



Victory!

Battalion photo by Clay Cockrill

Darrell Waltrip, winner of Sunday's Texas 400 at Texas World Speedway, rolls toward the winner's circle holding his hand high with the

victory sign. Waltrip is the current leader in the Winston Cup point standings, which is given to the top NASCAR stock car driver.

100 m.p.h. fastball

Ryan keep rocketing

United Press International
ANAHEIM — At age seven Nolan Ryan discovered he could throw a baseball faster than anyone in his neighborhood.
Twenty-five years later, the neighborhood has become the major leagues for the California Angels' power-pitcher.
As he progressed through Little League and junior baseball as a pitcher, he began working on the skills that today make him the fastest and most feared pitcher in baseball.
There are many in the majors today who would rather take the night off than face Ryan. For no matter what the ballplayers admit publicly, human nature decrees that you retain a fear of a rock-hard object buzzing under your chin at 100 mph.
Anyone who has played organized baseball when very young can sympathize with the kids Ryan pitched against in the Refugio, Texas, Little Leagues. When you're young, the fear of a pitcher sticking the ball in your ear is often overpowering. You bat with your feet closer to the dug-out than home plate and every muscle is tensed for that dive to the dirt that you know is inevitable.
"Oh geez," they must've said, — "Ryan's pitching again."
And today they say the same thing.
"When I was just a kid I realized I had the ability to throw a baseball that far exceeded that of kids my age," the author of four major league

no-hitters said. "It was a God-given ability and I took advantage of it."
"No matter how hard someone works at pitching, if you don't have that natural ability to throw real hard it's no use."
"It's a combination of things for me," Ryan explained. "Arm speed, leg strength, wrist flexibility, hip rotation — it all combines for a natural speed thrower."
The 6-2, 195-pound righthander threw a baseball during a game Aug. 20, 1974 against the Detroit Tigers that was clocked at 100.9 mph. He was clocked at 100.8 mph later that season against the Chicago White Sox.
In addition to his all-time record equalling four no-hitters, Ryan has recorded six one-hitters, 13 two-hitters and 22 three-hitters.
And his arm, though injured in three different seasons, always has come back to prove it can take the punishment of long workouts without fatigue. In games in which the Angels have had a lead at the end of seven innings with Ryan pitching, he has recorded a 95-2 record. If you don't get to Ryan early, you don't get to him at all.
A pitcher who throws as hard as Ryan is extremely rare. A pitcher who throws that hard and lasts very long before his arm turns to pudding is even more rare.
Ryan has suffered a string of arm injuries, the most serious in 1975 when surgery was required on his

right elbow. In 1977 his season was cut short by an arm injury and last season more stiffness and soreness hampered him and he stumbled to a 10-13 record.
But Ryan claims the wing is as strong as ever and he hopes to continue for awhile. He lost his first start this season — Seattle got to him in a hurry — but he won his next three on a 3-hitter, 4-hitter and 2-hitter and appeared to be winging with the verve of old.
"I can foresee pitching for three or four more years," he said. "But any injury that reduces my velocity could end it anytime. When I lose that fastball, I'm gone. I'm too old to try to learn an entirely new pitching style and learn how to throw new pitches."
For the batters that step into the box a little slower, dig in a little less and lean back a little more, the end of Ryan's career can't come too soon.

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Bad eyes bad news for athletes

United Press International
WASHINGTON — Promising athletes who never seem to live up to their potential may have eye problems.
Dr. Donald J. Getz, a Van Nuys, Calif., optometrist, says he is concerned with quarterbacks who may have 20-20 vision but have problems finding secondary receivers, basketball players who are poor ball-handlers and tennis and baseball players who take their eye off the ball.
Getz' premise is that many problem athletes, whether they play in the National Football League or on a neighborhood tennis court, can be helped through a series of eye exercises.
"Most professional athletes have good visual abilities or they would not be where they are, but just as a good piano player can be taught to be a better piano player, an athlete can be taught to have superior visual skills and better performance will result," said Getz, writing in the American Optometric Association Journal.
"One of the major differences between super stars like Jerry West and Oscar Robertson and other National Basketball Association players appears to be their great peripheral vision."
"All players can develop this skill as well as the other visual skills," said Getz.
Asked in a telephone interview to single out a performer who needs visual help, Getz suggested James Harris, the former Los Angeles Ram who is now a backup quarterback with the San Diego Chargers.
Harris, Getz said, "was sensational in practice and also great in throwing to primary receivers." But he had trouble locating secondary receivers and seeing rushers closing in on him.
"Harris never saw them, he never tucked the ball away and when he was hit, he fumbled."
Getz said his comments about athletes were aimed basically at those who believed they had good vision.
To determine problems, Getz gives his athlete-patients a series of

tests designed to determine their abilities and reactions. He measures such things as peripheral vision, how fast visual information can be translated into action, balance problems and the ability to handle a ball over-

head.
The program takes about three months and results are more or less permanent. "Once you develop the skill, every time you use the skill, it becomes more developed," he said.
"In addition, athletes form significantly better balance than when out who have great natural never perform up to the might also have visual

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