

'Too Small'

The Cowboys' Tony Tolbert needs a big weight gain to fill Ed Jones' shoes at defensive end

IRVING (AP) — He answers to the nickname of "Too Small," in part because Tony Tolbert is the heir apparent to Dallas Cowboys defensive left end Ed "Too Tall" Jones.

At 6-6 and 241 pounds, Tolbert is small by NFL standards. Not to mention collegiate standards, according to a recent survey conducted by the College Football Association that found the average weight of rah-rah-type linemen to be 253 pounds.

"I've always had a problem with weight," said Tolbert, a rookie who broke into the starting lineup in Jones' place at mid-season.

"I used to eat three times a day, snack in between and lift weights two hours a day. I was running every day, and that helped get me to about 245. As soon as I became active, I started losing weight. But I'm still young, and my metabolism rate is still high."

What that means is that Tolbert would like to add about 14 proportionate pounds next off-season, the better to stack up against the best defensive ends in the NFL.

Too Tall has anchored the Cowboys defense for 15 years at 6-9 and 270 pounds. Chris Doleman of the Minnesota Vikings — the top quarterback sacker among defensive ends in the National Football Conference with 11 — is 6-5 and 262. His counterpart in the American Football Conference — Leslie O'Neal of the San Diego Chargers with 10½ sacks — is 6-4 and 259.

Indeed, Freddie Joe Nunn of the Phoenix Cardinals rates as the "runt" of name players at the position. Nunn is 6-4 and 255, Tolbert's preferred weight, and 30 pounds lighter than Bruce Smith of the Buffalo Bills.

The notion of Tolbert beefing up is fine with Dave Wannstedt, the Cowboys defensive coordinator.

"He's got to add weight, but he should have said 'strength' with that," Wannstedt said. "And that will come with it. And that would make him that much better. I think he's got the instincts for it. I mean, you

can become stronger and faster and all that stuff. But unless you've got the instincts, you're kidding yourself. He has those."

Wannstedt said Tolbert, the team's fourth-round draft pick from UT-El Paso, already has exceeded expectations.

In his starts and in spot duty as Jones' replacement on pass-rushing downs, Tolbert, the youngest player on the team at 21, has become one of the most active members of the defense.

"I would like to get stronger in the upper body," Tolbert said, figuring that as the quickest way to enhance his sack potential. "Maybe I don't need to get up to 270 like the other

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— Tony Tolbert, Cowboy's Defensive End

guys, but I know I need to get stronger."

Tolbert said he weighed approximately 200 pounds as a freshman at UTEP. The Miners, he said, did not have a top-notch weight room or program installed until he was a junior.

"I'll see the guys lifting here, and how big they are," said Tolbert, who lifts weights three times a week at the Cowboys' Valley Ranch headquarters.

Line play often is a matter of leverage, Tolbert said.

"The NFL is not a game of who weighs the most," he said. "It's a game of leverage — who gets the better position. A light guy like myself may get out-muscled by a Joe Jacoby because of weight. But in a lot of situations, I have gone against

guys like that and done a good job."

However, Tolbert has not done it play after play for 16 regular-season games.

Defensive tackle Danny Noonan, an avid lifter from his days at the University of Nebraska, said 10 to 15 pounds could make a critical difference for Tolbert. And not at the expense of his speed and quickness.

"When your legs get stronger, you can move them faster," said Noonan. "As long as you keep stretching out, you're going to get faster. Back in the old days, the thing was if you lifted weights you're going to get musclebound and become slow. That's not true at all."

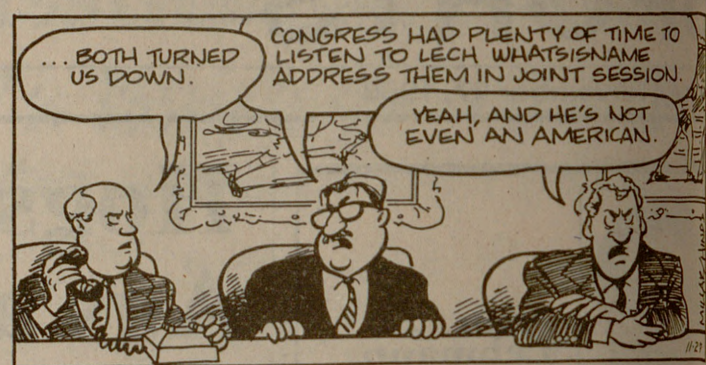
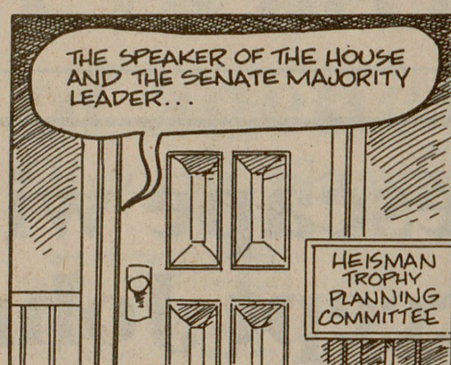
A bigger, quicker Tolbert could find himself inserted at right defensive end, Wannstedt said. Such a move could not be made until after this season and involve some kind of shuffle affecting Jeffcoat, Noonan and Tolbert.

"I think Tony's got enough quickness and pass-rushing skills," Wannstedt said, "that as he gains experience, he could be as good as any of them rushing from that right side. He plays as hard as any defensive player we've got. You talk about a guy chasing the ball, we've got films where he has run by two players getting to the ball. So, he's got the right attitude."

The right side generally is regarded as the premier pass-rushing position because it is blind side to the majority of NFL quarterbacks. And home to players like Dexter Manley of the Washington Redskins, who checks in at 6-3 and 257. Opposite Manley is Charles Mann, who tips at 6-6 and 270.

"I don't remember Dexter Manley or Charles Mann coming in their first years and totally dominating," said defensive tackle Dean Hamel, who spent four seasons with the Redskins before joining the Cowboys in a trade Aug. 29. "Tony looks a lot like Charles — smaller version. You put 15, 20 more pounds on him and he's going to be dominating the line of scrimmage."

TANK McNAMARA®



Curtis Strange bags \$265,000, Nicklaus \$90,000 in Skins Game

LA QUINTA, Calif. (AP) — Curtis Strange chipped in for a \$135,000 prize and capped golf's Skins Game with a \$70,000 putt on the final hole Sunday.

Strange, shut out of money-winnings in his first Skins Game appearance last year, emerged as the big winner this time, collecting \$265,000 from the total purse of \$450,000.

Jack Nicklaus won \$90,000 — \$35,000 of it on a routine, two-putt par-5 — in the 18-hole, two-day event at the PGA West Stadium course. Ray Floyd won \$60,000 and Lee Trevino avoided a shutout with a three-foot birdie putt on the 14th hole worth \$35,000.

"A lot more fun than it was last year," said Strange, who automatically qualified for next year's Skins Game.

Not only did he win the most money, Strange also was involved in most of the drama; the chip-in birdie, the last-hole putt and a sandy adventure on the 16th.

But the match, which revolves around money-winnings, was centered on the 13th.

It was there, with \$135,000 on the line, that he called his shot in a response to television commentator Vin Scully.

The two-time U.S. Open champion was in the fringe, about 35 feet from the cup, and backed away from his chip when he heard Scully's voice from a television tower.

"I hope he's saying it's an easy shot," Strange said at the time.

"It was a pretty easy shot, almost flat, but it's still one you have to make," he said later.

And make it he did, running the ball into the cup with a 9-iron from about 35 feet. Floyd had a 12-foot putt to tie Strange and halve the hole.

Trevino won the next hole, worth \$35,000, after a sand wedge shot from 95 yards nestled in only three feet from the flag. Floyd followed with a 4-iron approach that set up a winning, six-foot birdie putt on the next hole. That, too, was worth \$35,000.

Seniors welcome latest legend

PALM BEACH GARDENS, Fla. (AP) — PGA Seniors Tour officials bestowed a lavish welcome on golfing great Jack Nicklaus Tuesday as he prepared to join the increasingly popular circuit.

"Having people like Jack Nicklaus and Lee Trevino coming to the tour is a huge boost," Paul Bremer, general chairman of the 1990 PGA Seniors Championship, said. "It's like a great reunion."

Nicklaus, who will be 50 in January, announced plans to compete in at least a dozen tournaments next year on both the Seniors and PGA Tour. Trevino is eligible to join the

Tour next month when he becomes 50.

The first unofficial Seniors event for Nicklaus is scheduled to be the nationally televised Skins Game event in Hawaii a week after his birthday.

In April, Nicklaus plans to enter the Seniors' Tour event The Tradition at Desert Mountain in Scottsdale, Ariz. Later that month, he will play the PGA Seniors Championship at the PGA National Course in Palm Beach Gardens he recently redesigned.

He also plans to compete in the U.S. Open, British Open and PGA

Championship, which he has won five times.

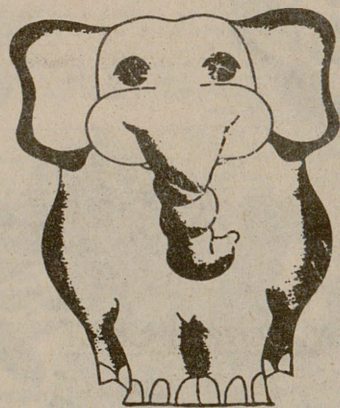
"I have set a goal of trying to win an event on each tour," said Nicklaus, whose last major PGA Tour victory was the Masters in 1986.

Nicklaus said he would remain on the regular PGA Tour as long as he remains competitive.

"It's not my desire now to play a full Seniors season," he said.

Nicklaus, who won the first of his 71 PGA Tour titles in 1962, earned \$28,845 this year to place 177th, his lowest ranking ever. He has total career earnings of more than \$5 million.

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