

Texas A&M

The Battalion Sports

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Oilers frustrated in 37-7 loss

Cowboys roll over Houston

United Press International
HOUSTON — The Dallas Cowboys established themselves as the most consistently winning team in the history of the National Football League Monday night and they did so by stepping over a club that seems to be setting a record of its own for frustration.

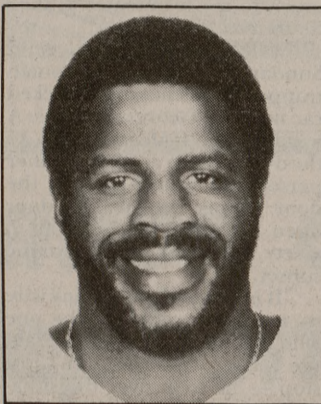
With every close call going their way and with the ball bouncing in their direction most of the night, the Cowboys rolled over the Houston Oilers in only their fourth meeting ever — 37-7.

The victory ensured Dallas of its 17th consecutive winning season — something never before accomplished in the NFL. The Oilers, meanwhile, sank to new depths — a mere shadow of the team that just a few years ago made two consecutive appearances in the AFC title game.

"I don't think there is any question the best football team won the game," said Houston coach Ed Biles, whose club dropped to 1-5 and is winless since the resumption of play following the NFL strike. "We may have been trying too hard. We made some mistakes that cost us some opportunities to put points on the board."

Indeed, every time it seemed the Oilers were in the process of doing something right, they did something wrong.

"You look at the score and it seems like we blew them out," said Dallas quarterback Danny

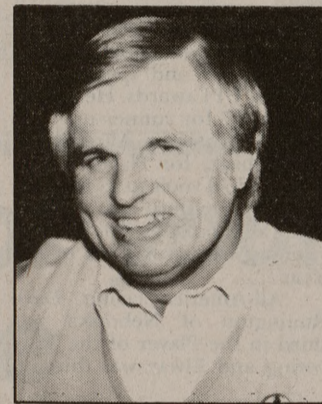


Earl Campbell's two fumbles costly in 37-7 loss to Dallas

White, who completed 21 of 27 passes for 279 yards and three touchdowns. "But we didn't blow them out. For a long time they were just one play away from being back in the game."

Dallas ran its record to 5-1, all but clinching a spot in the playoffs and keeping pace with the Washington Redskins for the best record in the NFC. But for a while it looked as if the result might be different.

Houston struck for a 54-yard touchdown on its second play with a pass from Archie Manning to Mike Renfro. And the Oilers were in position to add to that lead only to have Earl Campbell, fumble twice inside Dallas territory.



Ed Biles: Oilers may have tried too hard in fifth loss

Then things began to pile up in favor of the Cowboys. Three critical plays turned the game around.

Early in the second quarter, still trailing, Dallas faced third-and-7 at the Oilers' 21. White, after scrambling out of trouble, lobbed a pass deep in the end zone. Butch Johnson, dragging his toes to keep them in bounds, grabbed it for a score.

Dallas led at the half, thanks to a 22-yard field goal by Rafael Septien and another White-to-Johnson touchdown pass — this one of 18 yards.

But there were two more twists of fate awaiting the Oilers. In the midst of what turned out

to be a field-goal drive in the third quarter, White threw a desperation pass that was intercepted by defensive end Malcolm Taylor and returned for what looked to be a 74-yard touchdown. Referee Jim Tunney ruled, however, that White was in the grasp of a defender before throwing the pass and ruled the play dead.

Even after falling behind by a 20-7 score, the Oilers appeared ready to jump back into the game. They had the ball at the Dallas 7-yard line, but on second down rookie Gary Allen had the ball stripped away by Ed Jones and safety Michael Downs raced back 86 yards for the backbreaking touchdown.

"Obviously that was a big play," said Dallas coach Tom Landry. "They were down there to make it 20-14. Everything came unglued for them at that point. A play like that is a shocker when you have lost a few. I thought it would be a tough game until that happened."

Dallas went on to add a 46-yard touchdown pass from White to Timmy Newsome and a 53-yard field goal by Septien — which Landry said was tried only to give his field goal kicker some confidence.

The end result was that Dallas continued to roll along as one of the more dangerous clubs in the league. But White said a lot of rolling yet needs to be done.

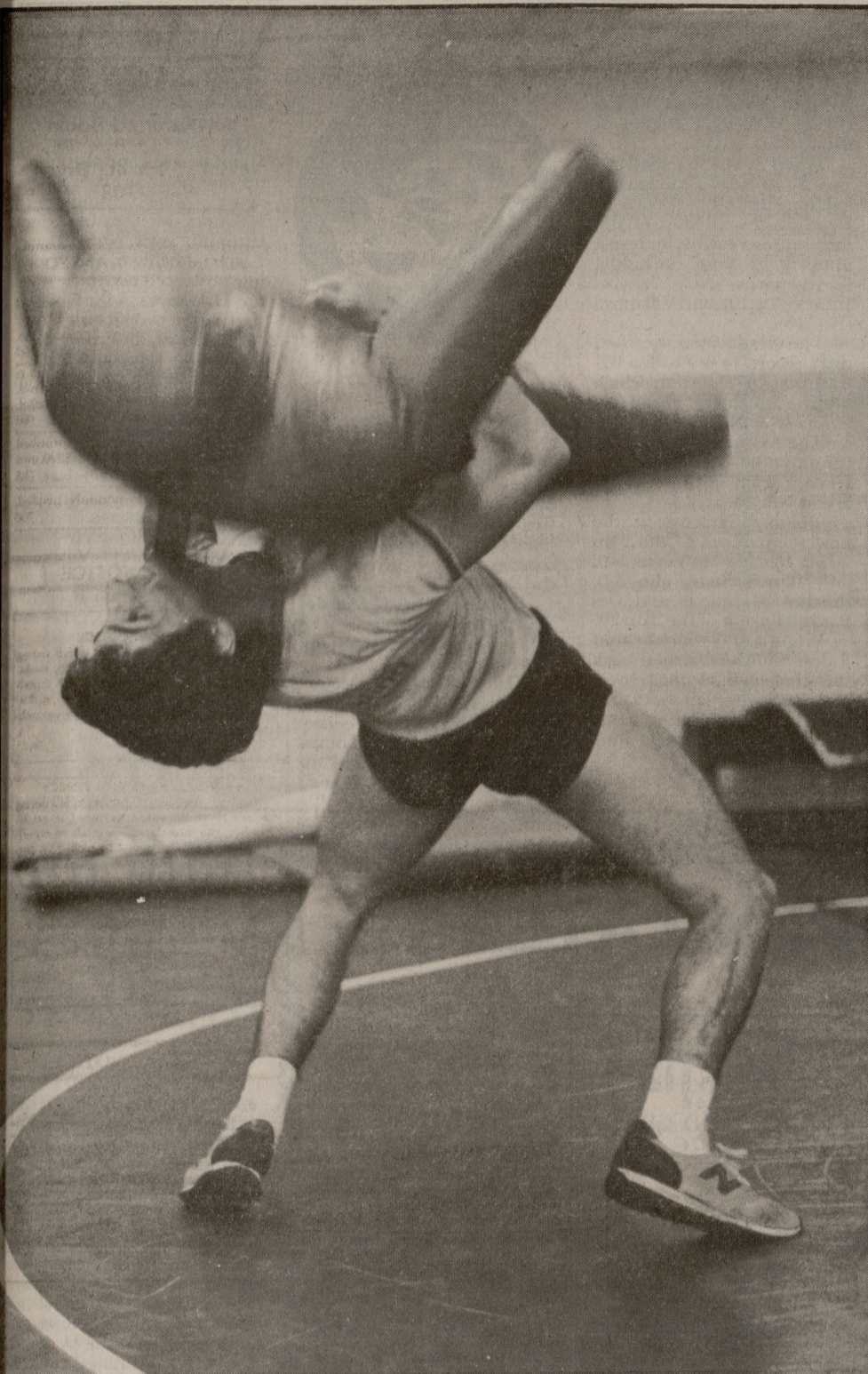


photo by Paige Parker

It's not as easy as it looks

Damian Cook, a senior member of the Texas A&M wrestling team, practices one of his throws on TNT, a sand-

filled dummy that weighs more than 100 pounds. Cook is an electrical engineering major from Dallas.

United Press International
HOUSTON — The numbers were those usually reserved for some third-string running back who is destined to disappear from the National Football League in just a matter of weeks.

They are not numbers to be associated with Earl Campbell. But on Monday night they were.

Against the Dallas Cowboys, a team he battered for 195 yards the last time he played them three seasons ago, Campbell gained 17 yards on seven carries Monday night.

In addition he fumbled twice, both times costing his team chances for points at a time when they are already leading, 7-0.

"I have to be honest," said Campbell after the Oilers fell to the Cowboys, 37-7. "It is very frustrating. I've been spoiled. I'm used to winning."

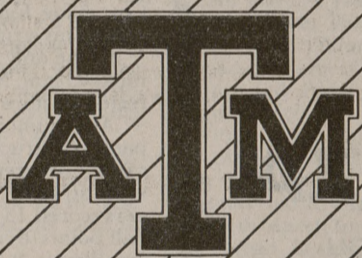
Campbell came into the game averaging less than four yards a carry, a victim of Houston coach Ed Biles' attempts to diversify the Oilers' offense and also a victim of little blocking.

Only once Monday night was there a flash of the old Campbell — that coming when he suddenly burst through the line of scrimmage and dashed for 14

yards to the Cowboys' 32. But at the end of that play Cowboys' safety Benny Barnes knocked the ball loose and Dallas' Randy White fell on it.

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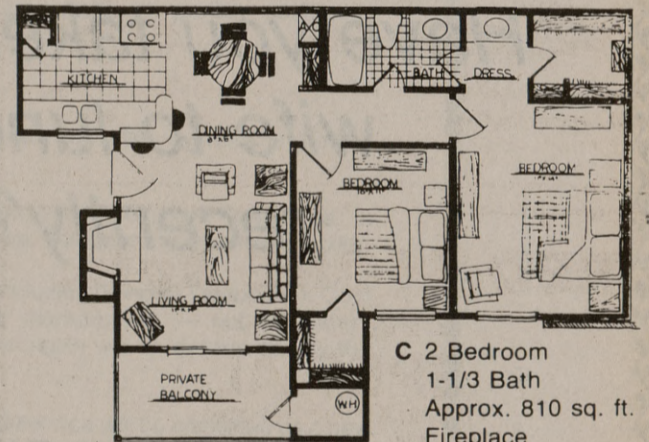
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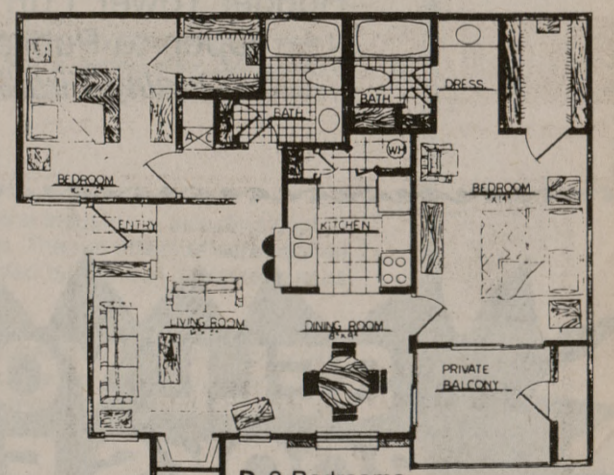
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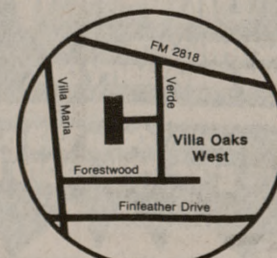
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