play enough ("Do these guys have any pride?"), and now he's peeved about the inability of hitters to get out of the way of inside pitches—"what few they see," he quips. "Nobody knows how to get out of the way of a pitch anymore," says Rodgers. "Virtually every hitter in the game leans in over the plate, and when a pitcher tries to brush him back, or even come in on him, he glares at you. And God forbid if they hit you. He'll kill you. I'm telling you, if any of the hitters today had to face guys like **Don Drysdale** or **Bob Gibson**, they'd be rushing the mound every other at-bat. It's insane the way hitters react today, and something has to be done about it—and soon."

The Raiders chose **Jeff Hostetler** over **Bobby Hebert** not because Hebert wanted \$1 million more per year and one more guaranteed year (a fourth) on the contract. "It's because Hostetler led the Giants to a Super Bowl [in January '90] and Hebert prevented the Saints from getting there [last year]," says a Raiders assistant. "Hebert made some of the most asinine decisions [in the Saints' playoff loss to Philadelphia] that we've ever seen." ... All-Pro safety **Ronnie Lott**, now a New York Jet, says **Ronnie Harmon** of the Chargers "is not only one of the most underrated players in the league but



Randy Johnson



Roger Clemens

JOHN SOCHOO/BERNSTEIN & ASSOC.

TOM DIPACE

MICHAEL PONZIO