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September 1 - 11

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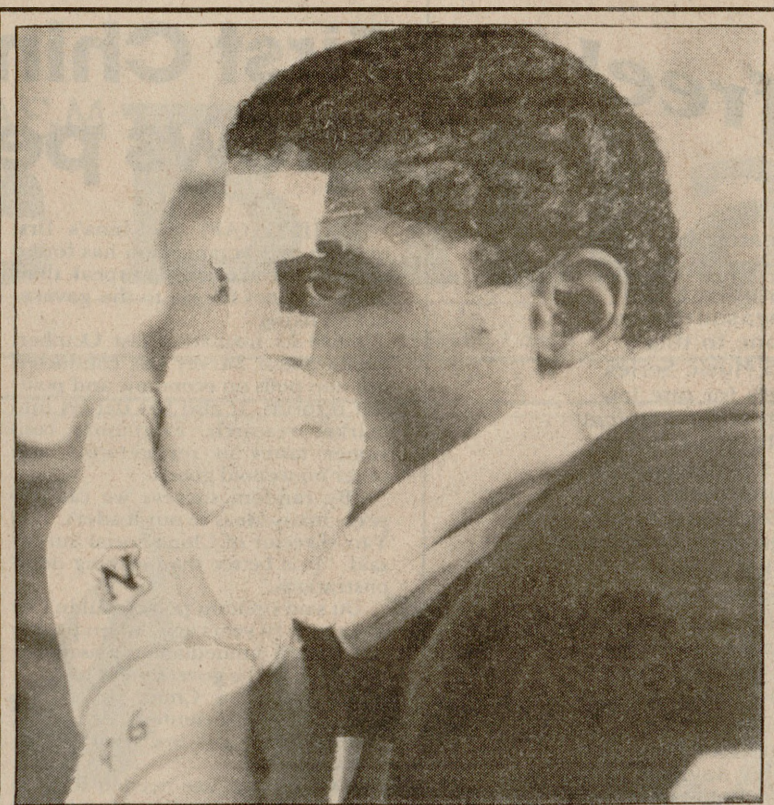
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Wounded
Texas A&M linebacker John Roper watches from the sidelines as he nurses a cut to his forehead. Roper suffered the cut while sacking Louisiana State quarterback Tom Hodson during the first half of Saturday's game at Kyle Field. Roper later returned to the game.
Photo by Robert Rizzo

Landry says Cowboys need offensive help

IRVING (AP) — Dallas Coach Tom Landry says the Cowboys have never been so ill-prepared offensively to start an NFL regular season in the 27-year history of the team.

"We worked hard during camp but we're not ready to start the year on offense," Landry said after the Houston Oilers downed the Cowboys 18-13 Saturday night.

Dallas scored only three touchdowns in a 1-3 preseason, the lowest total in the club's history. Paul McDonald's 19-yard scoring pass to Robert Lavette against the Oilers was Dallas' only touchdown pass in four exhibition games.

Landry said the absence of running back Herschel Walker helped to contribute to Dallas' poor training camp record. Walker missed every preseason game with a knee injury but is expected to play on Sunday against St. Louis.

"If we had all our guns this preseason we wouldn't be looking at this type of a situation," Landry said. "We just have to get ready for St. Louis. They beat the (Chicago) Bears so we'll have to be ready."

Houston finished the preseason with a 2-2 record.

The Oilers recently found the missing Governor's Cup and now they get to keep the symbol of Texas professional football supremacy another year.

The Oilers used three field goals by Tony Zendejas to beat the Cow-

boys for only the sixth victory in 21 decisions in the exhibition series.

"It's always nice to end the preseason with a victory over the Cowboys," said Oilers' Coach Jerry Glanville. "I thought we played really good defense. Our offense still needs some work," he said.

"If we stay healthy, I think we'll be exciting. I think the city of Houston will be proud of us."

The Oilers open at home Sunday against the Los Angeles Rams.

The loss was a costly one for the Cowboys who lost defensive end Robert Smith with a broken arm.

Houston wide receiver Drew Hill suffered a twisted ankle.

Allen Pinkett scored Houston's only touchdown on an 11-yard run.

"That was important to me," Pinkett said. "You don't like to get an opportunity this way (running back Mike Rozier's absence) but when you do get an opportunity you need to take advantage of it. I think we're going to be a really good football team."

As for Dallas, Walker promised to be at full speed for the Cardinals.

"I'll be ready to play, I feel sure," Walker said. "I have confidence my knee will be OK."

Dallas quarterback Danny White, who has had a poor preseason, said, "Believe it or not, I feel we will be a good team. It may not have been evident by the way we have performed."

Dunne pitches Pirates to 4-3 win over Astros

HOUSTON (AP) — If baseball had a Rookie-of-the-Year award for pitchers, Mike Dunne would be the best choice, according to Pittsburgh Manager Jim Leyland.

"If he's not the Rookie-of-the-Year pitcher, then something's wrong," Leyland said after Dunne pitched the Pirates over the Houston Astros 4-3 Sunday.

The victory gave Dunne a 10-5 record and the most wins by a rookie pitcher in the National League. Joe Magrane of St. Louis is second with a 7-6 record.

Dunne went 7 1/2 innings and gave up three runs. He won for the seventh time in his last eight decisions.

"It's not all me. It's the defense and the way the team seems to play well when I'm pitching," Dunne said.

Rookie second baseman Jose Lind had three hits and made a game-saving play for the final out. With runners on second and third, he went fielded Alan Ashby's grounder behind second base and threw him out.

"When the ball first came off the bat, I didn't think he had a chance to get it," Pirates catcher Mike LaValiere said. "I thought the ball was in center field and two runs would score and we would lose. I was just hoping he could knock it down, but then I saw him gun it and the game was over."

Jim Gott relieved Dunne and finished for his seventh save.

Manny Hernandez, 0-2, took the loss. He went 5 1/2 innings and allowed three runs on five hits.

The Pirates took a 1-0 lead when R.J. Reynolds doubled with two outs and LaValiere singled.

Rangers' Valentine takes blame for a poor season

ARLINGTON (AP) — Texas Rangers Manager Bobby Valentine says he's willing to shoulder the blame for the errors that led to his team's season of disappointment.

"I got a lot of credit when some of the guys had good years last year, so I should get most of the blame when they have a bad year," he said Saturday.

The Rangers are near the bottom of the American League West, and Valentine said that's because of mistakes he made in leadership.

Specifically, Valentine said he mistakenly thought the club had enough talent to overcome its 1-10 start and win the AL West, causing doubt in his leadership to spread when the losing continued.

He said he was wrong about not trying to speed up the motions of Rangers' pitchers in an effort to re-

duce opponents' stolen bases and didn't do enough to cut down on the club's walks and errors.

Valentine also blasted his handling of Don Slaught, who started the season as a regular catcher but has been reduced to pinch-hitting, part-time duty as a designated hitter and occasional use behind the plate.

"The talent is better than 10 games below .500," Valentine said. "That points to me. I don't think I've done the job I should have. I'm not playing the martyr, but things went awry this year, and I hope I learn from them."

Valentine delivered his self-criticism Saturday in a meeting with general manager Tom Grieve, owner Eddie Chiles and president Mike Stone. Valentine later discussed the mistakes with reporters.

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