

Would it be too much to ask, do you think, to get the Bills' Tom Donahoe involved in the negotiations to bring a Pro Bass fishing shop to Buffalo? Heck, why stop there, let's put the guy in charge of developing the whole waterfront, and maybe throw in a new bridge to boot.

It hasn't been since Bob Rich buzzed Buffalo with the fastball dream of professional baseball here that we have gotten this excited about someone who doesn't actually wear cleats, helmets or goalie pads.

And, for good reason. On the field, he's built the Bills into one of the NFL's elite teams (it says here 10-6 and with an iota of good luck, 11-5 this season), and done it in three short years, one less than the City of Buffalo gets to find a way to balance its books using the oh-by-the-way- but-it-only-works-if-county-residents-blindly cough-up-68-million "plan" unveiled by our forward-thinking city fathers.

So, it got us to thinking, with all the gridiron giddiness bubbling about, who else on the Bills might be available, just in case any of the key players in the fiscal rescue attempt aren't available on a daily basis. Or, at the very least, be people qualified to play a role in this ongoing drama. They might just be overpaid understudies of a sort, but they're well versed dealing in big money, big egos and on a public stage. The list should include:

**Ralph Wilson** – Could sit in for Joel Giambra. They both often hold all the cards, and they know when to play 'em.

**Drew Bledsoe** – Easily slides in for control board chairman Thomas E. Baker as leader of the troops, chief signal caller, and as one whose every decision has monumental implications

**Greg Williams** – Available, maybe sooner rather than later if the critics are right, to spell Tony Masiello. Both are great at exuding supernatural levels of arrogance and indispensability, which in both cases, has hardly been earned.

**Takeo Spikes** – Gender issues aside, Spikes might fit the bill if control board executive director Dorothy Johnson needs an occasional three-day weekend. Both are glitzy newcomers on which high expectations have been placed. They both have strong resumes, and both are central to the game time decisions and details that will make or break their respective teams. OK, it might be a slight stretch to say Spikes was brought in to save the defense, just as it was a slight exaggeration of the Pittsburgh Post Gazette to declare that Buffalo was "hers to save." But only slight.

**Willis Magahee** – Perfect for George Pataki. Both are a long way from truly and tangibly and publicly stepping on the playing field, but once they do...

**Travis Henry** – Let's see, a guy who already is wondering where he might ply his trade – the only one he knows – in six or eight months time. Does the name Jim Pitts ring a bell along these lines?

**Brian Moorman** – There's been more daily punting in the halls of City Hall than 30 collective years in Orchard Park.

**Van Miller** – Because someone, anyone, needs to become a fatherly, knowledgeable, reasonable and classy voice amidst the rancorous rubble.

**Travis Brown** – Irrelevant third string quarterback, other body parts still work, but broken finger put him out, maybe for good. Has been fortunate to get this far for this long. Sounds like a casting call for Andrew Rudnick.

**Sam Adams** – Because, we all will need a little kick back and throw back during this ordeal – football or fiscal. That, and there is no one named Michelob Light on the Bills' roster.

If they haven't already, let the games begin.

*(Brian Ackley is a columnist for the Weekly Independent Newspapers (WIN) of Western New York. WIN is a consortium of 19 community newspapers in Erie and Niagara counties with a paid weekly circulation of 75,000 homes, providing collaborative advertising and editorial support for member publications. For more information on WIN, or to provide feedback on this column, visit our website at [www.wnynewspapers.com](http://www.wnynewspapers.com). Opinions expressed here are those of the author.)*