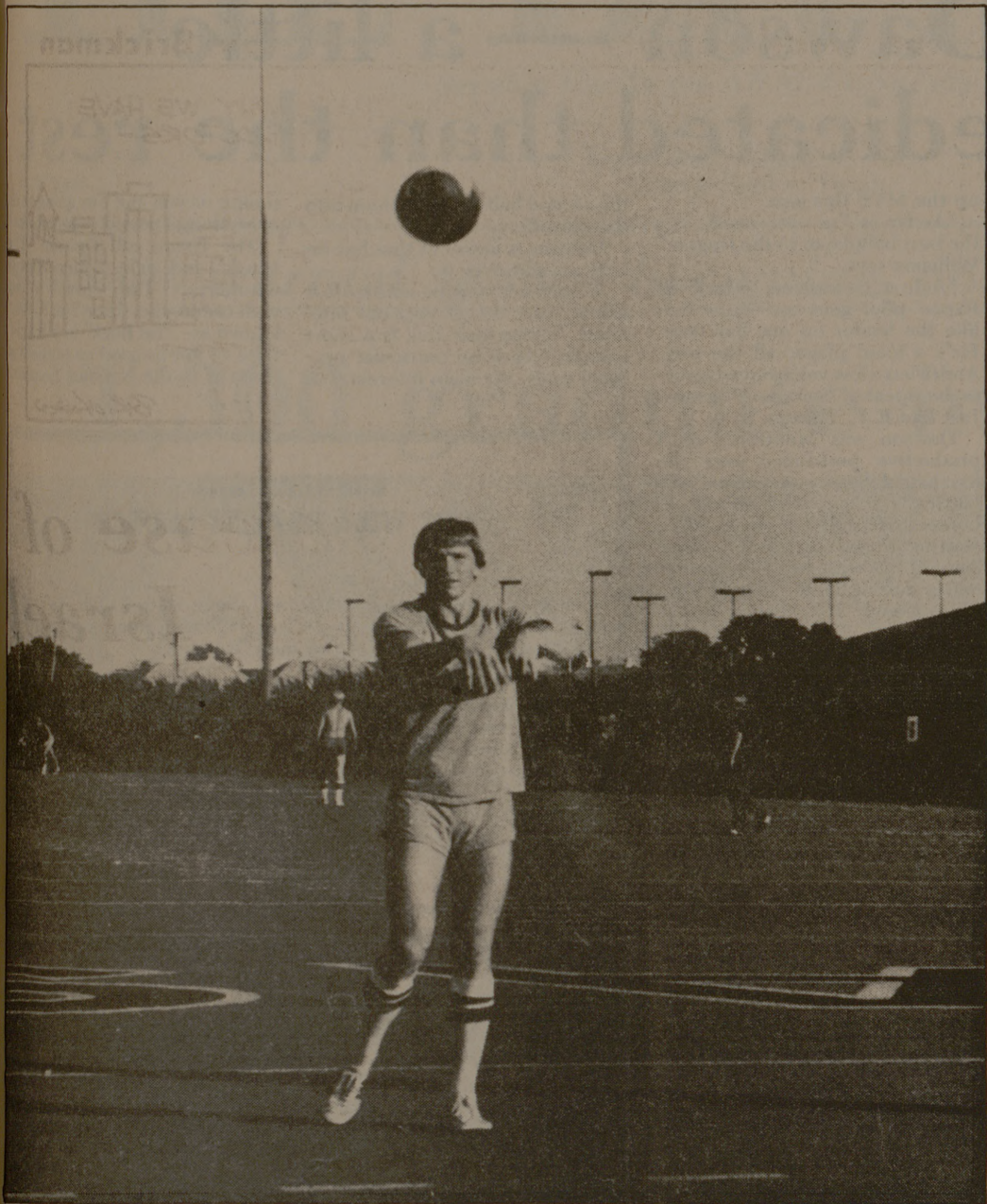


Sports



All-Star receiver

Senior split-end Mike Whitwell, from Cotulla, Texas, warms up prior to a recent workout. The Aggie three-year letterman returns as one of the top receivers in the conference this fall. The Ags begin fall drills Monday when the veterans report.

Photo by Nancy Floeck

Pinch-hit carries Astros past Giants in finale

United Press International
SAN FRANCISCO — Figures can be deceiving, and a perfect case in point is Denny Walling's batting average.

Counting a pinch-hit single in the eighth inning Wednesday that drove in the run that gave the Houston Astros a 5-4 victory over the San Francisco Giants, the 27-year-old Walling is hitting .224. Now, that's not anything to write home about, and Walling is the first to admit he is a little embarrassed with his average because he feels he is a better hitter than the numbers indicate.

"I don't think you can look at a man's batting average if all he is doing is pinch-hitting," said Walling, who never has had more than 284 at-bats in any of his five previous big league seasons. "There are more important things."

In the case of the Astros, and especially manager Bill Virdon, the important number on Walling's statistics is 14 RBI on 20 hits, and that's why Walling is Virdon's No. 1 pinch-hitter.

"He's had a great deal of success as a pinch-hitter," said Virdon, "especially against lefthanders, although I think he can hit right-handers, especially those who throw hard. No question, he is a big help on our club."

With the score tied at 4-4 in the eighth Wednesday, the Astros put runners on first and third with on out when Virdon called on Walling. Facing Greg Minton, San Francisco's top reliever and one of the best in the National League, Walling fought off an inside pitch and looped it to center to score the winning run.

"I had all I could do to get my bat on the ball," said Walling. "Minton made a helluva pitch."

"I don't know how he hit it at all, let alone get it to the outfield," said Minton. "Give the man credit. Anyone that could hit that pitch deserves a hit."

The Astros jumped to a 4-0 lead on Vida Blue and Fred Breining in Wednesday's games on an RBI each by Tony Scott, Jose Cruz, Art

Howe and Terry Puhl, but the Giants caught up with Vern Ruhle in the sixth to tie it on an RBI single by Jack Clark, a two-run homer by Darrell Evans, his 10th,

and a solo homer by Jerry Martin. Joe Sambito was the winner for the second time in three days (3-3) while Al Holland was the loser (3-3).

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Falcons prepare for Jets as preseason woes continue

United Press International
The way Atlanta Falcons coach Leeman Bennett talks, you'd think the New York Jets were a winning team last season. But then, against the Falcons, the Jets were.

The Falcons, 12-4 in 1980, take on the Jets Saturday night in Atlanta and Bennett wants his team to take the game more seriously than they might normally regard a preseason game.

"The Jets gave us a tough time last year," Bennett said of the 14-7 upset loss to the Jets, "so this will be a good test. They have great speed at wide receiver and that will be good for our young defensive backs."

The Falcons lost both their previous exhibition games to Cleveland and Oakland, while the Jets won their only preseason game, a 23-7 decision over the Denver Broncos in which they controlled the ball for 44 minutes.

Atlanta will start Steve Bartkowski, who has seen only limited action this pre-season, at quarterback.

"Our other two quarterbacks (Mike Moroski and June Jones) played well at Oakland," said Bennett, "but we'll start Steve this week so he can get to work on his timing. I'm comfortable now with our backup quarterback situation."

Meanwhile, the Jets will try to put their dreadful 1980 season behind them and build on their impressive showing in Denver.

"We've just got to forget about last season," said coach Walt Michaels. "We were a young team and we just never bounced back after our opening loss to Baltimore."

In other NFL training camp news, Baltimore Colts' wide receiver Roger Carr returned to training camp, but left before officials found out if he would return for good.

Carr, who is an unsigned player, left camp Tuesday without permission, apparently because he has a problem with his contract, according to a team spokesman.

"Roger showed up for a couple of minutes, but he left again before he talked to anybody. Nobody knows what's going on," the spokesman said. "The holdup is definitely the contract. But he did talk with head coach Mike McCormack Tuesday night and it was a positive conversation. It appears Roger does want to be in."

Philadelphia Eagles Coach Dick Vermeil says he intends to have a replacement available for Bill Bergey in case a knee injury prevents the veteran linebacker from playing Saturday against the Pittsburgh Steelers.

"I had planned to play him in

the second quarter, but I don't know whether I will now," Vermeil said. "It's an ache that's bothering him."

Bergey missed the team's workout at the West Chester State College training camp because the Eagles' physician was examining his injured left knee.

The Dallas Cowboys released

free agent rookie defensive end Dan Anders of the University of Northern Arizona to trim their training camp roster to 79.

The Cowboys are expected to make another cut later this week before Saturday's exhibition game against the Los Angeles Rams.

All teams must reduce their rosters to 60 by next Tuesday.



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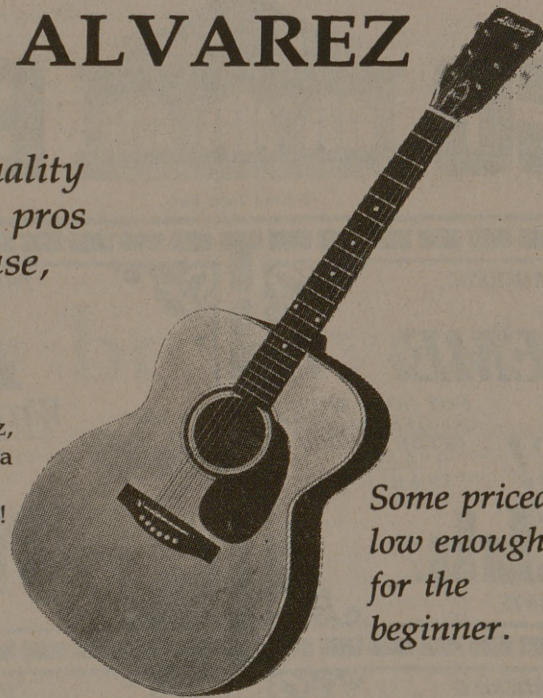
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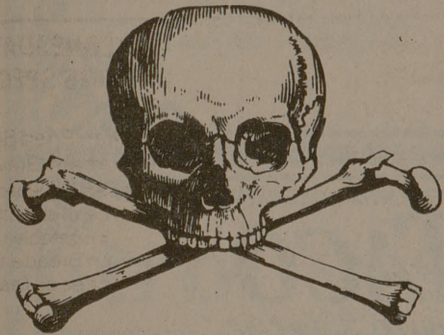
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