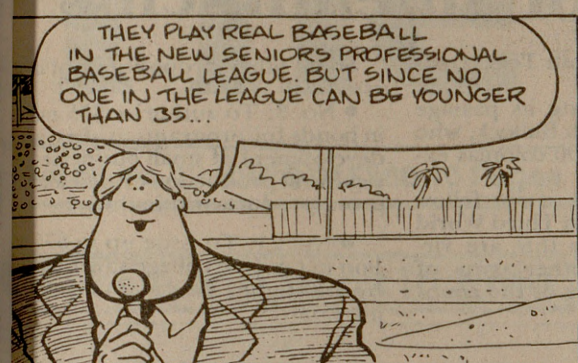


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by Jeff Millar & Bill Hinds



Montana looks sharp in win

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Joe Montana returned sharper than ever from an injury layoff, throwing for three touchdowns and running for another as the San Francisco 49ers rolled over New Orleans 31-13 Monday night to pile up a three-game lead in the NFC West.

Montana found a familiar target, fleet Jerry Rice, for two TDs and John Taylor for a third. Montana raced down right end for the 3-yard clincher in the fourth period.

Montana had played only one half in the previous three games, not at all since being carried off the field on a stretcher in the second quarter of an Oct. 22 victory over New England at Stanford with a sprained left knee. But the NFL's top-rated quarterback quickly dissembled any notion he might be rusty or ailing by going 16-for-19 for 223 yards and three touchdowns in a brilliant first half, finishing 22-for-31 for 302 yards.

San Francisco, 6-0 on the road but winless at Candlestick Park in its only other game there this season, started fast with impressive touchdown drives of 78 and 15 yards the first two times it had the ball.

Rice had the first two scores, catching Montana's short pass over the middle on the 22 and slipping three

tackles en route to the end zone.

The Saints tied it late in the first period on Dalton Hilliard's 1-yard burst over the middle. Then San Francisco took charge for good with 10:31 left in the half when Montana connected on all seven of his throws, punctuating the drive with a 14-yard bullet to Rice at the 2 and then a short flip to his favorite receiver on the right side for a 2-yard score.

Morton Andersen's first of two field goals, a 39-yarder, cut it to 14-10. But Montana directed an incisive drive in the final two minutes of the half, taking the team 85 yards in six plays. On a first down from the New Orleans 45, Taylor took his pass over the middle, broke two tackles and dragged safety Dave Waymer the final four yards, stretching his right hand with the ball into the end zone to make it 21-10.

Andersen and Mike Cofer traded field goals and then Montana capped it with 6:35 left in the game by racing around defensive end for a touchdown to make it 31-13.

Saints' quarterback Bobby Hebert threw two second-half interceptions. He was 20 for 33 for 183 yards.

Cowboys attain huge win for organization

IRVING (AP) — Jimmy Johnson's deal is finally over. He's the proud owner of a Pete Rozelle autographed NFL game ball.

The rookie coach of the Dallas Cowboys had to wait until the ninth week of the season to get his first victory, a 13-3 upset of the Washington Redskins on Sunday night.

Quarterback Steve Walsh and defensive back Bill Bates gave a grateful Johnson the game ball after the 4-point underdog Cowboys had humbled the Redskins on national television.

Johnson in turn gave the team Monday off.

"It's been a hard, frustrating year and there will still be some rocky days ahead but the future of the team is bright," Johnson said. "It's good for the team to have some success because they've worked so hard. Now, we can get about our business."

Johnson said the key to the victory was just what he had been preaching, no turnovers and eliminate mistakes.

"I've never coached a game where the team didn't have a penalty that was accepted against us, and, of course, we never turned the ball over," Johnson said. "We never did that when at Miami."

Johnson said the victory was more a relief than the jubilation he felt when he won the national title at the University of Miami.

Apology due for racial slur

HOUSTON (AP) — Houston Oilers defensive end Sean Jones can expect an apology for a racial remark directed at him by Detroit lineman Eric Andolsek, Lions coach Wayne Fontes said Monday.

"In the fourth quarter, he called me a nigger," Jones said. "He said 'Come on you...nigger.' I've been called everything in the book since I've been playing football, but nobody's ever called me that."

Andolsek acknowledged that he used the term but said he didn't mean it in a racial way.

"Yeah, I called him that, but it's not a racial remark," he said. "You get upset out there, and words come out of your mouth you don't really mean to say."

It didn't matter to Fontes how Andolsek meant his remark.

"I talked to Eric and he will apologize to Sean Jones and he will apologize to our entire football team," Fontes said. "I know Eric and he's not that kind of person. I don't think this will hurt this team."

Fontes said he also would personally call Jones to "straighten it out. There's no place for that in the NFL."

Jones declined to talk further about the incident on Monday.

"I said everything I wanted to say yesterday and I'm not going to spend the rest of the season talking about it," Jones said.

Tech intending to stay ranked

LUBBOCK (AP) — Their tuxedos are on, the music has started and the Texas Tech football team isn't about to sit this one out.

Tech climbed into the national rankings for the first time in 12 years by beating the Texas Longhorns on Saturday in Austin. The Red Raiders are ranked 23rd going into a home game Saturday against Texas Christian, and Coach Spike Dykes said Monday he wants to stay in the Top 25 for a while.

"We don't need to get kicked out of the big black-tie ball the first chance we get to go," he said. "We need to dance a little bit."

The last time the Red Raiders wore their black ties, they were ranked 16th in the Nov. 14, 1977, poll. They lost that week to Houston, dropped out of the rankings and didn't reappear until this week.

Tech (6-2 overall and 3-2 in the Southwest Conference) beat their third ranked opponent this season by defeating 22nd-ranked Texas and knocking the Longhorns from

the Top 25. Tech also beat Arizona and Texas A&M.

To hear Dykes tell it, the Red Raiders could be in danger of defeating a fourth Top 25 team — themselves — if they savor the 24-17 victory over the Longhorns too long and fail to take TCU seriously.

"TCU got beat 55-10 last week (against Houston) and you're going to say, 'You say they're good?'" Dykes said. "I say they're good. They played Air Force three weeks ago, Air Force was ranked 15th in the nation, and they beat Air Force, 27-9. I'm talking about rare back and beat 'em."

"The big thing is going to be to convince people that TCU is for real, and that we've got to play our tail off to play them, to beat them. I think our players understand that. I hope they do. They'll hear it more than once, I promise you that."

Dykes did not want to speculate whether Tech will receive a bowl bid later this month. And he didn't want to talk about Southwest Conference

championship, which Tech conceivably could still win. Tech has thrown the Cotton Bowl race into turmoil by beating A&M and Texas.

"I think we better worry about TCU," Dykes said. "I don't know who to pull for on Saturdays. Boy, I was pulling for A&M to beat Houston, and they said, 'Well, you moron, that's not what you want.'"

Saturday's highlight for the Raiders was Jamie Gill's 65-yard touchdown pass to Anthony Manyweather on a third-and-26 with 4:26 remaining in the game. It put Tech ahead 21-17.

But Dykes said the defense kept the Red Raiders in the game. Linebacker Charles Rowe recorded 15 tackles, 12 solo. Cornerback Sammy Walker had six tackles and two second-half interceptions.

The coach stressed that Tech needs similar efforts on offense and defense against TCU to keep its ranking.

UT's Jones hurt, may miss UH game

AUSTIN (AP) — Going into Saturday's game with Houston, which has college football's most potent offense, the Texas Longhorns may be without their deep threat on offense and a couple of key defenders.

Texas coach David McWilliams said senior flanker Tony Jones is doubtful for this weekend's contest with No. 15-ranked Houston after spraining an ankle in Texas' 24-17 loss to Texas Tech.

Jones, who injured his left ankle just before halftime after stepping on a sideline marker, was on crutches Monday.

Although Johnny Walker has been quarterback Peter Gardere's main target this season, Jones is the Longhorns' long-distance scoring threat.

"Well, you really can't replace Tony," McWilliams told a news conference Monday. "That's not taking anything away from anybody else, but it's hard to replace his speed."

Jones has had some of his best games in the Astrodome, scene of the Texas-Houston game.

In 1987, when Texas lost to Houston 60-40, Jones caught five passes for 173 yards. A month later, in the Bluebonnet Bowl against Pittsburgh, Jones was named the game's most valuable player after making eight receptions for 242 yards and two touchdowns.

The Longhorns, 4-3 overall and 3-1 in conference, will be without reserve safety Bubba Jacques. The sophomore suffered a knee injury on the opening kickoff Saturday and will be lost for the year.

Starting defensive tackle Rocky Allen also is doubtful with an ankle sprain.

Junior safety Stanley Richards could return for the first time since spraining an ankle against Arkansas two weeks ago.

The Cougars, 6-2 and 3-2, have averaged 63 points a game in their last two victories over Texas, including a 66-15 mauling last season in Austin.



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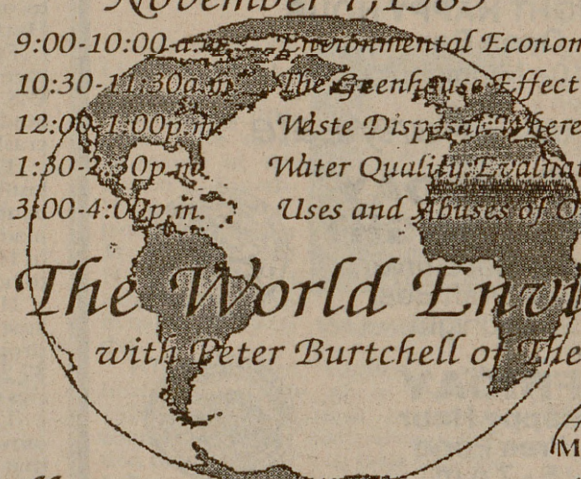
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