

Astros, Texas getting new look

Ryan may leave Houston

HOUSTON (AP) — Unless the Houston Astros increase their current \$1.15 million base offer to veteran pitcher Nolan Ryan, the all-time strikeout leader may already have played his last game in an Astros uniform.

At baseball's winter meeting in Atlanta, two teams interested in Ryan increased their previous offer and another entered the bidding war for the 41-year-old free-agent.

The Texas Rangers and California Angels, both of whom had significantly higher bids than the Astros already on the table, increased their offers Monday.

Texas reportedly offered Ryan a two-year contract worth \$1.4 million for next season and \$1.6 million for 1990. The Rangers would have the option of buying out Ryan's contract for 1990 for \$400,000.

The Angels bumped their offer to a reported guaranteed \$1.8 million for one season.

In effect, the Angels and Rangers are both offering Ryan a minimum of \$1.8 million for one season. If the Rangers sign Ryan and elect to bring him back for 1990, their package will be worth \$3 million.

In addition, San Francisco confirmed it made a two-year offer to Ryan over the weekend. Reportedly,

the Giants offered Ryan \$1.5 million for 1989 and \$1.6 million for 1990 with a \$300,000 buyout clause for the 1990 season. Giants' General Manager Al Rosen, the former Astros' general manager, said he thinks the Giants have an excellent chance of signing Ryan.

Astros General Manager Bill Wood repeated Monday the club's intention of not offering Ryan more than \$1.15 million in base salary and \$200,000 in incentives.

The Astros have informed Ryan they will not offer him salary arbitration. If Ryan doesn't sign with Houston before midnight Wednesday, they will lose the right to negotiate with him until May 1.

"It sounds like I did better in Atlanta than I did in Alvin today," said Ryan, who met with officials from an unidentified club believed to be the New York Yankees. "I think there's a possibility something may be done in the next couple of days."

Moss said he expected Ryan to make his choice from among three teams — California, Texas and San Francisco.

Monday's developments involving Ryan left Wood with little optimism of re-signing a local favorite.

"I would say hope is certainly fading," Wood said.

Wheelin', Dealin' Rangers deal for Cleveland's Franco

ATLANTA (AP) — The Texas Rangers remained the most active organization at the Major League Baseball winter meetings Tuesday as they traded away three more players and made a decision regarding the sale of the team.

The Cleveland Indians traded second baseman Julio Franco, a .303 hitter last season, to Texas in a four-player deal.

Cleveland was to receive first baseman Pete O'Brien, outfielder Oddibe McDowell and second baseman Jerry Browne.

Franco, 27, hit 10 homers and drove in 54 runs last season. He also stole 25 bases.

O'Brien has been one of the most consistent first basemen in the American League for several seasons. He batted .272 with 16 home runs and 71 RBI and will fill a position where the Indians have long been weak.

McDowell hit .247 with six homers and 37 RBI. He had hit 50 home runs in the previous three seasons.

Browne batted .229 in a utility role.

The Rangers had acquired Rafael Palmeiro, a first baseman-outfielder, from the Cubs on Monday. That move made O'Brien and McDowell expendable.

AL owners also decided Tuesday to wait until late January to make a decision on Edward Gaylor's bid to purchase the Texas Rangers.

American League president Bobby Brown said the bid to buy the team from Eddie Chiles will be discussed at a site to be determined.

"I can't predict what might happen," Brown said. "At that time we will consider the transfer of the ownership of the Rangers."

Gaylor, who lives in Oklahoma City, has extensive television interests, which some of the other owners have found objectionable because of the possibility he might telecast Rangers' games into other markets.

High-scoring Aggs tangle with HBU

By Doug Walker
Sports Editor

The Texas A&M men's basketball team hopes to keep the home cooking going tonight against the Huskies of Houston Baptist University at G. Rollie White Coliseum.

The Aggies, 4-1, hope to continue a recent trend of success at home.

A&M has won 29 of its last 36 home games. The Aggies have posted a home record of 280-29 since they began playing there in the 1954-55 season.

A&M has shown vast improvement offensively over last year in the early going. The Aggies are averaging 84.2 points per game and have connected on 57.8 percent of their shots from the field in the first five games.

Power forward Donald Thompson leads the Aggies in scoring and rebounding averaging 19.4 points and 8.2 rebounds per game.

Junior guard Tony Milton, a junior-college transfer, supports Thompson offensively averaging 16.2 points per outing. He also leads the team in assists with 31.

Another juco transfer, guard David Williams, has also been an effective scorer.

Williams averages 15.2 points and six rebounds per game. The 6-foot-6 guard is the big guard in the Aggies' three-guard offense.

HBU, 1-4, is led by junior guard Reggie Gibbs, who averages 16.8 points per game, and sophomore center Alvaro Teheran.

Teheran stands 7-foot-1 and is averaging just under 11 points per game and pulls down 5.4 rebounds per game.

"They have a young big man inside (Teheran) and he'll continue to get better," A&M Head Coach Shelby Metcalf said.

"We'll have to do a good job on him at both ends of the floor."

Metcalf isn't looking past the Huskies, in spite of their record.

"Houston Baptist has lost some close games early this season," Metcalf said. "A couple of breaks here and there and they could be 4-1 instead of 1-4."

The Huskies opened the year with three consecutive close losses at home. Texas Wesleyan (71-67), Stetson (77-71) and McNeese State (60-56) spoiled the Huskies' start.

A&M has apparently managed to settle on a solid starting five despite the influx of seven junior-college transfers, three of whom are starters. Milton and Williams have settled in at two of the guard slots while junior Darren Rhea has become the starter at a forward position opposite Thompson.

The 6-foot-10 Rhea leads the team in three-point shots hitting seven of nine. Tipoff is scheduled for 7:30 p.m.

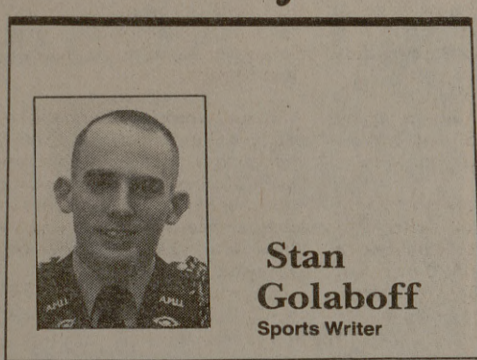
Calling all Cowboys' fans: Show this Bear fan your stuff

Oh my! How the times have changed. The Dallas Cowboys lost again on Sunday. The Cowboys are enduring their worst season since their inception. Dallas' last win was against Atlanta back in September.

If you had told me at the beginning of the year that Dallas would be 2-12, two weeks before the playoffs, I would have called the nut farm to see if you had escaped recently. I didn't think Dallas was a playoff team, but I thought they would win more than two games by now.

If you took a survey today, nine out of ten people would tell you that Dallas stinks. I agree, but there is a group that is worse than Dallas.

As the self-appointed president of the Dallas Cowboys' Haters Club at Texas A&M, I feel it is my job to point this group out. They are the Cowboys' fans.



Stan Golaboff
Sports Writer

That's right. The so-called fans of Dallas are in hiding right now. You can recognize them because they are the ones you see on Mondays grumbling about false start

penalties, fourth-quarter interceptions, and the newest defeat saving penalty, tripping on field goal attempts.

When I first moved to Texas in 1977, I couldn't go more than three feet without seeing a Dallas Cowboys logo or fan telling me how great Dallas was. Everyone loved the Cowboys. They were the best. If they lost, it was because of the refs or the other team cheating. They were "America's Team."

It was this attitude that made me begin to hate the Cowboys. Oh, I would root for them whenever they played the AFC in the Super Bowl (I hate the AFC). The main reason I started to hate Dallas was because my favorite team, the Chicago Bears, never beat them and always had to come to Texas to play them. (That is until 1985, when the Bears beat the Cowboys 44-0 in Texas Stadium.)

I bring up the Bears because Cowboy fans, if there are any still out there, should take a look at Bear fans and follow their example on how to support a losing team.

I started rooting for the Bears in 1975, when a rookie running back, wearing number 34, was starting his record-setting career. Walter Payton was the only thing that the Bears had back in the seventies. There was no "Roger the Doger" at quarterback. Bear fans had to watch the likes of Vince Evans throw interception after interception. There was no "miracle catches" to win close games, just missed field goals and dropped passes.

Bear fans watched each year hoping to see a winner only to see the Bears go 4-10 or 6-10. (In 1975 they still played 14 game seasons.) If it was a good year they would go 8-8.

Dallas, on the other hand, was a shoe-in

for the playoffs and a Super Bowl contender almost every year.

Bear fans learned to love their team anyway. We never wore paper bags over our heads. The media never openly asked for the head coach to be fired. We wore our Bears' paraphernalia with pride.

Dallas fans do all the above, except the wearing of Cowboy paraphernalia. A sign shown on national television sums up how low Cowboy fans are. It read "Hi Mom, send money and Troy."

No Bear fan would ever hang a sign like that in Soldier Field. Maybe Cowboy fans should clean up their act and take a few lessons from Bear fans.

After Sunday's game, Bear fans everywhere will be chanting: "Bring on Minnesota," while Dallas fans will start to chant: "Bring on the draft."

Oh, how the times have changed.

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