

SPORTS

TANK McNAMARA

by Jeff Millar & Bill Hinds



Cowboy star tackles bass in off-season

White using fishing as hobby, not holdout

Associated Press

DALLAS — Randy White may be All-Pro evidence that training camps are an unnecessary evil for professional football players. White enjoyed one of his best years during his 10th season with the Dallas Cowboys, although he did not visit Thousand Oaks, Calif.

But there's no excuse for White to fish through the entire summer this year. There's no salary dispute, no reason for a holdout. He's got a new contract worth millions and, as the time nears to head for the Cal Lutheran training site, White wants to be ready.

Bob Ward and some visitors from the East who help teach the Dallas defenders the martial arts — especially movement, leverage and hand-eye coordination — would've been pleased to have the view recently from a seat in White's bass boat.

From the nose of the craft, the big defensive lineman with a chest the size of a tennis court tests his skills against an opponent that is considered no slouch in the quickness-and-reflex department.

On a recent outing, White cast spinnerbait several feet beyond an alligator's head and rippled it back slowly near the surface. The gator waited patiently, its large eyes periscoping over the water. When the lure came within striking distance, the reptile swung its head and clamped down with its jaws.

"Missed again," White laughed after jerking the lure from the gator's jaws before it could hook itself. "One thing I don't want to catch is an alligator."

For a man whose job restricts his fishing to less than one day a week for more than six months each year, White has come a long way in the 4½ years he has been a serious bass angler. Being who he is has opened the gates to some of the best private fishing holes in the country, of course, and that has been a factor in his fishing education.

It all started just under five years ago when White accompanied his coach, defensive coordinator Ernie Stautner, on a bass fishing trip.

"I didn't catch a fish," White recalled. "But I was throwing a buzz bait — a Lunker Lure I think it was — and the water was clear enough that I saw a little fish run at the lure and miss it. I think I was hooked from that minute on."

White is known at many roadside stops from Mount Pleasant to Palestine, Brushy Creek to Edom, Caddo Creek to Koon Kreek, Catfish Creek to Brownsboro, Murchison to Poynor and Monticello to Athens. And he is respected as a guy that pays his dues.

He has spent his share of chilly days and icy nights during the big-bass season on Monticello, at first learning from people like Bob Garcia, Tommy Milam and Jerry Riney. Now, he mostly fishes alone, which may be the truest measure of his dedication.

"I'm not a big-bass nut," White said "but I enjoy the challenge of a lake with big bass, like Monticello. I like to catch fish, but I'm not that hung up on big fish."

White has made it as a football player and he is making it as a bass fisherman. Pro football and fishing have helped him emerge from the shell, the backwardness, he seemed to have as a rookie.

Watching him wield a 7-foot, heavy-action flipping rod as if it were a toothpick is a sight to behold, but watching him be a good ol' boy around the gas pumps, short-order griddles and cracker barrels in those wide spaces in the road in East Texas is amazing.

Even though White is a native of Delaware who attended Maryland and who owns a farm in Pennsylvania, he is more Texan than many native sons. He talks the language and that includes some of the bull it takes to survive among fishermen.



WHITE

Aggies' Gilbert centers time around basketball

By PETE HERNDON
Reporter

Summer is the time of year most Texas A&M students usually get to go home, relax and enjoy themselves.

But A&M basketball player Jimmie Gilbert doesn't think he can afford the luxury of a vacation. Basketball is Gilbert's summer vacation.

"Most of the guys that stay over the summer do it so they can workout," says Gilbert, a 6-foot-9 Aggie center. "The facilities here (at A&M) are better than most of us can get to at home."

"Besides, if I were to go home, I'd probably do nothing but watch television and get fat."

Gilbert isn't worried about getting out of shape because he spends long hours working on the weights and playing basketball with some of his teammates.

Gilbert says he wasn't pleased with his performance on the court last year.

"I don't think I reached my potential last season," Gilbert says. "I had a lot higher expectations, but I'd been hurt most of the year."

However, Gilbert is healthy now and Aggie guard Don Marbury says Gilbert is playing aggressive basketball this summer.

"I've never seen Jimmie play like he has this summer," Marbury says. "The other day, he was working in some hard, power slams (jumping) off of one leg. Man, I was just standing there thinking that if Jimmie plays like this in the spring, we'll win the (Southwest) Conference."

Three centers have been drafted from the SWC over the last two years — SMU's Jon Koncak and Arkansas' Joe Kleine in '85; Houston's Akeem Olujuwon in '84. This coming spring, Gilbert should be the most experienced center in the conference. A fine season for Gilbert would not only silence a lot of critics, it could earn him a shot at the NBA.

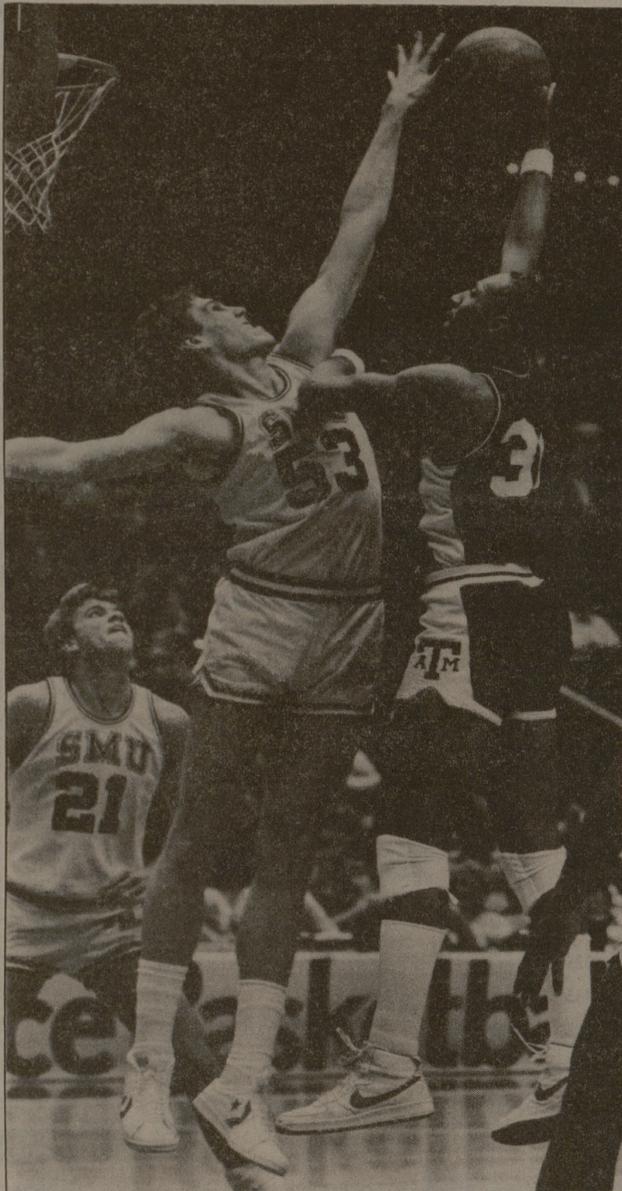
"The biggest thing to getting a chance in the pros is that you've got to come from a winning (basketball) program," Gilbert says.

"The second biggest thing is that you specialize in some aspect of the game, whether it's shooting, rebounding, passing, blocking shots or defense and be consistent in everything else."

"Right now, I'm working hard on my rebounding."

Gilbert has played against quite a few rebounding experts during his three years at A&M.

After playing in the shadows of Olujuwon, Kleine and Koncak for the last three seasons, Gilbert may have acquired enough experience to be the next dominant center in the SWC.



Battalion File Photo

Texas A&M center Jimmie Gilbert (right) hopes that having played against the likes of SMU's Jon Koncak (left), who was drafted in the first round of the NBA draft by the Atlanta Hawks, will help him become a more dominant player during his senior season.

Gilbert says becoming a force in the SWC is just a matter of staying healthy and producing.

And production is something the Aggies will need from the opening tipoff in the 1985-86 season.

Coach Shelby Metcalf's Aggies start the season as guests of the Big Apple National Invitational Tournament, the new pre-season NIT. NCAA powerhouses Georgia Tech, Duke and Lamar are all in the Aggies' bracket.

Astros' Ryan notches 4,000 strikeouts

Associated Press

HOUSTON — Nolan Ryan, baseball's reigning strikeout king, became the first pitcher in major league history reach the 4,000 mark when he fanned New York's Danny Heep in the sixth inning Thursday night.

Ryan, 38, went into Thursday night's game against the Mets needing seven strikeouts to become the first major league pitcher to reach the 4,000 mark.

The 19-year veteran got the milestone strikeout when Heep, the lead-off hitter in the sixth, swung at an 0-2 curve ball in the dirt.

The crowd at the Astrodome, which included Commissioner of Baseball Peter Ueberroth, gave Ryan a two-minute standing ovation as catcher Mark Bailey trotted to the mound to shake the pitcher's hand. Ryan's Astro teammates on the field and in the dugout also applauded.

Ryan tipped his cap several times while standing atop the pitching rubber, finally stopping the ovation when he threw a pitch to the next batter, Rafael Santana.

But the crowd was up again when Ryan struck out Santana and pitcher

Sid Fernandez to end the sixth and run his total 4,002.

Ryan started his run to 4,000 by fanning Len Dykstra to open the game, got Santana and Fernandez in the second, Fernandez again in the fourth, and Darryl Strawberry and Gary Carter in the fifth.

"This is an unbelievable milestone for him," Ueberroth said.

Ryan started the game with 3,993 strikeouts and an 85-strikeout lead over his nearest rival, Philadelphia's Steve Carlton, who currently is on the disabled list with a shoulder injury.

Ryan had 119 strikeouts this season in 19 starts. And in his last start on Saturday, he struck out three in a losing effort to the Montreal Expos in the Astrodome.

Montreal's Brad Mills became Ryan's 3,509th career strikeout April 27, 1983, in a race with Carlton to become the first to break the career strikeout record of Walter Johnson that had stood for 55 years.

Ryan went for the 4,000-strikeout plateau against his former Mets teammates. It was as a Met that Ryan recorded his first major league strikeout Sept. 11, 1966, fanning Atlanta's Pat Jarvis.

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