

Signing autographs now a struggle for Ruffing

United Press International
SPERSTOWN, N.Y. — A little thing like signing his autographs practically all the time and energy Red Ruffing doesn't mind doing it a bit, giving people his autograph is a labor of love. It's so painful, almost extremely so, to go back not that

many years ago and recall what a fine figure of a man Charlie "Red" Ruffing was, pitching for the New York Yankees, and then to see him now partially paralyzed and imprisoned in a wheelchair struggling so hard to write his name. Charlie Ruffing is happy to do it, though. You could see that by the pleased reaction on his face every time someone came over to him for

his autograph here the past couple of days, as so many did. Elected to Baseball's Hall of Fame 10 years ago, the 72-year-old Ruffing shames many younger and much more vigorous Hall of Famers by coming here from his home in Cleveland each year for the annual induction ceremony. Without his devoted wife, Pauline, to whom he has been mar-

ried for 40 years, he'd never make it. She watches over him like a baby, shaving him each morning, feeding him each day, putting him to bed each night. "What does coming here mean to him?" she said, repeating a question put to her by a newsman. "It means everything. He plans this all year. He looks forward to seeing the

people he knows and the people in his own environment. When we go home today, he'll begin making preparations for next year." Pauline Ruffing looked over at her husband on the other side of the lobby in the Hotel Otesaga, where all the Hall of Famers get together each year this time, and watched him autographing baseballs. Tears welled up in her eyes and she had to wipe them with a handkerchief when someone asked her how difficult it was to make the trip from Cleveland.

"It's a hard job," she said, unable to talk for a moment. "He has such a little bit of pleasure and it breaks my heart to see him stuck in a wheelchair like this. Five years ago, he had a stroke, and he doesn't have control of his left side. It kills me to see him this way." Charlie Ruffing won 273 games during his 22-year career in the big leagues and hit .300. Remember, he was a pitcher. Today you have outfielders who can't hit that.

own husband a piece of her mind. "Look, you pitch," she said. "I pitch, too." She certainly does. What's more, she's still in there pitching now.

Tech tops league in experience

It's like receiving a presidential endorsement from George Washington or being named who's among CIA operations personnel. Whatever the implications, it's with a track record Texas Tech just as soon forget.

Gaining one point for each returning letterman, another point if he is a starter and still a third if the player is a senior, then subtracting a point for each starter and each letterman lost, Tech amassed a total of 51 points to edge TCU for the championship.

Supplying names with points for an aid in explanation, Tech quarterback Rodney Allison is worth three points to the Raiders because he is a senior letterman and a returning starter. On the other hand, all-America defensive tackle Wilson Whitley cost defending co-champ Houston two points on the experience formula chart (and possibly a lot more on the field).

has the experience champion shared a conference crown (A&M in '75) and not since 1969 when Texas won the national championship has an SWC entry won the league title outright after being given this early confidence-builder. That season ended a string of five straight conference winners which started the year as the league's most experienced units. Last season's most experienced entry, Baylor, finished fourth.

Ruffing came to the Yankees in 1930 from the Red Sox, and next to getting Babe Ruth from the same club the Yanks never made a better deal.

"When I came to the Yankees, I was called into the office by the manager, Bob Shawkey," Ruffing said. "He told me you will walk like a Yankee, conduct yourself like a

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Raccoons do not wash their food in water because they cannot salivate. They have salivary glands and do salivate.

Oakland pulverizes Oilers

30-0 in exhibition opener

Raider Coach John Madden, a master of understatement. "We had a chance to look at a lot of players. We have a long way to go and a lot of things we still have to do. We're an explosive team. I think we proved that."

Only once in the last seven years

TCU also returned 42 lettermen and 16 starters, but only 12 are seniors and the Frogs lost 22 points due to graduation. In individual categories, Arkansas returns the most lettermen with 43, while Tech, TCU and SMU all welcome back 16 starters. A&M's loss of 12 starters tops that department by one over Texas while Rice said goodbye to a league-high 30 lettermen enroute to its total, well above the all-time low of minus four turned in several times.

Ironically, the top four teams on this year's experience chart show the four lowest averages over the past seven seasons. From 1970 through 1976, the Raiders averaged only 26.1 points of experience per year, TCU was barely ahead with 26.3, SMU trailed with 19.6 and Arkansas topped the group at 27.1.

Pauline Ruffing apologized to Red Ruffing's wife that day personally. Before she did, though, she gave her

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Oakland starting quarterback, Ken "Snake" Stabler, played only the first quarter in which he completed three-of-five passes for 72 yards and one touchdown, a 54-yard bomb.

Houston coach Bumb Phillips took the crunching defeat philosophically, noting "You can't make mistakes against a team like Oakland and expect to win. We have a lot of things to work on."

A total of 119 of 198 starters return for the '77 season, or 60.1 per cent of last year's top players. Included are 32 returnees for co-champion Houston. But the loss of 13 lettermen, including eight starters, whittled away at the Cougars final total.

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"It felt good to be back," exulted Stabler. "We have more good

Stabler Dorsett out of action with injury

United Press International
SAN ANTONIO, Texas — The Houston Oilers' starting quarterback, Ken Stabler, was out of action with a knee injury sustained during the Oilers' 30-0 exhibition win over the Oakland Raiders.

The Cowboys also announced 13 players were waived. Draft selections released were No. 8 choice Al Cleveland, defense lineman from Pacific; No. 9 draft pick Mark Cantrell, center from North Carolina and No. 11 Don Wardlow, tight end from Washington.

The most spectacular touchdown of the night was provided by Rick Jennings, who returned a punt 69 yards for a TD in the second quarter.

Houston, with only two scoring threats all night, drove to the Oakland 20-yard line in the first quarter but Ove Johansson's field goal attempt was blocked. In the fourth quarter, Houston drove to the Oakland 11-yard line on a pass from Karl Douglas then passed into the end zone but it was intercepted by rookie Lester Hayes.

Leonard Allen of East Texas State and Gary Hernandez of Fresno State, defensive backs Marty Hammock of Memphis State and Keith Ponder of Northern Michigan, linebacker Lucien Johnson of Texas-El Paso, wide receivers Gerald Johnson of Johnson C. Smith and Kenny Walker of Oklahoma State, center John Rosetti of Oregon, and defensive linemen Dennis Dedrick of Wichita State and Keith Kerkhoff of Buena Vista.

Second-year wide receiver Percy Howard was placed on the "physically unable to perform" list. Howard, who has had knee surgery twice in the past two years, may be reactivated Nov. 1.

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