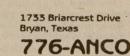


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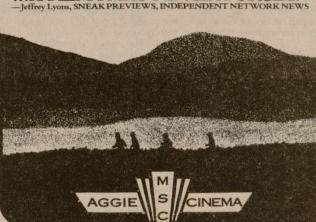
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Page 12/The Battalion/Thursday, October 29, 1987

Rockets need guard Co for winning season

HOUSTON (AP) — The Houston Rockets achieved some long-range goals in the off-season, giving a 6-year, \$12 million contract to Ralph Sampson, who joins fellow Twin Tower Akeem Olajuwon, already signed through 1988.

Owner Charlie Thomas signed a

lease extension on Oct. 19 that will make The Summit home for the Rockets through 2003.

Now it's up to Coach Bill Fitch and General Manager Ray Patterson to solve the short-term problem of rebuilding the team's guard corps.

The Rockets open the season Friday against San Antonio in The Houston has been deficient at the

guard position since John Lucas, Louis Lloyd and Mitchell Wiggins left the club because of drug problems over the past two seasons.

The cast of characters for Fitch's

guard revue has been extensive, ranging from 12-year veteran World B. Free to diminutive Andre Turner, to Lester Conner, a former Golden State No. 1 pick.

Turner, at 5-9, 159, has been a surprise during training camp, making up in speed what he lacks in size. He'd like to accomplish with the Rockets what Spud Webb has done at Atlanta.

at Atlanta. Turner wants to prove he won't be a defensive liability.

"I know that's something the coaches worry about," Turner said. "That's what teams try to do against Spud. The little guy has to compensate by fighting and scratching.

We have to start on the other end of the floor and play aggressive de-fense for 70 or 80 feet before our

Turner, who played at Memphis
State, failed in attempts to play for
the Los Angeles Lakers and Boston

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Celtics last season and spenti in the Continental Baskettel

The Rockets look at Tune

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Fitch likes Free's outside keep defenses from collapse the Twin Towers. At age 3, signed with the Rockets as a

agent.

"My age hasn't caughtupe mind," Free said. "My boby burned out. When you get up tain age, people will start true draw conclusions about aple.

"But World B. will know this control of the contro

World B. can't play. Free averaged 23.4 point Cleveland in 1985-86. After a tract dispute he signed with delphia, but saw little playing last year.

Conner started two season the Warriors but played in a games in 1985-86 and last was in the CBA. He can Rockets' eye in the Californ mer League

"I played my heart out," said. "I have a chance to sho it was a mistake that happen (at Golden State)."

Allen Leavell is the inco 1985 first-round pick Stevell still trying to get control of his

Harris had a lackluster to mance in the first two pre games but bounced back will for-9 performance from the against Detroit and hit 10011 in 23 minutes for 22 points the New York Knicks.

Mavs set to fast break

DALLAS (AP) - The Dallas Mavericks won 55 games and their NBA Midwest Division last year, yet came to a fatal finish.

They were stunned in the first round of the playoffs by Seattle and lost Coach Dick Motta in the secondguessing fallout because of it.

Motta, who had been embroiled in

frequent spats with star Mark Aguirre, resigned and never went public with his reasons. Motta had been the Mavericks' only head coach since Dallas obtained an expansion

The big question mark for the team this year is whether new coach John MacLeod can put all the pieces back together again.

MacLeod was fired after nearly 14

seasons with the Phoenix Suns.

Only Red Auerbach, who coached the Boston Celtics for 16 seasons, had a longer continous service with one club in NBA history. MacLeod, 50, was 579-543 with

Phoenix and directed the Suns to nine playoff berths. His 1975-76 team lost to Boston in the NBA fi-"Dick built a great winning tradition and I hope to carry on that tradition and hopefully get the Maver-

icks up to the next level," MacLeod Although he contends "it makes no sense to make dramatic changes,"

he is hoping Dallas can run more like the Los Angeles Lakers. This team averaged 117 points on his retirement

per game, but I think we can little more, though," Maclado "I think you'll see us look for easy basket in transition first not there, then we'll set up a with the reliable half-courtes The Mays, who open the

Friday night at home against don't expect much immedia from first round draft pid Farmer, a guard from Alaba

had a poor preseason.

But second round draftpdl
Alford of Indiana has been a
sive with his shooting.

The Mays' also got some but season news when forward Ro pley reported 20 pounds on and admitted a drug abuser

A first round draft pick to

Tarpley is the first front-lines tute off the bench.

Aguirre, All-Star guard in Blackman, speedy planinguard Derek Harper, forward Chronicle race track Perkins, and center James aldson give Dallas an important starting club.

Aguirre is a sconne and horses small forward who may be before and at times this year. He lost to the content in the off in the off-season to get MacLeod's running game.
"We have a lot of talental

use 10 players. I'm excited

Motta has declined to

Roldan prepared to bloom Hearns' fourth title attem s a single for regular

LAS VEGAS, Nev. (AP) — Thomas Hearns will try to become the first boxer to win titles in four weight classes when he fights Juan

weight classes when he fights Juan Domingo Roldan tonight.

At stake will be the World Boxing C o u n c i l m i d d l e w e i g h t championship, which became vacant when Sugar Ray Leonard retired after upsetting Marvelous Marvin Hagler last April 6.

On hand for Hearns' bid to make history will be Leonard, who stopped Hearns in the 14th round of

stopped Hearns in the 14th round of battle for the undisputed welterweight championship in 1981, and Hagler, who knocked out Hearns in the third round of an undisputed middleweight title defense

Leonard will attend as a spectator, while Hagler will be a commentator on the closed-circuit and pay-peron the closed-circuit and pay-perview telecast of the scheduled 12-round bout at a 10,100-seat outdoor stadium at the Las Vegas Hilton.

"I'm evaluating the situation," said Hagler, who is a possible opponent for the winner. "I want to sit back watch these guys and see what

back, watch these guys and see what happens."
"This fight will put me above ev-

eryone else out there," the 29-year-old Hearns said. "This fight definitely will make up for those two

Hearns, an 8-5 favorite, is one of 10 men to win at least pieces of three titles. Six of those 10 won their third titles in the 1980s when the number of weight classes doubled from the traditional eight and most championships have been been split.

Only two of those six champions tine to be middleweight held an undisputed title - Roberto

Duran, lightweight, and I

welterweight. However, Hearns' road an easy one. If he succeed titles would span weight ing from 147 pounds to Hearns, the former

Association welterwell WBC super welter champion, relinqui light heavyweight (175) for the 160-pound title. He is the fourth man

win a fourth title. The tailed were Henry Arms fought a 10-round draw rino Garcia in a bid for the weight title in 1940; Alexis who was knocked out terweight title in 1982 and truiting, Duran, who lost a decision in 1983.

Hearns attempt is scheduled begin at 8 p.m. PST. Bobby Czyz's scheduled defense of the International Federation light heaving against Charles Williams will begin about 7 p.m. am

Hagler, who stopped the 10th round of a tide 1984, thinks "the fight" very even. Roldan is very morning

and very quick."

The 30-year-old Rotathrough an interpreter, start curta a difficult task, but on 04. "That ever is in front of me will knockout. We need a title tina, and that's why I'm

Roldan would be the the since 1970.



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