

Sports

Biles pleased with 'new' QB Reaves

United Press International
SAN ANGELO, Texas — Freshly signed Houston Oiler quarterback John Reaves "put zip on the ball" and shows experience and skill, despite a two-year layoff, says Houston Oilers Head Coach Ed Biles.

Biles installed Reaves, 31, formerly of the Cincinnati Bengals and Philadelphia Eagles, as the team's No. 2 quarterback Tuesday, a week after the surprise resignation of quarterback Kenny Stabler. Reaves will play behind Gifford Nielson.

"We watched him work and he had some zip on the ball," Biles said. "We wanted to see if he could throw some patterns — outs, ups and posts. He looks like he has a good touch, but you have to remember he's been out a year."

The terms of the contract were not disclosed.

Reaves did not play for an NFL team in 1980, and the year before he was on the Minnesota Vikings' roster but did not play. In six NFL seasons he has passed for 3,155 yards on 249 completions in 539 attempts.

A first-round draft choice out of Florida, Reaves played from 1972 to 1974 at Philadelphia and from 1975 to 1978 at Cincinnati. The other other quarterbacks the Oilers have in camp are third-year pro Nielsen, Craig Bradshaw and

Harold Bailey. "With his experience," Biles said, "he may have a leg up on the other two (backup) prospects."

The training camp boycott of free safety Mike Reinfeldt in a contract dispute has caused the Oilers to look for defensive backs with experience, and Wednesday they signed Doug Greene, 25, a free agent from Houston who has played for the St. Louis Cardinals

and the Buffalo Bills. The Oilers said Tuesday they were talking to former Washington Redskins perennial all-pro safety Ken Houston about coming out of retirement, and reportedly he has told them he would consider it if they still needed him early in the regular season.

Biles said Greene could make the move to free safety. He was signed on the recommendation of backfield coach Elijah Pitts, who coached Greene at Buffalo last year.

The Oilers continue to say they are trying to trade Reinfeldt, who is without a contract this year and who wants a big increase in pay before reporting to camp. Biles said the team has given his agent, Ron Grinker, permission to try to work a deal with another team.

Meanwhile, the Oilers Wednesday cut seventh-round draft choice Don Washington, a safety out of Texas A&I, and two free agents, tackle Mike Gibbons and linebacker Taliferro Neal.

Yankees continue suit over Munson's death

United Press International
VERO BEACH, Fla. — A strike by professional football players may be inevitable, but lessons learned from the current baseball strike should prove valuable in negotiations, says Saints owner John Mecom.

Mecom said Wednesday both owners and professional football players should heed the lessons learned from the current strike by baseball players, but he added that a football strike may be forthcoming.

"It's just another one of the normal problems of professional sports right now," said the Houston businessman, who is looking to new head coach Bum Phillips and a host of promising recruits to improve on the club's dismal 1-15 record of last year.

"I hope we owners have learned enough to want to compromise and that the players have grown up enough to want to survive, and that everyone realizes that you can't afford a strike."

"At least we started negotiating about three years ago on our collective bargaining agreement — as opposed to waiting to the last minute as baseball did. Two or three years ago, baseball owners gave everything away. Now they're trying to be hardnosed and get something back. You don't do it that way."

Part of the problem was that football players often do not feel bound by their contracts and are not willing for owners to possess the same bargaining rights they seek, Mecom said.

"If the players believe so much in the players' agreement, then it's a shame they don't believe as much in their own contracts," he said. "They feel like they can break their own written contracts at will."

"When it comes to the owners trying to get something back through negotiation from a contract, they're very upset about it. They ought to live up to their contracts as well as they expect the owners to live up to their contract with the union."

"At least we're trying to compromise. Did you ever see a player give you anything back on a contract?"

A walkout could be avoided through compromise between players and owners, Mecom said, adding he was unsure football could survive a long strike without permanent damage.

"It isn't the strike, it's the image," he said. "It's the tarnishment of the image. That's what I hope we're going to learn from this baseball strike."

Strike insurance is one alternative being explored by owners hoping to protect themselves from a players strike, Mecom said.

Excitement marks Festival's finale

United Press International
SYRACUSE, N.Y. — National Sports Festival III, which started with a riotous display of green and blue laser lights a week ago before thousands of cheering fans and athletes, ended quietly and without witnesses just after midnight Wednesday.

A few moments after the final medal was decided, a lone security guard at Clinton Square in downtown Syracuse received word by walkie-talkie to douse the flame that stands as symbol of brotherhood and good sportsmanship in the world of amateur athletics.

He turned a small valve, and the fire disappeared without a trace.

"I think it could be the most exciting and moving thing after the Olympics," Tim Daggett, gold medalist in the men's horizontal bar gymnastics event, said. "I got chills during the opening ceremonies — it seemed like America was together again. This could be the American Olympics."

"If I had this when I was 17 or 18, I would have been better prepared for international competition," said veteran sprinter Harvey Glance.

Crowds were near capacity at Wednesday's festival-ending events — in judo, ice hockey, indoor speed skating and men's and women's volleyball and basketball — despite unseasonable chilly weather and rain that fell intermittently until late afternoon, accompanied by gusty winds.

In men's basketball, UCLA almost stole the limelight away from the West in the gold medal basketball game.

UCLA recruit Stuart Gray scored 22 points; UCLA sophomore-to-be Ralph Jackson scored 18, and Nigel Miguel, another UCLA recruit, added 13 to lead the West to a decisive 109-97 victory over the South.

Steve Carfino scored 23 points in the bronze-medal game to lead the Midwest to a 93-92 win over the East earlier Wednesday.

In women's basketball, the

South took advantage of Medina Dixon's second-half foul trouble to mount a rally that gave it the gold medal with a 93-84 victory over the East.

In indoor speed skating, pony-tailed Gloria Bogacki, 18, of Park

Ridge, Ill., and Steve Merrifield, 26, a motorcycle racer from Canoga Park, Calif., each picked up their third and fourth gold medals of the Festival, completing sweeps of the events in their respective divisions.

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