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ABC gets Namath to join crew

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Pledging to bring to the broadcasts "my personality, my good humor and my good Joe Namath will replace Don Meredith on the announcing team for Monday Night Football, Roone Arledge, president of ABC News and Sports, announced Tuesday. Frank Gifford, who has been with

the series since its second year, and O.J. Simpson, who moved into the booth last season, will complete the broadcast crew, Arledge said. "Don Meredith decided he did

not want to continue," Arledge said. "We'll miss him. We've been trying

to get Joe involved for a long time." Namath, the former New York Jets quarterback who led them to the Super Bowl championship in 1969, signed a five-year contract of undisclosed terms.

Arledge said the network antic-ipates continuing its relationship with the NFL and that Namath, who has worked as an actor since his retirement, might do some movie work for the network as well.

"I, of course, am very excited," Namath said. "I've been out of foot-ball since 1977. I've been a good fan of football and missed not being closer to it.

Namath said he had watched Monday Night Football as often as he could and that the key to being a successful announcer would be preparation.

"I'll certainly be prepared," he said. "As a quarterback, I found out early how important that is, preparing, doing your homework." Namath said his wife, Debra, had

encouraged him to seek a broadcast job. "She'd listen to what I have to say about games we watched and she enjoyed it," he said. "It was her idea.

The Monday Night ratings, like those for other football broadcasts, dipped last year. "We were down six percent, which

is less than the packages of the other networks," Arledge said. "We had a 29 share of the audience and that's pretty good.



Landry has confidence in White as Cowboy QB old

Associated Press

DALLAS — Dallas Cowboys Coach Tom Landry said he feels comfortable with choosing Danny White as his starting quarterback and picking Dallas to finish fourth in the NFC East.

"He's our quarterback," Landry said of White on Monday, six days before training camp opens in Thousand Oaks, Calif. "He's got the ball. He is going to play until he proves he can't do the job the way I want him to."

Landry said Gary Hogeboom is still in the running for the starting assignment later. But Landry said he favors the 33-year-old White over Hogeboom, 26, because he detects a difference in the way White is per-

ceived by his teammates. "He (White) has got to play poorly (before he loses the job)," Landry said. "How poorly? I can't tell you. If in my eyes he's performing as well as he can and the failure is someplace else, I'm not going to penalize him. I'm going to make a decision based on what's best for the team."

Landry's preseason prediction is that the Cowboys will trail Washing-ton, St. Louis and New York. "Washington got (George) Rogers and they have confidence in him and (John) Piercine". Louise and "Fr

(John) Riggins," Landry said. "Everybody can start picking dark horses to knock off the champion, but you better stick with the cham-

pion until he proves he's not the champion anymore. "After Washington, it's St. Louis,

then New York and Dallas," he said. "I think New York improved in the draft and they will be tough. I pick us fourth. I like that position. I like to come from behind."

Washington won the NFC East last year at 11-5, followed by the Cowboys, Giants and Cardinals at 9-

We have to re-establish ourselves as a winning team, a playoff team," Landry said. "You can't sit here and say you're going to be in the playoffs before the season starts when you just got knocked out of the playoffs. We have to recognize we have a fight ahead of us. We have to re-earn it."

Landry said the morale and atmo-sphere of the club is now more conducive to White keeping his job. Hogeboom was a surprise first-game starter last season who later lost, regained, then lost the position to White again.

"It wasn't Danny's ability last year, it was the team and how they felt," he said. "The climate was not right, so I made a change.

"We had a problem with morale. We needed solid team unity. So we went with Gary and won the first game. We probably would have won more if our receivers would have stayed healthy.

Then last year he (White) re-established his relationship with the team and there's a good fee he doesn't make it this year th we hope he will, it won't be be the team isn't behind him. It w because he failed on his ow year our theme is 'Get the job

If you get the job done, it's OK. Landry said he hopes Hogebon responds positively to the situation "It's competitive all the wa Landry said. "Danny knows he's back its old to work to hold it, and if I though Gary could do a better job, then la

Tom Gray Landry said he anticipates kee la in Atlan ing both quarterbacks. After lasts ntinue to m son he had indicated the starting troduced in would be decided in training an with the loser likely to be traded. Coca-Cola In other developments involve ost actively Vew York St 2.371/2 a shar

the Cowboys: Fullback Ron' Springs' solved legal problems could a PepsiCo's share to \$57 his chances to make the team i summer, said Landry. Springs h a September trial date on an agg vated assault charge stemming pril that it

an alleged attack on a police off last January at a bar in Dallas.

ormula hav Linebacker Eugene Lockhar publicity. In said he plans to halt contract ne id it has re tiations with Cowboys vice presid Gil Brandt and take his case Landry. Lockhart said More there is a remote chance he will report to training camp on tim the contract issue remains u solved.

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