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**Pokes say goodbye  
to finesse with draft**

By DENNE H. FREEMAN  
Associated Press Sports Writer

DALLAS — The National Football League draft has always been the holiest of days to the Dallas Cowboys.

The Cowboys built their franchise and name on glittering gems found in the NFL draft mother lode.

They discovered Cornell Green on a basketball court, Bob Hayes on a track and Roger Staubach in the Navy.

The Cowboys made the draft a science and have five Super Bowl appearances as proof of their prowess.

They even slickered Seattle into giving up running back Tony Dorsett in 1977 and he immediately took Dallas to a Super Bowl in his rookie season.

But the competition has caught up with the Cowboys.

Pressured by the opposition, the Cowboys have made some draft goofs in recent years, including Rod Hill and Larry Bethea to name two of recent vintage who are no longer with the team.

The NFL draft is no longer their personal recruiting ground.

"It's been tough, and it keeps getting tougher every year," said Gil Brandt, the former baby photographer who has masterminded the Cowboys scouting. "Other teams do their homework now."

The "homework" includes not doing business with Dallas on trades.

*"We did more to try to make a trade than we have in 10 years. We would have loved to have an impact wide receiver but we got some solid players for the future." — Cowboys' President Tex Schramm*

The Cowboys couldn't pull off a big trade last Tuesday when they needed to move up from the No. 17 position to get an impact wide receiver.

"We did more to try to make a trade than we have in 10 years," admitted Cowboys President Tex Schramm.

"In the long run what happened is probably for the best. We would have loved to have an impact wide receiver but we got some solid players for the future."

The "future" is the operative word there.

You must understand that Tom Landry calls the draft shots.

Brandt puts the information in front of him, but it's Landry who makes the ultimate decision. It's Landry who has the say on the first four rounds then he turns the decisions over to Brandt.

Landry picked 6-foot-7,

275-pound Michigan defensive tackle Kevin Brooks in the first round and tabbed Virginia Tech linebacker Jesse Penn in the second round on Tuesday.

"I felt very good about those players," said Landry. "They are good players for the future."

Of 17 Cowboy drafts I've attended, I never heard the word "future" used so much.

The impression you got was Landry is in for the long haul, bring Dallas back to a Super Bowl caliber.

Landry has any length of contract he wants. And apparently he's ready to be at Dallas another five years that's what it takes.

Not making the playoffs last year stung Landry's pride.

Landry's a tough competitor and doesn't like getting beat.

Every player he drafted had an excellent "competitive" rating from the Dallas scouts.

Landry even had Penn flow in Dallas for a personal interview to see just what he was getting.

"The guy can play," said Landry. "And I liked his attitude. He's a competitor."

You get the picture. Landry drafted the kind of players who win an alley fight.

The days of the Cowboys being strictly a finesse team are about to long gone.

**Spurs due for a change  
after disappointing '85**

Associated Press

SAN ANTONIO — Adjectives like "disappointing" come to Coach Cotton Fitzsimmons' mind when he evaluates the San Antonio Spurs' defeat at the hands of Denver in the first round of the NBA playoffs.

"Average" is the word he uses to describe the Spurs' 41-41 record this year — his first as coach of the San Antonio team.

But Fitzsimmons is even less descriptive when it comes to talking about the makeup of next year's Spurs team.

"There will be some changes," he said. Team owner Angelo Drossos isn't much help, either.

"Anything is possible," he said, "and it always has been."

But some changes undoubtedly are in store. As team spokesman Wayne Witt said, "It's going to be an interesting summer."

Drossos did say the Spurs "would be reluctant to trade a George Gervin because he has been such a major part of this franchise since our first year."

He also said he would hate to lose Artis Gilmore, this year's top rebounder (10.4 per game) for the

Spurs, who this past week made noises about retiring.

"I think he has several more years to play in the league. He is a major part of any franchise, including this one," he said.

Drossos has been quoted as saying there will be no major shakeup of the roster in the coming year.

The Spurs nucleus of Gervin, Gilmore, Mike Mitchell, Johnny Moore and Gene Banks has been intact since 1982. The squad finished 53-29 the first year, then 37-45 and the even split this year.

"This team has been intact for three seasons. I don't think you can stay intact another year," Fitzsimmons said, adding that the Spurs are leveling off. "We need some quicker people on the ball club."

The Spurs will have to flip a coin with Utah to determine their slot in the NBA draft in June. The team will pick either 13th or 14th in the first round.

Unless the Spurs put together a trade for a much higher draft slot, it is unlikely they will come away with a first-rate talent.

"I hope to get a good player," Fitzsimmons said. "I don't know if we'll get one as good as Alvin Robertson."

Robertson, a 6-4 guard, was the Spurs No. 7 pick in the first round last year. He has the kind of speed Fitzsimmons says the team needs.

The team has five free agents — Moore, who as point guard led the team with average assists with 10 per game, Jeff Cook, Marc Iavaroni, Billy Knight and John Paxson.

Drossos said the team will try to keep Moore, but he refused to play what he called "20 questions" on the future of the other free agents.

Taking a look back at the 1984-85 season, Fitzsimmons said he wouldn't rate it a bad one.

"But unless you're restructuring, don't see how you can be happy with 41 and 41," he said. "We didn't win the division. The team wasn't proved enough to suit me as a coach or the general manager or the fans."

The Spurs were plagued all season long with turnovers, and that failing proved their undoing in the playoffs, Fitzsimmons said.

"Most of our quickness and speed was hurt," he said, referring to Robertson and Banks. "I'm disappointed in the way it ended. I would have liked for it to come up to the wire with a final layout."

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