

# Sports

## Draft could be new beginning for defeat-weary Cowboy fans

It's only appropriate that my last sports column of the semester (I'm just as excited as you are) is about the Dallas Cowboys.



**Curtis L. Culberson**  
Sports viewpoint

Those controversial athletes who sport blue and silver have recently taken on an either-or-you-love'em-or-you-hate'em quality similar to J.R. Ewing, the fictional quarterback of Big "D's" business world.

And like lovable/hateable J.R., the Cowboys don't rule with the iron hand they used to. In fact, they are ruled most of the time. Without that dynastic power, both Mr. Ewing and friends and Tom Landry and company are starting to leave many Texans disinterested.

Most readers would probably say one of the following things about the Pokes:

- I love the Cowboys — I was practically raised on them. Win or lose they will always be my favorite sports team. Give me Dallas or give me a Schlitz!

- I used to like the Cowboys, you know back when they had Roger Staubach. But now the Poke quarterbacks are weak, Tony Dorsett has slowed down because he dropped a mirror on his toe, the All-Pro defense is now the Old-Pro defense and Tom Landry gets more senile with every game.

- Ha Ha Ha, I hate the Cowboys, always have. I love to watch them lose. I bet against them every game and those arrogant \*&%%\* always manage to make me money. By the time those guys get good enough to win the Super Bowl again, professional football will be played with little bleeping blips on a video screen.

- The Dallas Cowboys? They have great cheerleaders.

- Dallas is a good team, they might even beat the Lakers.

If you fit into the last category I suggest you start over before going any further.

I fit into the Cowboys or bad beer category and happily end my stint as a *Battalion* sports columnist with some good/bad news about the Pokes, depending upon what category you fit into.

As I said before, the 1988-89 National Football League season starts with the draft. And the Cowboys came out with their heads far above the water in the season's first competition.

Irvin, a 6-foot-2, 190-pound wide receiver may be the Cowboys' best No. 1 draft pick of the 80s. He is fast enough to be a deep threat and big enough to downfield block for Herschel Walker. And from early indications he isn't going to prove to be a contract headache like last year's first rounder Danny Noonan.

Unlike the days of old, Landry didn't seem to be preoccupied with filling a position or reaching

for a long shot. Norton, a UCLA linebacker, was simply the best athlete available.

Some might argue the Cowboys don't need help at linebacker; I would argue they need help everywhere. Besides, if he doesn't work out at the linebacker spot he could always spar with Ed "Too Tall" Jones in practice. Norton will definitely make an aging defense tougher.

Irvin also will bring back some personality back to the Cowboys. He's called a hot dog — I call him a winner. He was a big part of the University of Miami national championship team. It's long past due that a Cowboy stuck the ball in a defender's face while prancing into the end zone or slapped a high five with a hysterical fan.

The Cowboys may not win Super Bowl XXIII but I'd say they're on their way back.

Oh, for those of you who still think the Cowboys play basketball, your right. Catch them in action against selected Aggie athletes in G. Rollie White Saturday.

## Irvin should help Cowboys' depleted wide receiver corps

IRVING (AP) — Tex Schramm looked like a man who had just hit a Las Vegas jackpot.

His Dallas Cowboys had been lucky enough to compensate for one of the worst pieces of bad luck in their history.

The broken leg suffered by wide receiver Mike Sherrard, their 1986 first-round pick, in training camp last summer caused Coach Tom Landry to junk some of his offensive plans.

Then Sherrard re-broke the leg again last month while jogging in California.

On Sunday, the Cowboys sweated out Mike Irvin, a fast, tall, extremely competitive wide receiver for Miami, the nation's collegiate national champions.

They got him as the 11th pick of the first round of the NFL draft and club president Schramm said, "We're delighted beyond words."

"We were lucky and I hope it signals a turnaround in our fortunes," said Schramm. "We got a player of the same quality as Sherrard and last year's pick, Danny Noonan."

"This should accelerate our return to the living."

The Cowboys have missed the NFL playoffs for two consecutive years.

Irvin has the size and speed to get away from bump-and-run coverage. He has what the experts call "separation speed," or the ability to put distance between himself and a defender while the ball is in the air.

He is 6-foot-2, and runs a legitimate 4.5 in the 40. Irvin also isn't shy about going over the middle.

Irvin will command double-coverage respect which should keep teams from ganging up on running back Herschel Walker by jamming the line of scrimmage.

"It should help our running game considerably," said Landry. "Irvin should be good enough to force the defense to pay attention and get off Herschel."

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Irvin's main drawback, that of a hot dog image, could work in Dallas' favor.

"Mike is an exciting player," said Gil Brandt, director of player personnel. "He'll excite the fans and he will excite the other players and he will excite our organization."

Irvin said all the correct things when questioned by the Dallas media.

He said he liked playing for a team with a star on the helmet. That's what he wants to be, a star.

"I'm a hard worker and I'm not spoiled," said the 15th of 17 children. "I have a lot of discipline in my life. I grew up in a family where if dinner was six you got there at 5:45."

"If you missed the time for dinner you had to wait until 7 o'clock the next morning."

Dallas' second draft pick is interesting, Ken Norton Jr., son of a former heavyweight champion.

Norton Jr. played inside linebacker for UCLA.

Landry likes his speed and will try him on the outside.

Dallas doesn't have to worry about him going into boxing.

"I don't like getting my head beat up on," Norton said.

And by drafting offensive linemen Dave Widell of Boston College and Mark Hutson of Oklahoma, Landry sent a message to 360-pound Nate Newton: Lose some weight, Nate.

"It might alert him," Landry said.

Draft expert Mel Kiper called Widell "one of the big steals" in the NFL draft.

"Widell has great size and mobility," Kiper said. "He's a tremendous worker and competitor."

The Cowboys needed competitors and they got some.

## Four Aggies go in annual pro football draft

From Staff and Wire Reports

NFL coaches continued to pick sparingly from Southwest Conference players Monday as the 1988 draft moved into the 11th round.

A total of 13 SWC players had been selected to play on NFL teams by late Monday afternoon.

For only the third time in SWC history, there was no SWC player taken in the first round of the draft.

The only other years in which no SWC player was taken in the first round was 1971 and 1974.

Four Texas A&M players were

drafted in all — running back Keith Woodside, tackle Louis Cheek and safeties Kip Corrington and Chet Brooks.

Woodside was taken by Green Bay in Sunday's third round, Cheek went in the eighth to the Miami Dolphins, Corrington the ninth to the Detroit Lions, and Brooks in the 11th to the San Francisco 49ers.

Last year, all but one of the A&M players drafted made a team.

Like last year, former A&M quarterback Kevin Murray, who decided to forego his senior year of college in

favor of the pro draft, was passed over.

In all of Sunday's five rounds, the league contributed only three players to the draft — Texas Christian running back Tony Jeffery in the second round, Woodside in the third round, and Texas Tech defensive back Eric Everett in the fifth round.

In Monday's six rounds of picks, 10 more SWC players were added to the NFL ranks.

They include: Texas offensive guard Paul Jetton, Texas Tech defensive back Lemuel Stinson, Texas

defensive back John Hagy, Cheek, Corrington and Brooks.

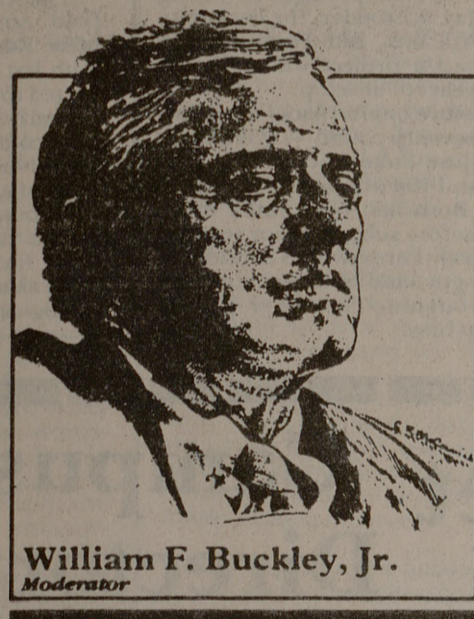
Others included TCU linebacker David Spradlin, TCU defensive back John Booty, Texas Tech nose tackle Artis Jackson, and Baylor offensive guard Joel Porter.

The Phoenix Cardinals drafted Jeffery and the Philadelphia Eagles selected Everett.

Jeffery led the SWC in rushing with 1,353 yards in 1987 despite being suspended for his final game because he signed a contract with an agent.

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