

Astros, Ruhle silence second-place Phillies

United Press International
HOUSTON — Philadelphia's Pete Rose tied the all-time record for plate appearances, but most of the talk was about the appearance Houston's Vern Ruhle put in on the mound in a masterful 2-0 shutout of the Phillies.

Ruhle tossed a five-hitter and Dickie Thon stroked three hits and scored a run Tuesday night to lead Houston.

In his fourth plate appearance of the night, Rose tied Henry Aaron's all-time plate appearance record of 13,940. But he went hitless on the night.

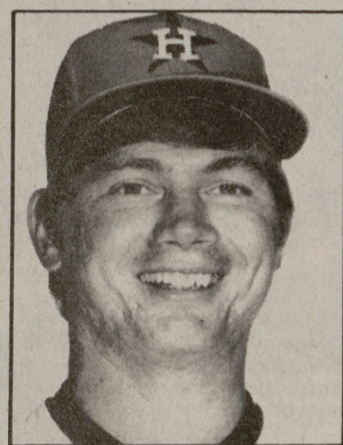
"Ruhle had real good stuff tonight," Philadelphia manager Pat Corrales said. "We were hitting the ball real well, but right at somebody."

Houston manager Bob Lillis also lauded his pitcher.

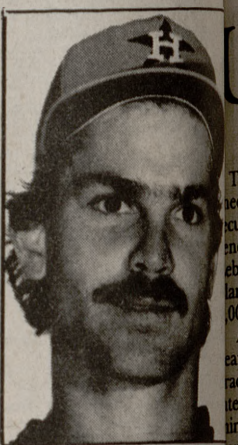
"Vern pitched a whale of a game," he said. "When they put a man on in the ninth inning, I still had confidence that he could finish."

Ruhle gave credit to the defense and a team effort.

"The guys played great defense behind me and the balls that they hit really hard were right at our people," he said. "The Phillies are a tough team from top to bottom in their lineup. I've had extremely good luck against them this year."



Vern Ruhle



Dickie Thon

Ruhle, 7-8, has beaten the Phillies four times — twice as a starter and twice in relief — without a loss. He permitted the Phillies, in second place in the National League's East Division, to put only two men in scoring position. Ruhle walked none and struck out four.

The Astros scored once in the second inning off Philadelphia starter and loser Larry Christenson. Jose Cruz led off with a single, stole second, moved to third on an infield out by Art Howe and scored on Tony Scott's two-out single to left.

The Astros added another

run in the third when Thon off with a single, advanced to third on Terry Puhl's sacrifice fly to left by Ray Knight.

"Thon has just been tremendous in our leadoff spot," said of his short stop. "He's gotten us started on the foot in many games. He's done everything that coaches have asked him to do."

Corrales said: "We are in good shape as far as the pennant race is concerned," Corrales said. "There are a lot of left to play."

Knee injury might keep Cunningham on sidelines

United Press International
New England's Sam Cunningham, who voluntarily missed the last two training camps, may miss more of this year's too due to circumstances beyond his control.

The bruising fullback, who passed over training camps in 1980 and 1981 because of a contract dispute, may miss the rest of this one because of a knee injury suffered Saturday night in New England's exhibition opener.

Cunningham will undergo an arthroscopic examination to determine the extent of damage in his left knee.

Doctors suspect a cartilage problem, which means the Patriots' all-time rushing leader will miss at least five weeks. If no surgery is required, Cunningham will miss about eight days.

"I'm disappointed at getting hurt, but that's part of the

game," Cunningham said Tuesday. "Hopefully, it's early enough so that I'll be able to get back for most of the season."

Coach Ron Meyer termed the loss of Cunningham "a big blow," noting the former Southern Cal star had been projected as the team's starting fullback.

In other training camp news: — Buffalo cut guard Frank Kalil, its 11th-round draft choice from Arizona, free-agent running back Garry White of Minnesota and free-agent kicker Jim Asmus of Hawaii.

— Pittsburgh veterans John Banaszak and L.C. Greenwood returned to practice as the Steelers began work for Saturday's exhibition game against the New York Giants.

— Atlanta waived defensive backs Donnie LeGrande of North Carolina State and Ron Steverson of Wisconsin and run-

ning back Mo Harris of Tennessee State. Center Greg Bell of Illinois accepted an offer to leave business and left camp.

— San Francisco signed backer Eric Scoggins, cut by Raiders last week, announced tackle Ken Burda, a second-year man from Missouri, left camp Monday.

— Philadelphia released free-agent quarterback Warner. Joe Pisarcik, the regular backup for Ron Jaworski, suffered a concussion in the fourth period of Saturday night's loss to Tampa Bay.

— Training camp highlights: Leon Gray will travel to Houston Friday and watch the Patriots' second pre-season game at the team's guest, General Manager Ladd Herzog said Tuesday, although he said the move would mean the Oilers were anxious to signing the veteran offensive tackle.

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