

But Drivers Like Assignment

Baseball Players More Rowdy Than Gridders

Baseball teams are more rowdy than football teams — at least when they are riding the bus.

That's the consensus of most ATA operators who have driven professional teams to and from the airport and the stadiums at Truman Sports Complex.

Leroy Odum, Badge 322, recently hauled the Cleveland Browns for the game with the Chiefs at Arrowhead Stadium.

"They all boarded the bus quietly with their bags (an Airport Express Truck hauls football equipment to the stadium)", Odum said. "They're just normal, nice fellows.

"**They carry** on normal conversation, with a lot of talk about women and things you'd expect them to talk about," he said. "I did hear a couple players talk about how they were going to run over the Chiefs.

"They were all nice to me," he said. "I recognized Greg Pruitt but I'm not a big enough fan to know many of the players."

But the main thing that struck him, Odum said, was the difference with baseball teams he's hauled in the past.

"Baseball players are okay," he said, "but they seem to be a little more ornery. They're a little louder, and more spirited."

George Petty, Badge 594 agrees.

"I hauled the Texas Rangers recently and they are a rowdy bunch," Petty said. "They give you a lot of hassle. They say: 'Can't this bus go faster?', things like that.

"I had one baseball team not long ago that came in for a three-game series with the Royals. They lost all three. They were a real nasty bunch on the way back to the airport."

But Petty thinks football players are generally a nicer group.

"As a whole they are calmer guys," Petty said.

"I had the Oakland Raiders last year and they were really a lot of fun," he said. "They acted like it was their day off. They treat you just like a regular guy."

But Bobbie J. Broadus, Badge 799 said it makes a difference whether the teams win or lose.

"When you're running them to the airport after they lose, they are down, and quiet. They're polite and courteous all right, but you can tell they're not happy."

She hauled the Baltimore Colts, who lost their game to the Chiefs.

"They joke a lot before a game," said James Rowlen, Badge 675, who hauled some of the Cleveland Browns for their game here. "They delayed me at Crown Center for a few minutes because they wanted to watch the last of another game that was on TV.

"They don't look as big as you'd think they would," he said. "Don't get me wrong, there are some big players. But a lot of them look smaller than you'd expect. I guess it's all that football equipment they wear that makes you think they ought to look like giants."

But all the drivers agree, it's a choice assignment.

It's fun to haul a team, there's electricity in the air, and often there are some pretty good tips.



N. Cheadle, #281, and Floyd Barbee, #340, size up the Oakland Raiders before driving them to the stadium.