

Players need print

By MILTON RICHMAN
UPI Sports Editor
NEW YORK — Sparky Anderson received his earliest baseball education the same place all of us did — from the newspaper.

Growing up in the Los Angeles area when the Pacific Coast League had one of its franchises there, Anderson would get the paper every morning, turn to the sports section first as a matter of course and study the box scores of both the Angels and Hollywood Stars.

And while the ballplayers, of course, are the ones responsible for all the drama and excitement in the game, Sparky Anderson agrees with me the newspapers serve as the basic historic record of all that drama and excitement, and in so doing, they quite naturally generate fan interest in both the players and the game.

Some ballplayers can't see that. They show a tendency to become unhappy when their version of the truth doesn't coincide with the reporter's, and lately, they think they have discovered the most effective way of hampering a newsman is by not talking to him.

It never dawns on players who do this they are hurting themselves much more than they are hurting any reporter. He's going to get his story, anyway, no matter how many obstacles he encounters along the way. And this concept has certainly crossed the mind of Sparky Anderson.

With most ball clubs, the trainer's room is off limits to all members of the media, so that's the first place some of the players head for in the clubhouse and it was one of the first things Anderson talked about to the Tiger players when he became their new manager eleven weeks ago.

"I told them I didn't want them running into the trainer's room," he said. "I held a meeting with the players and said to them it was up to each one of them to be a man here. I said, 'If you do not wish to speak to a writer, it's up to you to tell him.' 'I'd

rather not speak at this time.' If he doesn't accept that, you have the right to walk away."

"I got upset over a headline once," he remembers. "The story was 100 percent the way I told it to the writer, it was only the headline that was at variance. Seeing the headline made it sound like I was badmouthing the Dodgers, which I wasn't. I told the writer about it and he told me the truth — he did not control the headline. For me, that was a learning process. I learned something by that."

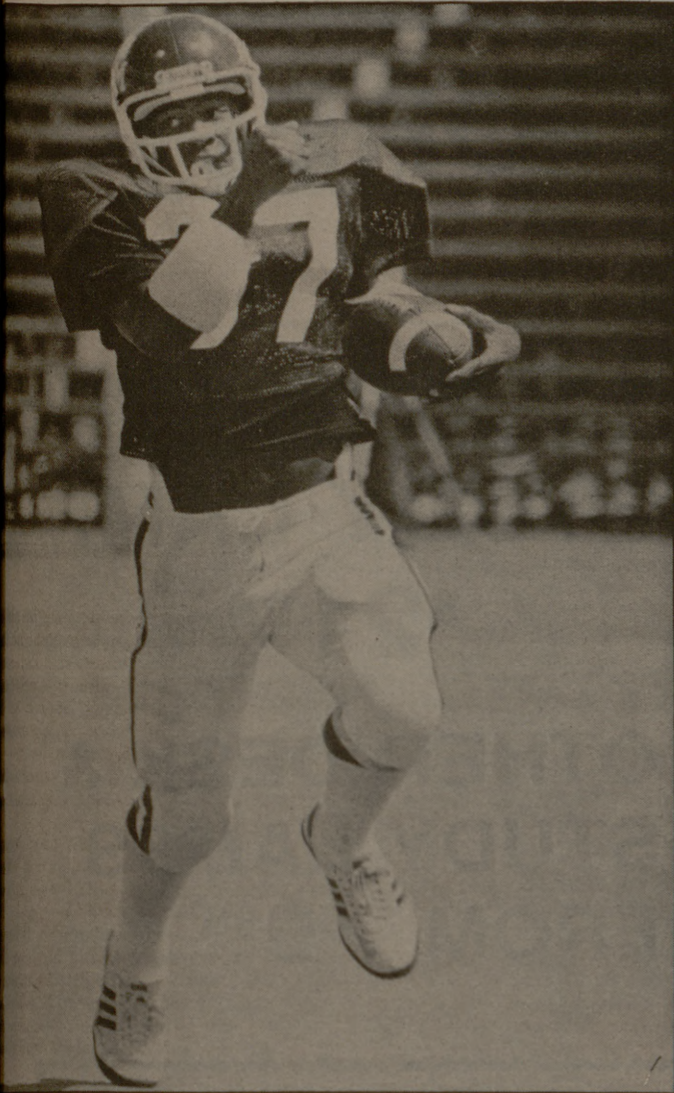
The former Reds' manager feels that escalated salaries are as much responsible for some players avoiding newsmen as anything else.

"When they say money is the root of all evil, they are stating a fact," Anderson says. "Society is changing and so is baseball. When you suddenly take people making relatively ordinary salaries and start paying them better than presidents of long-established, successful companies, then you get a backlash. We have some people thinking they have the money now, so they don't need anything or anybody else. How wrong they are."

"Now you take my case. I signed a contract with Detroit that has five years to go after this. I'll be 50 when that contract runs out and I could probably live ok on my pension. But next to my family, this game is the most important thing in my life. I need this game, it doesn't need me. This game can survive without George Anderson. I suggest to all the players, general managers, farm directors and right down to the equipment men and groundskeepers that this game is so great, it doesn't really need any of us."

Sparky Anderson is a throwback to those days, not that long ago, when players played professional baseball primarily because they loved the game and secondly for the money.

"Let's face it, where do you get an opportunity to live in the style you do in the big league?" he asked.



Johnny Be Good

From all indications, this young man named Johnny Hector from New Iberia, La., will be more than good during his four-year career at Texas A&M. Hector, a freshman tailback, has continually impressed Aggie coaches throughout his workouts with his quick feet, moves and ability to escape tight tacklers. Hector highlighted the final scrimmage of fall Saturday rushing for 81 yards on six carries and one touchdown.

Battalion photo by Pat O'Malley

Dodgers blank Astros 1-0, Rangers sink Mariners

Associated Press International
HOUSTON — Jerry Reuss fired a 7-0 shutout against the Astros in the seventh inning to drive in the only run Monday night, lifting the Los Angeles Dodgers to a 1-0 victory over Houston that dropped the Astros out of first place in the National League West.

Reuss, 35, retired the first 14 batters he faced and got Luis Pujols grounded out and end the Astros' rally in the fifth inning after Jeff Leonard and Jose Cruz had singled. The Astros, who hit only two balls in the infield, fell a half game behind Cincinnati with the Reds beating a 6-5 victory over Atlanta Monday night.

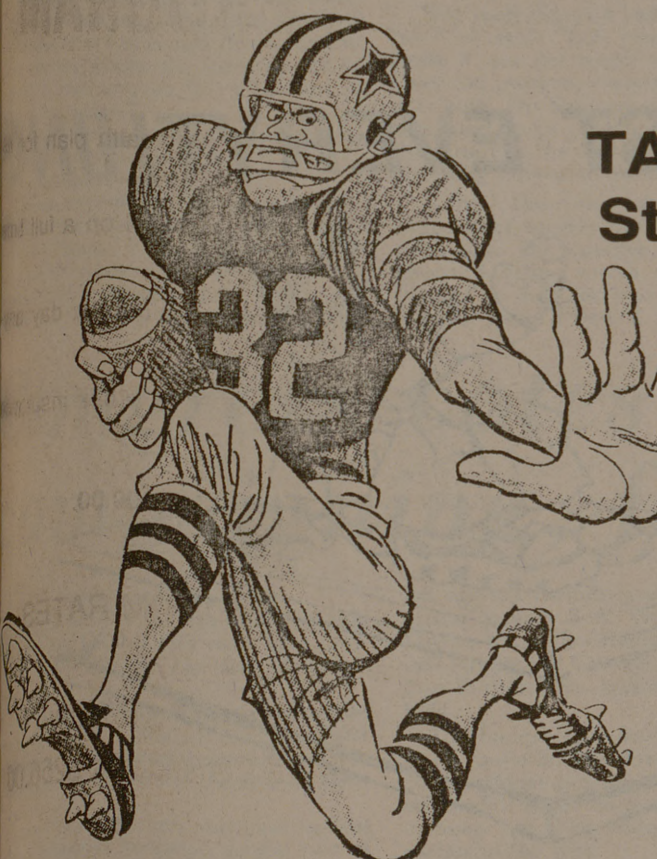
Reuss struck out seven and did not allow a batter in recording his first shutout of the season. Starter and ace Niekro failed in his bid to

become the first 19-game winner in the NL despite a strong five-hitter. Niekro, 18-9, threw two wild pitches in the seventh and one of them allowed Dusty Baker, who had walked, to advance to second base. Baker scored on Ferguson's two-out single to left.

In Seattle, Bump Wills went 4-for-5 with a home run and two RBI Monday night while the Texas Rangers hit three homers en route to a 4-1 victory over the Seattle Mariners.

Solo homers by Willie Montanez and rookie Greg Muhlberg helped starter Doc Medich improve his record to 7-6. Medich was relieved by Jim Kern, who pitched shutout innings to register his 23rd save. Loser Floyd Bannister, 7-14, was the victim of all three homers.

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