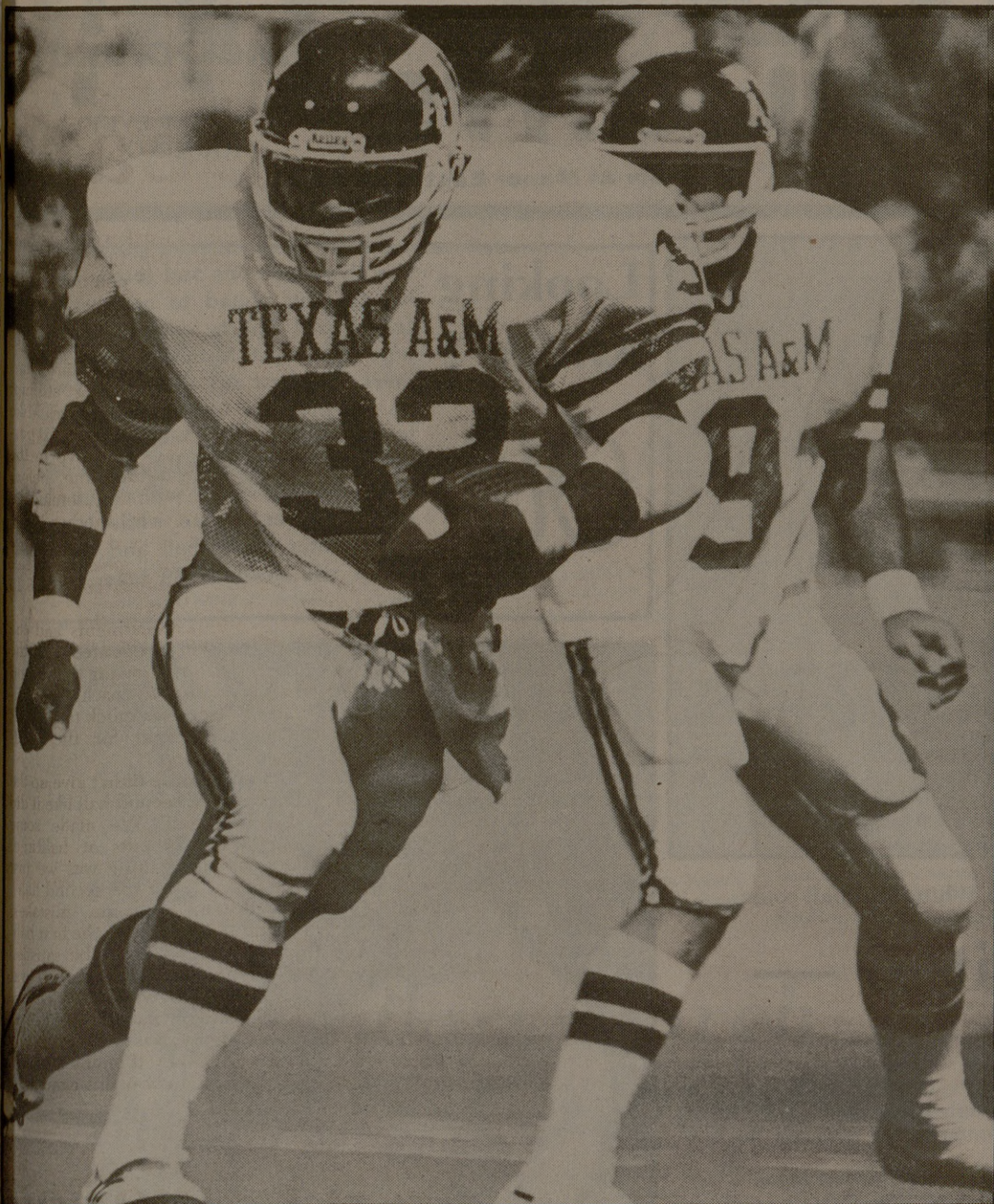


# Sports



**Tailback Johnny Hector looks for running room in second half action of Saturday's football opener against Cal-Berkeley as quarterback Gary Kubiak looks on. The Aggies won the thriller 29-28 as Hector and fullback Earnest Jackson each finished the game with 125 yards. The Aggies have a week off before they will travel to Boston to play Boston College.**

Photo by Bob Sebree

## Last minute return leads Oilers to victory over LA

United Press International  
ANAHEIM, Calif. — For about 13 seconds, as Willie Tullis made his sparkling 95-yard kickoff return for a touchdown, all the 63,198 Los Angeles Rams' fans could do was watch and admire.

Then it was Tullis' turn to admire the watch.

"I'll never forget this moment," said Tullis while examining the expensive wristwatch he received from his Houston teammates as the game's most valuable player.

"It's a very emotional moment for me. I'll never trade this watch, not for anything. It's my first NFL game and I get voted most valuable player. This is just unbelievable.

Tullis' reckless kickoff return with 57 seconds left in Sunday's game lifted the Oilers to a 27-20 victory over the Rams in the season opener for both teams.

The Rams had tied the game seconds earlier on Frank Corral's 36-yard field goal and it appeared the game was headed for overtime. But on the ensuing kickoff, Tullis, a rookie from Troy State, fielded the ball and broke left around his wall of blockers. From there, he turned the corner and simply outran the entire Los Angeles team into the end zone. The last man with a shot at him, Leroy Irvin, was screened out and missed the streaking Tullis.

"I was just trying to follow the blockers and get us in decent position for a field goal," said the 6-

foot, 190-pound speedster. "But when it opened up, I was going to try to score all the way. Once I got free I was thinking that all I had to do was score and we'd win."

Tullis admitted he didn't plan on the breakaway run and also said that he didn't plan on the onslaught of questions from a horde of reporters.

"The play took less time than it's taking me to explain it," he laughed.

The game-winning run was made possible by veteran quarterback Ken Stabler. The 36-year-old Stabler, who came out of retirement to start his 13th NFL season, fired a pair of third-quarter TD passes to lead the Oilers from a 17-6 halftime deficit into a 20-17 lead.

The first was a 33-yard strike to halfback Rob Carpenter, and the second was a 20-yard pass to Ken Burrough.

Stabler announced his retirement during the summer and

came back only when projected Houston starter Gifford Nielsen was injured in the pre-season. So out of the mothballs came the crafty Stabler. He played just two series of downs in the Oilers final pre-season game last week, and then had just seven practice sessions to re-acquaint himself with his teammates and his offense.

Add to that Stabler's problems with the law, in which the state of California had threatened to arrest him for allegedly ducking alimony payments, as well as rumors of reported ties with a known gun-runner, and Stabler had plenty of reasons for a poor showing.

But he overcame the obstacles in completing 13-of-20 passes for the two TDs and 192 yards.

"All I can do is play as well as I can," Stabler said. "I've had to put up with an awful lot of rhetorical BS but I just have to forget about all that. The only thing I care about is the other 44 guys on this team."

## Cowboys upend Redskins

United Press International  
WASHINGTON — The tough guys on the block have a way of slapping down the youngsters who want to hang around on the corner.

Sunday, the tough, experienced Dallas Cowboys cuffed around would-be upstart Washington, slapping down Redskins, 26-10, to open the NFL season.

Holding the Redskins to just 44 yards on the ground, the Cowboys picked off four of Joe Theismann's 48 passes and recovered two of five Washington fumbles. Theismann did complete 22 passes, but mostly he was far off target under a heavy Dallas pass rush.

One of Theismann's passes went 15 yards to Joe Washington for a touchdown. Mark Moseley added a 42-yard field goal for the Redskins.

Meanwhile, Danny White was throwing second-quarter touchdown passes of 33 yards to Billy Joe DuFree and 42 yards to Drew Pearson. Rafael Septien kicked four field goals, all in the second half, from 29, 42, 23 and 18 yards.

Dallas' defensive front of four Harvey Martin, John Dutton, Randy White and Ed Jones had hands on Theismann often, causing many more problems than their three sacks for 33 yards in losses would indicate.

"We controlled the line of scrimmage on defense," said Cowboys coach Tom Landry. "Those people set up some of the interceptions we had by forcing Theismann to throw before he wanted to. I thought we kept good pressure on him all day."

"When Washington went to the passing game, we had to get some interceptions. (safety Dennis) Thurman's interception was a big play because the Redskins may have gotten back into the game."

With the Redskins trailing, 23-10, and threatening at the Dallas 4, Thurman stepped in front of Redskins wide receiver Art Monk on the goal line, intercepted Theismann's pass and returned it 96 yards before being caught by Washington.

"I decided our offense needed some work down near the goal line," said Thurman, grinning. "Actually, I had two blockers out in front and only Joe Washington to get by. Since Joe's only 5-9 and 180 pounds, I thought I was home free. The next thing I knew, I was out of bounds and Joe had me by the ankles."

Rookie defensive backs Michael Downs and Everson Walls and cornerback Steve Wilson had the other interceptions.

White, who hit 12 of 24 passes for 145 yards, hit DuFree for a touchdown on the second play of the second quarter.

Theismann's scoring pass to Washington, who caught 10 for 124 yards, came one play after the Redskins turned down a Moseley field goal midway in the second quarter in favor of a first-down at the 15 because the Cowboys had 13 players on the field defending against the kick.

The teams exchanged punts with White kicking out of bounds at the Washington 3. The Cow-

boys pinned Washington, forcing Mike Connell to punt from his end zone only to the Redskin 45.

Dallas needed just three plays, one an incomplete pass, to score with White throwing to Pearson.



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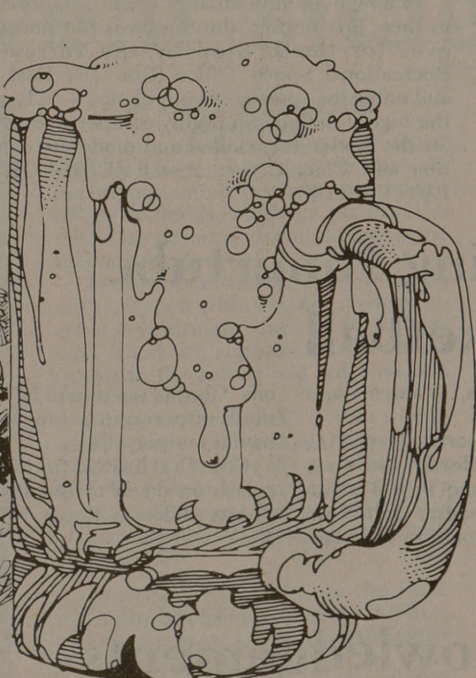
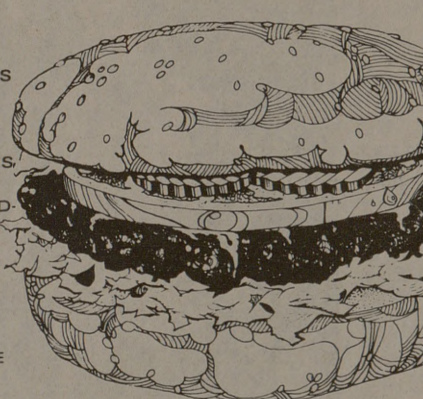
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