

## Gripes, peeves, and sundry quibbles

Sports columnists are known for attacking revered topics in their columns and stirring up a stink about whatever is going on in the sports world. Some readers may feel that a penchant for griping is our flaw and that it is impossible for us to ever write about sports in a positive manner.

While this may be partly true for some people, I don't write my columns to intentionally rile readers. At times it may seem all gripe, gripe, gripe. But sometimes there are events or people in sports that really inflame me. Not everything can be peachy and harmonious.

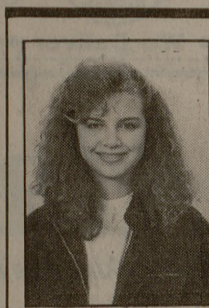
I'm sure there are sports and sports personalities that annoy you so much that the mere mention of them or perhaps the sight of them make you grit your teeth and shudder. Personally, there are some things about sports that hit my nerve in just the wrong spot, and I have been wondering if anyone else is supremely bugged by these same things.

So, on a positive note, to try and cleanse my conscience and in the tradition of *The Battalion* columnists, I bring you my Top 10 things I despise about sports.

As a disclaimer, my editor may not share my views on what to despise, but then, we try not to share anything.

**No.10: Critics Against Tom Landry or C.A.T.L.** These hacks steer clear of heaping abuse on anyone in the Cowboy organization besides Landry. They want to put America's coach out to pasture to graze away the rest of his years. This thought is abhorrent to rabid Dallas fans. I mean, we barely recovered from the trauma of Roger Staubach's retirement. How could we possibly get over losing Landry.

Win or lose, being a Cowboy fan is so much more comforting with Landry in the saddle — he's become a sort of security blanket.



**Cray Pixley**  
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**No.9: The NCAA.** Everyone agrees that the Texas A&M football program had a few skeletons in the closet, but bones are rattling all over the college campuses. The Aggies are taking the punishment well, but it has ruined some of the fun. What will become of us on New Year's Day? Arkansas in the Cotton Bowl? Inconceivable!

**No.8: The Weather.** The weather has thrown a chink in the armor of Aggie sports this season. First there was the big blowout with Hurricane Gilbert. Alabama tucked its tail and ran for cover, leaving the Aggies high and dry for football action. A&M gets a consolation bowl against the Crimson Tide this December unless the forecast is for sleet. Sleet could just rule out these two teams ever meeting. Oh, this notoriously dangerous Texas weather.

On another note, College Station had been having unseasonably warm weather, through dry, October. This was great until the A&M men's tennis team hosted a weekend tournament. The clouds rolled in and dropped rain all over the courts. Not even the dreaded Gilbert could manage

a weep over Kyle Field, but it rained on Omar Smith Tennis Center this particular weekend. I suppose basketball season will be threatened by a blizzard and then in spring Olsen Field will be swept away by a tornado.

The NCAA has no control over the weather — I think.

**No.7: The Dodgers.** Now I don't have any problem with the Dodgers, but everyone else seems to really despise these guys. They made my list because I had to listen to my fellow sports writers moan throughout the playoffs and the World Series. They're still moaning.

I think the moans stem from hurt pride. Most people felt L.A. had miniscule hopes of making the Series and no hope of becoming the champions. Wrong. They did, they are.

The New York Mets were supposed to win the jackpot. Sorry guys, the Mets popped out. But hey, I like the Dodgers.

**No.6: Mike Tyson and Robin Givens Marriage Saga.** Need I say more?

**No.5: CBS Sports starring Brent Musberger.** Yes, sports fans, I still get all worked up when I think of CBS' coverage of the Cotton Bowl game of A&M vs. Auburn. The more appropriate title would have been "The Bo Jackson Story" or "A Roasty, Toasty New Year's Day with Bo Jackson". Even when the Aggies were plowing over Auburn, all Musberger could say was how wonderful Jackson was, what a talented player — what a neat trophy he had.

I wish CBS would have shown more coverage of the Aggie talent on the field, not some prima donna off the field. Who can forget those loving long

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## Wood: 5 candidates still being considered

HOUSTON (AP) — Astros General Manager Bill Wood said five candidates are now being considered to replace former manager Hal Lanier, who was fired at the end of the season.

"For all practical purposes, I've completed the interviewing process," Wood said. "Making a determination of which of the five candidates we want for the job will probably be the hardest part."

Former New York Yankees Manager Lou Piniella, Texas Rangers batting instructor Art Howe, Astros first-base coach Matt Galante and New York Mets hitting instructor Bill Robinson are believed to be among the finalists.

The fifth major candidate could be former New York Yankees coach Jeff Tor-

borg, who said he was interviewed Sunday by Wood.

"We think we have outstanding candidates," Wood said, adding that he expects to meet with Astros owner John McMullen next weekend to discuss the finalists.

"It's going to be a tough decision because all of these candidates are going to be major league managers and probably relatively successful," he said.

Torborg, contacted by the Houston Post at his home in Mountainside, N.J., said he interviewed with Wood by telephone Sunday.

Torborg said he has also interviewed for managerial openings with the Seattle Mariners and Chicago White Sox.

## Losing puts Pokes in line for Aikman

IRVING (AP) — After going 0-for-October, the Dallas Cowboys have become legitimate contenders in the Troy Aikman sweepstakes.

The Cowboys, who are only a half-game behind the Kansas City Chiefs in the race to be the worst team in the NFL, play a tough schedule in the last seven games.

Dallas' remaining opponents have a record of 39-24.

This Sunday the Cowboys, who are having their worst season in 25 years, play at the New York Giants (6-3).

Then they meet, in order, the Minnesota Vikings (5-4), the Cincinnati Bengals (7-2), the Houston Oilers (6-3), the Cleveland Browns (6-3), the Washington Redskins (5-4) and the Philadelphia Eagles (4-5).

Sunday's 16-10 loss to Phoenix sent the Cowboys tumbling to a 2-7 ledger. Dallas has lost five games in row. The Cowboys haven't lost six consecutive games since the 1960 season.

Kansas City leads the chase for UCLA quarterback Aikman with a 1-7-1 record. Atlanta, Detroit, Green Bay, Pittsburgh, San Diego and Tampa Bay are at 2-7 with the Cowboys. The worst team gets the top pick in the NFL draft and it is expected to be the talented Aikman, rated the top quarterback in college.

"We are still hurting in the last two minutes of the game," said Dallas Coach Tom Landry. "Until we learn to get over that hump then we're not going to have much success."

Dallas has lost five games by 19 points. Three losses have come in the final two minutes.

Landry isn't planning an immediate switch to backup quarterback Kevin Sweeney although Steve Pelluer had one of his poorest games since becoming the starter.

"You have to keep working and climb out of it," Landry said. "I'm not thinking about changing quarterbacks."

Pelluer hit only nine of 31 passes for 132 yards, and blamed a sore shoulder and slick ball for his down performance.

Pelluer's interception late in the game cost the Cowboys; Landry said, "It really hurt us."

Pelluer said, "I don't think I've had as bad a day all year throwing the ball as I did in that game. I'm not going to give up. I'm going to keep firing the ball."

He said he hurt his shoulder in the first half and couldn't get loose although he warmed up constantly on the sidelines. "I just never could get into a good flow," Pelluer said.

Only 42,196 fans watched with 3,980 no-shows.

## Oilers clicked on all cylinders

HOUSTON (AP) — Houston's 41-17 victory over Washington Sunday night could be the most complete team victory the Oilers have produced, Coach Jerry Glanville said Monday.

"A lot of people played as well as they've ever played. It was fun to see," Glanville said. "I think the biggest victory is the playoff game but we weren't clicking on all cylinders then."

The Oilers were clicking in the sold-out Astrodome Sunday night from special teams to offense and defense.

"With special teams this week, the word special really means something," Glanville said. "The defense just kept on getting the turnovers."

The Oilers' victory over Seattle in the 1988 playoffs was more important, Glanville said, "but for offense, defense

and special teams, we were pretty hot last night."

Offensively, Warren Moon and Drew Hill connected for touchdown passes of 22, 33 and 11 yards.

Defensively, the Oilers attacked the huge Redskins line, forcing five fumbles, an interception and three quarterback sacks.

The Oilers turned four of Washington's miscues into 28 points.

"We came into this game wanting attack from the defensive line and it was very effective for us," Oiler defensive end Ray Childress said.

"Our defense shut them down all night, our special teams had some big hits and our offense really got the job done."

"We were successful in all three phases of the game."

Oiler special teams performer Eugene Seale knocked Washington's Derrick Shepard out of the game with a concussion on a kickoff return in the second quarter.

"Eugene Seale set the tempo on special teams with his big hit," Glanville said.

Shepard was knocked unconscious by Seale's blow.

"He thought he was going to get splattered and he ducked," Glanville said. "You wish he wouldn't do that."

Hill erased any doubt that he might be in a receiving slump. He dropped a touchdown pass in the end zone in the Oilers' previous game at Cincinnati, a 44-21 loss.

But against the Redskins, Hill caught nine passes and three touchdowns.

"I'll put it down as one of my good games but in this league, you're only as good as your last game," Hill said. "Warren made some great throws."

The Oilers, 6-3, now must prepare for another nationally televised showdown Monday night against the Cleveland Browns in the Astrodome.

Glanville hopes for another sellout crowd and plenty of noise for the Browns.

"A lot of America found out what the House of Pain is all about," Glanville said. "This should bury that story that we can't win a big game."

Washington, 5-4, is the first team with a winning record that the Oilers have beaten this season.

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