

# Slater

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another obstacle in the form of Eric Franklin.

Not only did Franklin have a strong leg and an extra year of experience on Slater, but he also had a big brother by the name of Tony who kicked for A&M from 1975 to 1978. The elder Franklin holds the school record for longest field goal (65 yards) and kicked for the New England Patriots in the 1986 Superbowl.

"I didn't really get much of a look in '84," Slater said.

"In the spring of '85 they figured out who I was because I could kick."

"By the fall of '85 I was getting more comfortable and they let me kick some field goals and extra points," he said.

Slater runs unusually fast for a kicker, 4.57 in the 40-yard dash. His speed enables him to run down kick returners, and he's not afraid to dish out a lick, either.

"Last spring I also played some DB (defensive back) but I'm not working out there anymore because of the (kicking) priorities for the team," Slater said.

Traditionally, the kicker has been stereotyped as being the loner on the team. He's either the hero, taking aim on the helmet from his teammates, or the goat, having to stand by himself to take the hisses and boos from the fans.

Slater said he doesn't fall into that category.

"I don't think that's the case here," he said. "I'm not just a kicker, I'm a player."

"When I worked with the (defensive backs) that got me a little respect."

When the pressure is on and Slater has the chance to possibly win a game, he said he doesn't

think about the consequences of the kick or about how many people are watching him.

"I just think about the basics of the kick: the plant (of the) foot, keep my head down, point my toe, get my leg up, square my hips — just make the kick," he said.

"It's hard not to think about what's going to happen if I make it or what's going to happen if I miss it, but that's my job."

"I try to kick it just like I would on a Sunday afternoon, jacking around."

Slater said he feels the pressure much more several days before the game than on the day of the game.

"When it's finally time, it's like 'Great! It's here!'" he said.

Slater said he pretty well has his form down now.

"We try to look at a lot of quality and keep the quantity down," he said.

The "We" consists of Slater and coach Hardy, a kicker for A&M from 1979 to 1982.

"He's helped me a lot in the past two years," Slater said.

"He's a kicker too, so he understands I don't need to kick two hours a day," he said.

"I may only kick 25 or 30 kicks a day but I make every one count," he said.

For anyone else thinking about walking on a football team, Slater said it's tough to get a shot.

"But if you believe in yourself and believe you're the best and keep on knocking, eventually someone is going to see you and give you a chance," he said.

He said he's not thinking about going professional yet because there's a long way to go this season and he has two more years of college after that.

"I've got to make it at A&M first," he said.

## Astros' Darwin quiets Giants in 5-0 victory

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — It really doesn't seem to matter who's pitching for the Houston Astros these days, the results are about the same.

"It sure seems that way," Manager Hal Lanier agreed after starter Danny Darwin and three relievers Wednesday collaborated on a four-hit, 5-0 victory over the San Francisco Giants, Houston's sixth shutout in eight games.

Darwin, 5-2 since joining the Astros in a trade with the Milwaukee Brewers, yielded two hits in five innings and struck out eight, his National League high. Aurelio Lopez, Charlie Kerfeld and Dave Smith completed the club's league leading 19th shutout.

"I'm not pitching any differently now," said Darwin, who was 6-8 with the Brewers. "I'm just getting a few more runs and better defense."

Seven of the Astros' nine hits were for extra bases, including home runs by Terry Puhl and Alan Ashby, driving right-hander Mike Krukow to his 20th victory.

"I didn't have my usual pop," said Krukow, 19-9, after being roughed up for five runs and seven hits in six innings following a 6-0 September. "I was pitching behind on the count. I never gave myself a chance."

The triumph boosted the Astros' record to 92-66, matching the club's record for victories set by the 1980 National League West Division championship team.

Puhl, making only his sixth start since coming off the disabled list July 23, singled, doubled and hit a two-run homer.

Glenn Davis knocked in Puhl with a two-out double in the first for a 1-0 lead and his league-leading 16th game-winning RBI, one more than Gary Carter of the New York Mets.

Houston added a run in the fourth on doubles by Jose Cruz and rookie Ty Gainey.

Bill Doran's walk and Puhl's homer, his third of the year, made it 4-0 in the fifth. Ashby hit his seventh homer, an upper-deck shot to right, leading off the sixth.

## Eighth-inning blast powers A's to 9-7 win over Rangers

ARLINGTON (AP) — Pinch-hitter Terry Steinbach hit a three-run homer in the eighth inning, rallying the Oakland A's to a 9-7 victory over the Texas Rangers Wednesday night.

Steinbach's second homer of the year came after the Rangers, who had a four-game winning streak snapped, scored four runs in the sixth and three in the seventh to lead 7-5 after trailing 5-0.

Steinbach's homer came off reliever Mitch Williams, 8-6, who relieved Dale Mohorcic with one out and a runner on base. Williams walked Alfredo Griffin before Steinbach hit his game-winning.

Reliever Jay Howell, 3-6, pitched the 9th inning for the victory.

Charlie Hough went the first six innings for the Rangers and allowed

six hits, including Dave Kingman's 35th homer and Jerry Willard's fourth, a three-run shot that made it 5-0 in the sixth.

The Rangers began their comeback against Jose Rijo in the sixth on RBI singles by Oddibe McDowell and Pete O'Brien and a bases-loaded error by shortstop Alfredo Griffin that allowed two runs to score.

Steve Buechele led off the seventh with his 18th home run of the season, tying it 5-5. Singles by McDowell, Jerry Browne and O'Brien loaded the bases before Incaviglia flied to deep right, and after Tillman caught the ball against the wall, McDowell and Browne both tagged and scored, giving the Rangers a 7-5 lead.

## Major League Baseball

AMERICAN LEAGUE				NATIONAL LEAGUE			
East Division				East Division			
	W	L	Pct.		W	L	Pct.
x-Boston	95	62	.605	x-New York	104	54	.658
New York	86	72	.544	Philadelphia	84	74	.532
Toronto	86	73	.541	St. Louis	79	78	.503
Detroit	83	75	.525	Montreal	77	80	.490
Cleveland	81	78	.509	Chicago	68	90	.430
Milwaukee	74	83	.471	Pittsburgh	62	95	.395
Baltimore	73	86	.459				
West Division				West Division			
x-California	91	67	.576	x-Houston	92	66	.582
Texas	84	74	.532	Cincinnati	83	75	.525
Oakland	75	84	.472	San Francisco	81	77	.513
Kansas City	74	85	.465	Atlanta	72	85	.459
Chicago	71	87	.449	San Diego	73	86	.459
Minnesota	68	90	.430	Los Angeles	72	87	.453
Seattle	67	92	.421				
x-clinched division title				x-clinched division title			
Wednesday's Games				Wednesday's Games			
Oakland 9, Texas 7				Houston 5, San Francisco 0			
Cleveland 12, Minnesota 3				New York 6, Montreal 4, 10 innings			
Toronto 3, New York 0				Chicago at Philadelphia, (n)			
Boston 11, Baltimore 7				Cincinnati 6, Atlanta 5			
Chicago 3, Seattle 1				Pittsburgh at St. Louis, (n)			
Kansas City 2, California 0				Los Angeles at San Diego, (n)			
Detroit 2, Milwaukee 1							

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