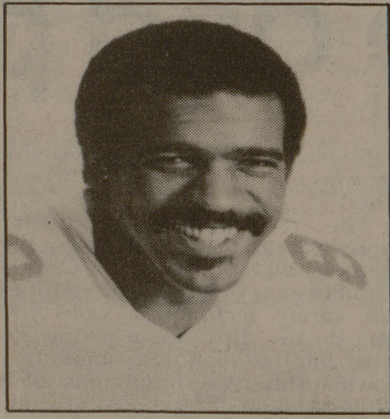


Pearson was Pokes' 'Hail Mary' receiver

By CHAREAN WILLIAMS
Sports Writer



Cowboys' Drew Pearson

With only seconds remaining in the game, Dallas Cowboy quarterback Roger Staubach lofted the football downfield to his favorite target — wide receiver Drew Pearson. The ball slid down to Pearson's hip where he hung on with his elbow. He then waltzed into the end zone preserving a Cowboy playoff victory over the highly favored Minnesota Vikings.

That 1975 "Hail Mary" catch exemplifies Pearson's entire 12 year career with Dallas.

With the game on the line, Pearson was at his best. He was instrumental in pulling the Cowboys from the brink of defeat to the pedestal of victory.

Pearson, who was in College Station Monday for the grand opening of Foley's, said his most memorable catch was an 83-yard playoff reception against the Los Angeles Rams in 1973. In the fourth quarter with the score close, Staubach fired a pass to Pearson over the middle between two Rams' defenders. That catch clinched a 27-16 victory in Pearson's rookie season.

Pearson had hoped to return to the Cowboys' starting lineup in 1984. However, after a tragic automobile accident on March 22 that in-

jured him and killed his younger brother, doctors advised Pearson not to attempt a comeback because of a small hole found in his liver.

"I was really hoping to comeback," Pearson said. "But it would be foolish to risk a hit to the liver. Any impact could cause hemorrhaging, which could be fatal."

He said he misses the game and the players, but he is staying involved in the game by doing broadcasts for CBS and the Texas State Network.

"Going to work for CBS definitely helps my withdrawals," Pearson said.

As a free agent out of Tulsa University, Pearson went to Dallas' training camp his first season with no more than a long shot of making the team.

Pearson made up for his lack of quickness with patterned footwork, fine concentration and great hands.

1974 was Pearson's best season as a Cowboy.

He made the NFC All-Pro team after catching 62 passes for 1,087 yards. He also made another game-winning reception that year, catching a last-second bomb from reserve Cowboy quarterback Clint Longley to defeat the Washington Redskins 24-23.

"I'm just thankful I got to play on a Super Bowl team," said the Cowboys' all-time in leader in receptions and yardage. "I am so happy I played with a successful organization."

The Cowboys have had problems running the ball successfully this season and Pearson knows why.

"I see a problem in blocking which is obvious," he said. "Not so obvious is philosophy. They are going to have to change their philosophy if they expect to run the ball."

"They're (the 1984 Cowboys) going to be all right. The important thing is that they're winning while learning. Down the line they're going to be tough to beat."

Cubs waltz past Padres to claim 2-0 series lead

United Press International

CHICAGO — Manager Jim Frey danced off the field Wednesday after his Chicago Cubs defeated the San Diego Padres 4-2 to take a 2-0 lead in the National League playoffs.

But Frey doesn't plan to dance into San Diego, where the best-of-five series resumes Thursday night.

"I'm not going to be confident until we get the 27th out and they call us National League champions," Frey said. "I know these things can turn around and they can turn in a hurry. So I think it's premature for Jim Frey to predict anything."

The Cubs manager also said he was not convinced he would win Wednesday until left fielder Henry Cotto caught a deep fly ball off the bat of Terry Kennedy for the final out.

"It got a little scary when Cotto backed up to the vines there," he said.

Chicago starter Steve Trout, however, said he had confidence Cubs reliever Lee Smith would get the final two outs to preserve the win.

"For me, with Lee coming in, I really feel assured we're going to

"I'm not going to be confident until we get the 27th out and they call us National League champions. I know these things can turn around and they can turn in a hurry."
— Chicago Cubs' Manager Jim Frey

have a good chance at it," Trout said.

A good mental attitude is important for Trout, who did yoga exercises before Wednesday's game.

"It was important that I just pitch my game and relax," said Trout, who gave up two runs on five hits in 8 1/3 innings. "I consider this one of the bigger games I've ever pitched in."

Trout also credited luck as a factor in his performance.

"When I get behind on the count, I can get in trouble. But that wasn't the case today. They were hitting the

ball on the ground. I was lucky," he said.

Chicago center fielder Bob Dernier, who scored twice, said he decided to challenge San Diego first baseman Steve Garvey's arm in the first inning.

Dernier had led off the first inning with a single off San Diego starter Mark Thurmond and reached third on a ground out by Ryne Sandberg on a hit-and-run play.

"When Sandberg chopped the ball (third baseman Luis) Salazar didn't look at me. I know Steve Garvey doesn't have the best arm in the league, so I just kept going. I knew it would take a great throw to get me," Dernier said.

Gary Matthews sent Dernier home with a grounder, enabling the Cubs to take a 1-0 lead.

"If we can get runs early, it makes it a heck of a lot easier for our starters," said Dernier, who led off Tuesday's 13-0 victory with a home run. "It was the same today as it was yesterday and it will be tomorrow."

"We're hoping to close it out tomorrow night."

San Diego doesn't mind leaving Chicago's park

United Press International

CHICAGO — It has been home sweet home for the Chicago Cubs. Now the San Diego Padres have the welcome mat out on their doorstep for their fans.

The Padres are one defeat away from being eliminated in the best-of-five National League playoffs after a 4-2 loss Wednesday. Although they have no complaints about Chicago, the Padres will be glad to get back to their park for the remainder of the series.

"We'll be away from the Cubs' fans and that was a real advantage for them. They really are a 10th man," said Padres manager Dick Williams. "Hopefully, our surroundings at home will be a help for our players."

Williams acknowledged he would have settled for a split of the two games in Chicago but added, "Give Chicago credit. You make your own

breaks. The Cubs are just doing everything right.

"One thing I'd like to give plenty of credit to is our relief pitching. They really shut the Cubs down. I thought another key part of the game was when we got to 3-1 and they got another run for a three-run cushion. We were better today, but not quite good enough."

Second baseman Alan Wiggins feels he must do more offensively to help the Padres score.

"It always helps to get on base early and score early. That's something I haven't done," said the lead-off hitter. "I'm still confident. It's nice to go home. It's still possible, we just have to settle down."

Padres first baseman Steve Garvey said that a change of scenery should help.

"We can use any advantage. Being down 0-2 isn't a desirable position but we're a major-league team. We

just need something to get us going — like a three-run homer, 10 strikeouts or three double plays. We have to score."

Right fielder Tony Gwynn is looking forward to playing at Jack Murphy Stadium.

"If we can get 60,000 fans, maybe they'll be our 10th man like the fans are here," Gwynn said. "The Cubs fans are super. I hope our fans do the same things."

"We have to shut them down in the first inning (Chicago scored twice Tuesday and once Wednesday in the first inning). That will pick us up. We have to get hits and put runs on the board. Until we do that, we'll be in trouble."

"We've hit good balls but they've been right at people. We couldn't afford to take chances because we've been behind. That's taken away our aggressiveness. All we need is that one key hit."

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