

Sports

Astros thwarted in first game

Houston defeated by long ball once again

United Press International
PHILADELPHIA — The Houston Astros could have claimed fatigue caused their 3-1 loss to the Philadelphia Phillies in Game 1 of the National League championship series Tuesday night, but they didn't.

Neither did they let themselves be depressed by their failure to beat Phillies ace lefthander Steve Carlton, who had considerably less stuff than usual in his seven-inning, seven-hit outing.

"I don't think that had any effect on us," said Astros' manager Bill Virdon, referring to the Astros late arrival in Philadelphia early Tuesday after defeating Los Angeles in a one-game playoff on the West Coast for the NL West title late Monday.

"I thought we played quite well," said Virdon. "We just got beat."
"We didn't have time for a let-down," Virdon added, when asked if the emotions of the past four games with the Dodgers might have robbed the Astros of their spirit.

"As far as the playoffs go, we've had one goal all season — to get into them," Virdon said. "And that means the spirit will take care of itself."

Houston first baseman Art Howe, the hero of the division-clinching win over Los Angeles, said there was no reason to be depressed by the team's play.

"If we'd have come in and played terrible then I might have bothered us, but we played very well. It was just a little too much Carlton. He made the right pitches when he had to. We thought if we could beat Carlton we'd be in great shape, but now we'll just have to go for the split," Howe said.

Losing pitcher Ken Forsch likewise was unshamed of his performance. Forsch gave up eight hits, including a game-winning two-run homer to Greg Luzinski with two out in the sixth. Forsch said the fastball Luzinski hit into left field stands was just a little higher than he wanted it to be.

"It was a 3-2 situation, so I had to throw a strike," Forsch said. "I got it

up a little higher than I wanted. I made the same pitch to him but a little bit lower his time up before and I struck him out."

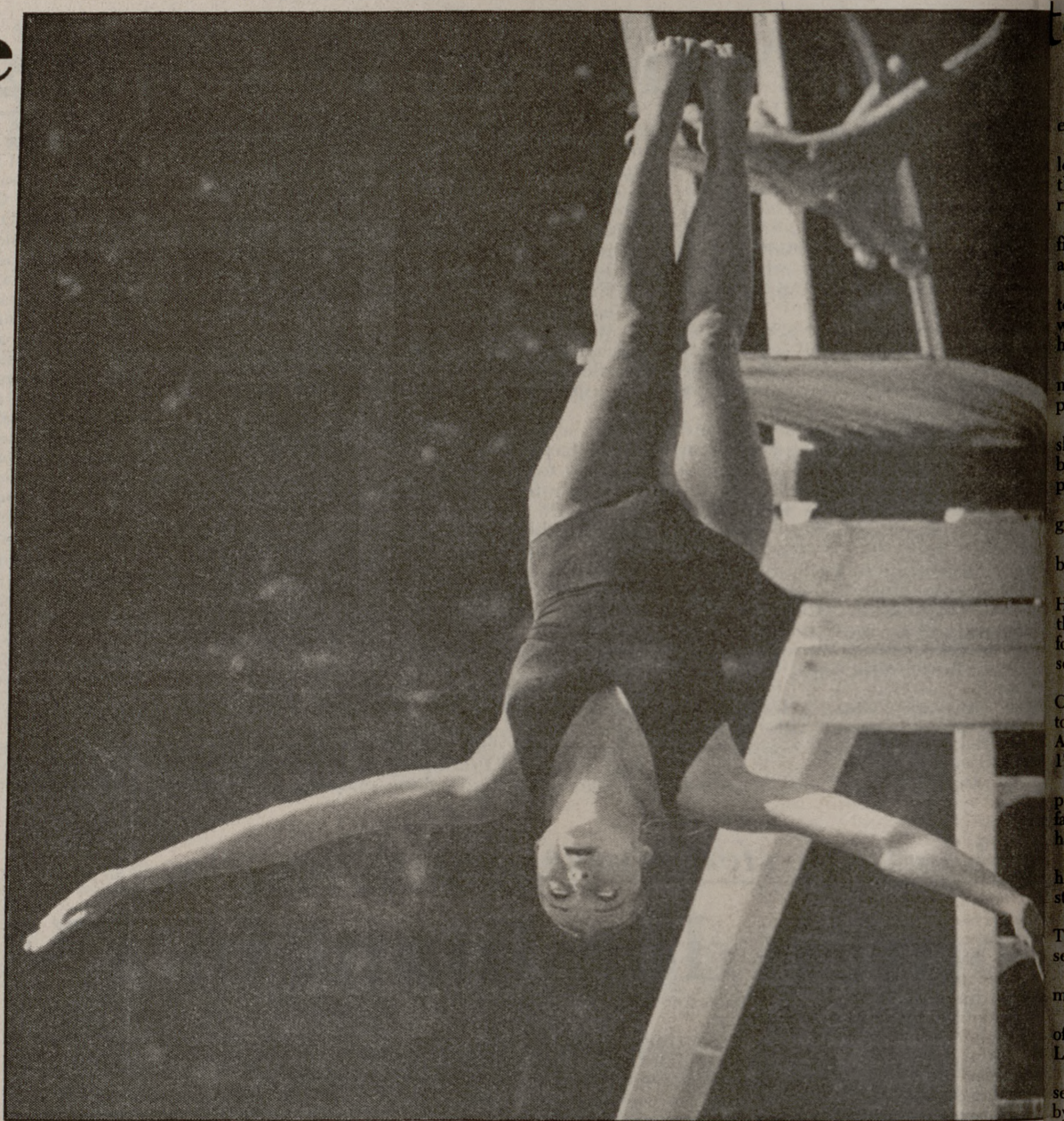
The crowd quieted considerably watching Bake McBride strike out and Mike Schmidt fly to center. Then Luzinski, made to look feeble in his first two at bats, with a strike-out and a pop-out, crashed a 3-2 fast-ball by Forsch well over the fence in left-center field.

Forsch said the Astros' 0-1 disadvantage in the best-of-five series was no big obstacle.

"We've been doing it all year long," he said. "We've got (Nolan) Ryan going (Wednesday), and if we get a split here and then head into the Astrodome, we'll be all right."

The Astros' clubhouse was quiet, but the players insisted they were not dwelling on the loss.

"You can't think about tonight any more," said catcher Luis Pujols. "We'll just have to do it (Wednesday). We'll be all right. We've been through this same thing all last week. We still have a chance."



Eyeing the spot

Staff photo by [unreadable]

Christie Jacob, a freshman from Arlington, concentrates on her form as she practices a dive last week. Jacob and the rest of the Texas A&M University diving team have been prac-

ticing since early this fall for the upcoming season. The A&M diving team reorganized over the summer after a couple of years non-competition.

Sunday game considered for Ags

United Press International
HOUSTON — University of Houston athletic department officials Tuesday listed their hesitance

to ruffle the feathers of reserved ticket buyers and their desire to maintain a home field advantage as the reasons the Cougars' football game with Texas A&M may have to be played early Sunday morning.

Astrodome officials also said they feared the worst traffic jam in the stadium's 15-year history as fans leave a sold out National League championship series baseball game

Saturday afternoon and collide arriving football fans.

Officials predict a five-hour delay needed to transform the Astrodome playing surface and standard baseball configuration to football would be cut to less than two hours by increased manpower.

The kickoff time will be whenever the Houston Astros Philadelphia Phillies complete Saturday game, which has started.

All of these problems, officials are contingent on the championship series going four games. If it should sweep the series in three straight the Saturday difficulty would be avoided and the game would start at 7:30 p.m.

Dempsey said "we gave thought" to A&M's preference have the game moved to the stadium or to Dec. 6. Those who accepted because "the Astrodome field and ... we really felt initially it was impossible to be said.

Gay line
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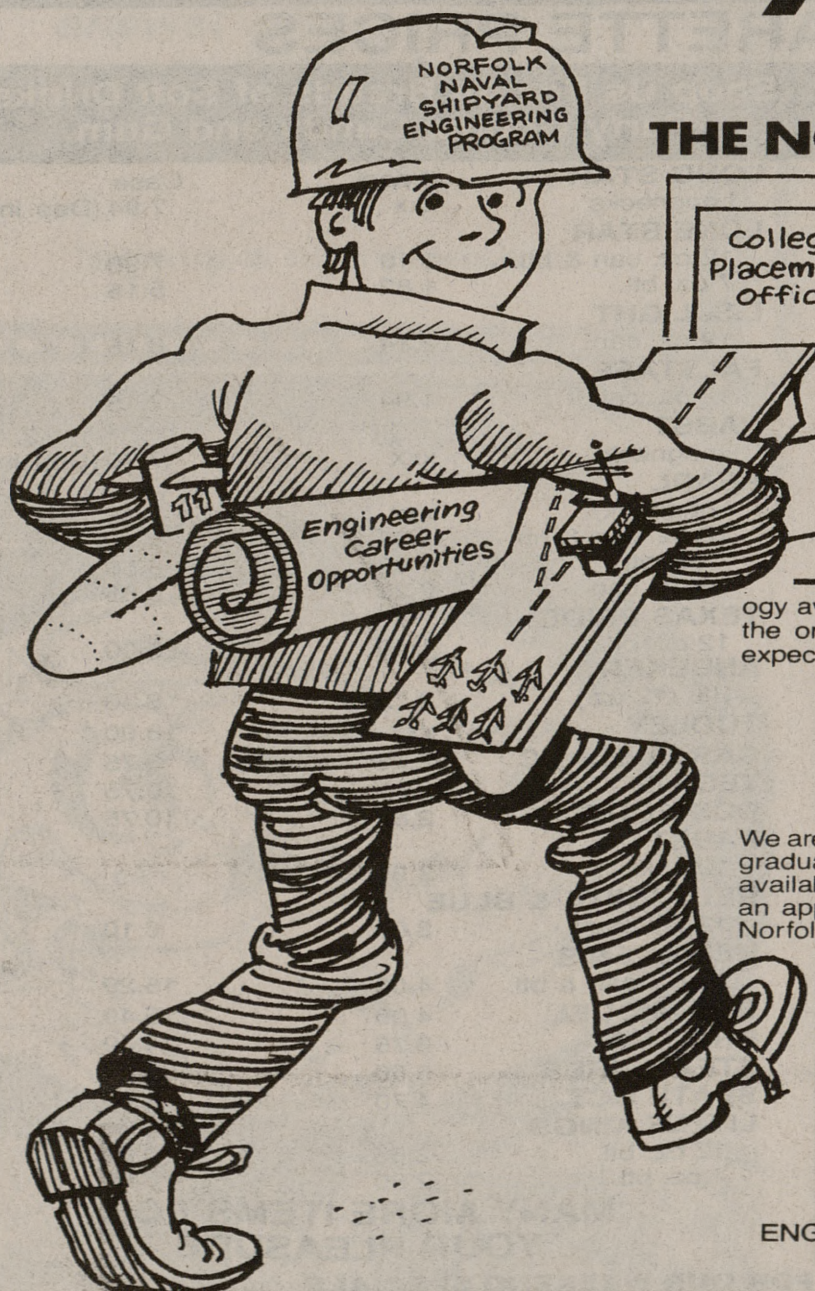
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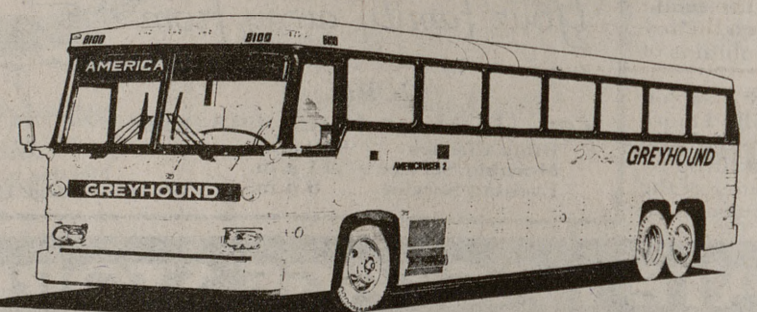
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