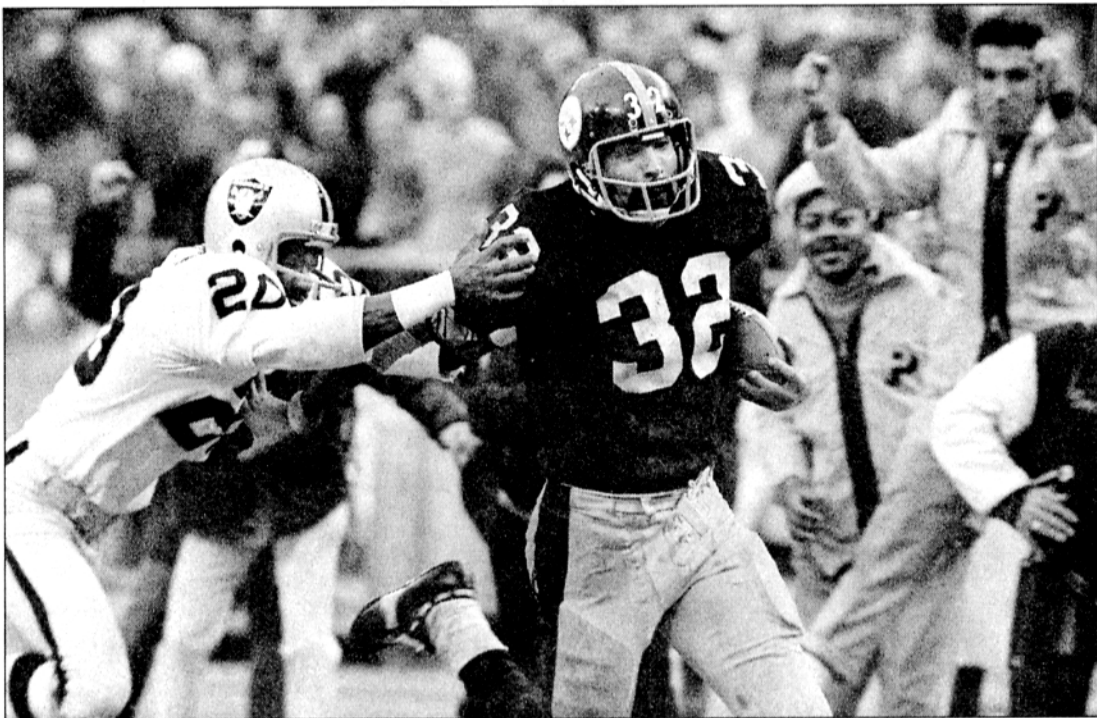


## Eye-Opener **A business model made of steel**



1972 photo by Harry Cabluck, AP

**Smart pick:** The Steelers got immediate returns from rookie Franco Harris with his legendary "Immaculate Reception."

Even for those who write them, business and management books are seldom put into the "can't put it down" category.

So Alan Simon, author of 26 previous business books, figured he'd mix a little business with a lot of sports pleasure in his latest one.

He took his love for his hometown football team and combined that with management lessons to write *Blocking and Tackling Your Way to Management Success: 40 Essential Lessons from 40 Years of the Pittsburgh Steelers*.

"One of the trickiest things with basic management fundamentals is try-

ing to get somewhat of a stickiness factor to it," he said.

"For the most part, a lot of the content is dull, dry, and with a lot of newcomers it just doesn't resonate. Watching the Super Bowl with my dad last year, we were talking about all these Steelers we watched growing up, and it just came together."

So drafting Franco Harris over Lydell Mitchell in 1972 becomes a lesson on how companies should interpret data.

Rocky Bleier's return from Vietnam is a textbook example of aiding your employees, while the arrival of Bill

Cowher becomes illustrative of "strategic rejuvenation."

Even a dropped Super Bowl XIII pass by Dallas Cowboys tight end Jackie Smith becomes Steelers legend and business fodder.

"Some of the business lessons bleed over a little bit into life," Simon said. "The title is a little bit of a cliché, but just because it's a cliché doesn't mean it isn't true."

— Reid Cherner

Click here for a Q&A with Simon and to tell us your favorite Steelers memory [gameon.usatoday.com](http://gameon.usatoday.com)