

Who will be Astros' shortstop?

Reynolds cheering for Thon's recovery

Associated Press

KISSIMMEE, Fla. — Houston's Craig Reynolds was ticketed for a season of sitting on the bench and spot duty for the Astros last season until a Mike Torrez fast ball knocked out shortstop Dickie Thon for the season.

Thon's misfortune opened a starting spot for Reynolds and he filled it admirably but all the while cheering for Thon's recovery.

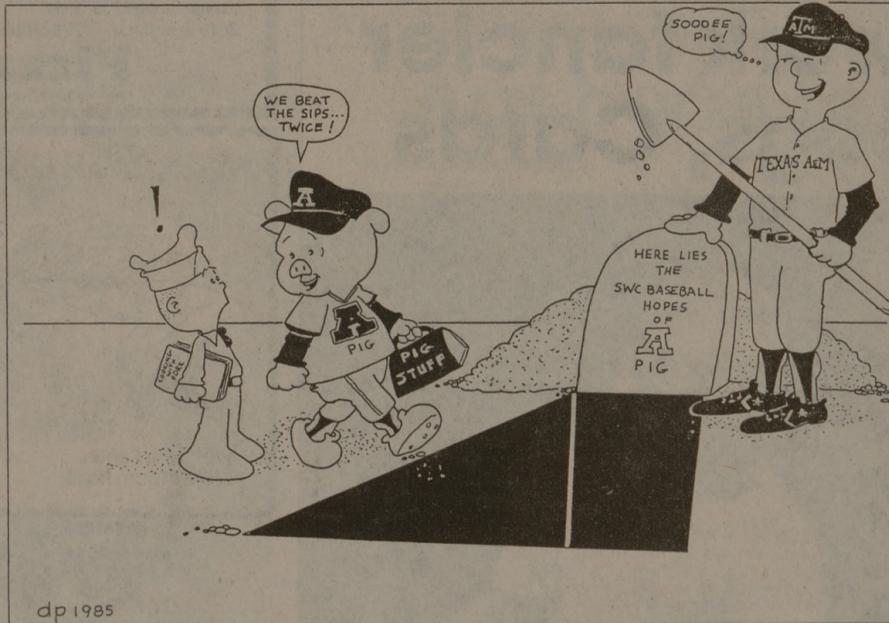
Reynolds goes into the 1985 season still cheering for Thon's complete recovery and possibly facing a return to the bench. But his approach is the same.

"If Dickie is ready he's going to play and he should play," Reynolds said. "We're close friends and I'm pulling for him just like everyone else is."

Some players might feel mixed emotions about a player recovering from injury and taking away his position. But Reynolds has not such problems.

"I don't feel any mixed emotions," Reynolds said. "I want Dickie Thon to come back and play and help our ballclub. If he's not ready, then I have to be ready."

Reynolds was Houston's starting shortstop until he was replaced by



dp 1985

Thon but Reynolds proved last season that he could still fill the starting position.

Reynolds hit .260, drove in 60 runs, tied for second in the National League in triples with 11 and ran a 14-game hitting streak last season.

"I'm preparing myself to be able to play at all three infield positions," Reynolds said. "I've come here with pretty much the same attitude that I did last season. I've got to be ready to play in case the club needs me."

Reynolds has played second, third and shortstop.

"I'll just go out each day and do what I'm supposed to do," Reynolds said. "It appears to me that Dickie is going to be ready and as time goes on he'll become better and better and I'll be spending more time at other positions."

Reynolds takes a similarly rosy attitude about the Astros chances this season in the National League Western Division.

"People seem to forget that we finished second in our division last year with the club we have right here, even with the lousy start," Reynolds said. "If we could have alleviated the horrendous start, we could have competed all the way down to the wire last year."

"If we fall behind 10 games early in all probability we won't be able to win. So we've got to get out of the blocks a little better this year."

Shot clock may rule college basketball

Associated Press

LEXINGTON, Ky. — College basketball is almost certain to have a 45-second shot clock next season, but it likely will take longer to accept the three-point field goal or deal with the problem of late-game fouling, NCAA official Edward Steitz said Thursday.

Steitz, athletic director at Springfield College and longtime editor of the NCAA's rules committee, told a news conference that 62 percent of the National Association of Basketball Coaches surveyed called for the NCAA to put into place the shot clock for all games next season.

The clock, similar to the 24-second clock used by the pros, was used experimentally by 23 conferences during the 1984-85 season. It is not, however, part of the national championship tournament.

The NCAA will meet next week to vote formally on the shot clock. A two-thirds majority of the rules committee is needed for passage. "The likelihood of it failing is almost nil," Steitz said. A year ago it fell just short of a two-thirds vote.

The support wasn't as strong for two possible solutions to late-game fouling — one or two shots and retaining possession (44 percent approval by responding coaches) or giving the team fouled the right to waive the shots and inbound the ball again, as is done in Olympic play (50 percent).

Fifty-five percent urged stricter enforcement of rim-hanging violations. But only 28 percent supported widening the three-second lane to

reduce rough play. Coaches also reversed their opinion on the coaching box inaugurated for 1984-85. A year ago, 61 percent opposed it. Now, Steitz said, 63 percent approved — along with 92 percent of the officials who responded.

Close to 4,000 questionnaires were sent out to NCAA, NAIA and junior college coaches, college administrators, referees and media. There was a 55 percent response, or 2,188.

Steitz said the NCAA also will be looking at installing the three-point field goal. "Each state high school association just adopted it, and all of our international competition and the Olympic Games in 1988 will be played with a three-point line. But it's out 2 feet beyond what we have experimented with for the past two or three years," he said.

Thirty-two percent of the responding coaches voted for just a three-point field goal, 42 percent for both the three-point line and the shot clock.

Steitz said he expected a lengthy debate on "how we can clean up, you might say, the fouling at the end of the game and, at the same time, not take quite as long to play the last four or five minutes."

The NCAA, without its usual experimentation, put in place at the start of the 1983-84 season an automatic two-shot foul for the final two minutes. "We passed it, thinking, 'this penalty is severe enough to serve as a deterrent, to fouling,' but it wasn't severe enough," Steitz said. The rule was rescinded halfway through that season.

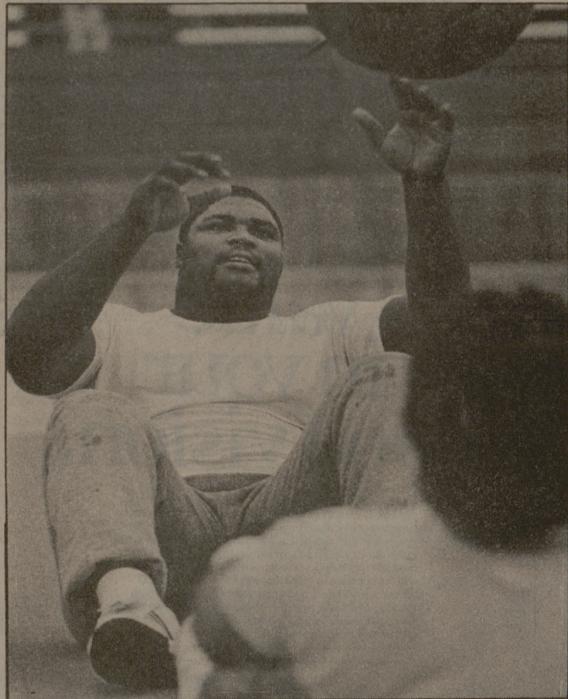


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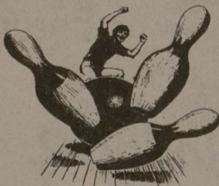
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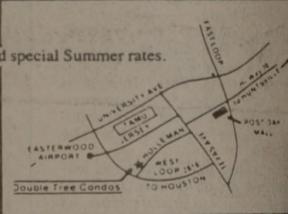
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