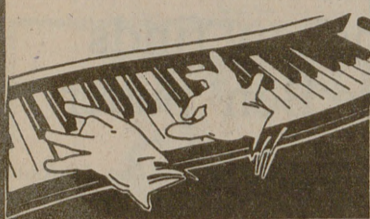


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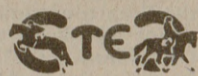
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Back from a disASTROus '89

Scott readying to lead Astros on opening day

KISSIMMEE, Fla. (AP) — Houston pitcher Mike Scott hasn't taken to tossing a football to help his delivery like his former teammate Nolan Ryan.

"Nolan sent me a picture of himself throwing a football and he told me the Dallas Cowboys were looking at him," Scott said.

"But the Cowboys have had their problems. They're probably looking at everybody."

Ryan, now starting his second season with the Texas Rangers, and Scott have their own methods for getting in shape to pitch.

Ryan was a pioneer in the use of weight lifting and extensive off-season training to keep in shape.

Scott has resisted the trend among some players who lift heavy weights.

Both pitchers will listen to new ideas but then make their own decision as to what's best for them.

"Everybody wants to come up with that new invention that's going to make everyone become a great baseball player," Scott said. "My rule is if it helps you, do it; if it doesn't, forget it."

Scott, who became the fourth 20-game winner in Astros history last season, would be the last to tell a player not to try something different.

Scott might be out of baseball if he hadn't made a change in 1985 when he mastered the split-fingered fastball that made him one of the dominating pitchers in baseball.

"I couldn't just keep going out there throwing the same pitch, something had to change so I went with a new pitch," Scott said.

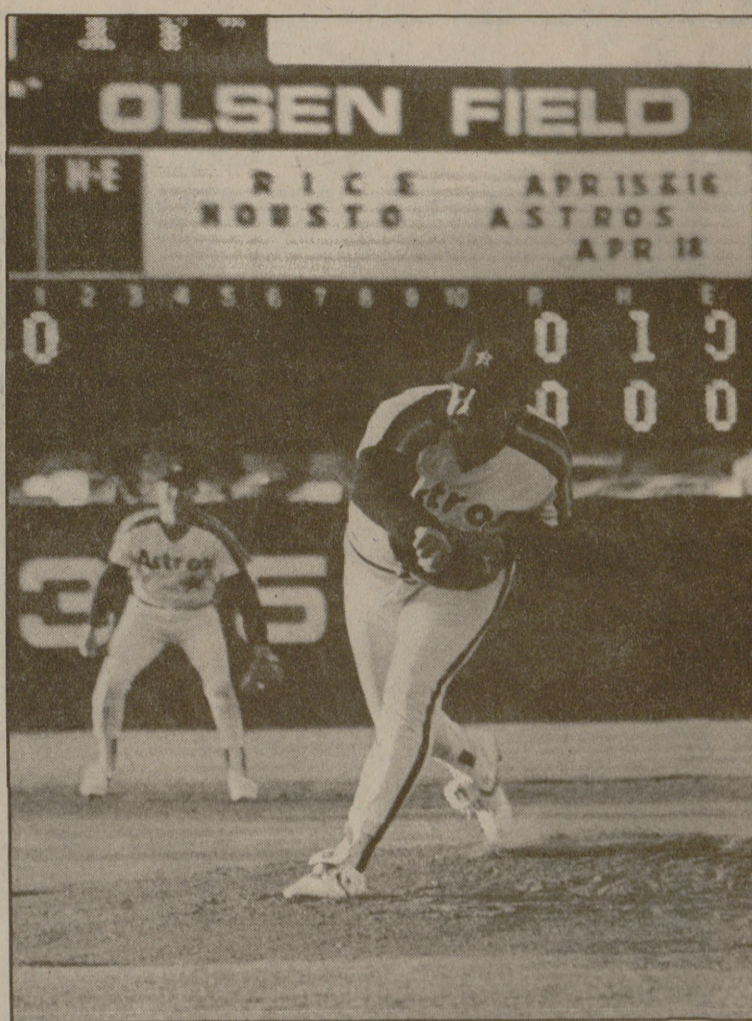
Scott also developed his own personalized training program and it involves a lot of stretching.

He's even incorporated a medicine ball into his routine. But he stops short of the heavy weight lifting trends that have increased in recent years in baseball training rooms.

"I don't think all the guys who look like Muscle Beach are always the best pitchers," Scott said. "I'm not saying the sloppy guys are always the best either."

"There's just no correlation to the strongest being the best."

Scott's 20 victories led the National League last season and he finished second in the Cy Young Award voting.



Battalion file photo by J. Janner

Charlie Kerfeld may be traded by the Houston Astros, but the club returns a strong nucleus of veteran pitching in 1990.

Astros crown Royals 3-2, improve to 6-5 in exhibition

KISSIMMEE, Fla. (AP) — Gerald Young stole third and scored on a wild pitch by Mark Davis with two out in the bottom of the ninth to lead the Houston Astros to a 3-2 exhibition victory over the Kansas City Royals.

After Young singled with one out, Carl Nichols reached on an infield hit to put runners at first and second.

Young then stole third on a strike

out by David Rhode and scored as Davis bounced a pitch in the dirt past catcher Bob Boone.

Kansas City first baseman Gerald Perry tied the game at 2-2 in the eighth with a solo homer off Mark Thurmond, 1-0, the eventual winner.

Davis, the 1989 Cy Young award winner, is 1-2 in exhibition play. The Astros are 6-5. The Royals are 5-6-1.

Club standing Anthony, hoping for more power

KISSIMMEE, Fla. (AP) — If there is a sputter and a cough in rookie Eric Anthony's major league takeoff this season, Houston general manager Bill Wood won't panic.

"He's going to struggle but it's his time," Wood said of the Astros opening day leftfielder. "My prediction was he'd have a good spring and then struggle when we get to Houston and those guys start throwing their money pitches."

Anthony has led the minor leagues in homers for the past two seasons and he offered a preview of his potential when he hit four homers in 61 at bats with the Astros last season.

It was enough to convince Wood and manager Art Howe to continue their injection of youth into the Astros lineup.

The Astros made a commitment to catcher Craig Biggio and third baseman Ken Caminiti last year and stood behind their decision. Now it's Anthony's turn.

"The ball club has to stand behind the players," Wood said. "There was criticism last year. Look at Biggio and Caminiti. They didn't set the world afire."

"But they had the talent and the mental approach to handle the criticism."

Biggio and Caminiti emerged with solid seasons and Anthony thinks he'll also make the transition.

"I've had three great minor league years and something had to be done sooner or later so this is my chance to do it," Anthony said.

Anthony has made a rapid ascent through the Astros' farm system after being signed as a 34th round draft in June 1986.

He was more noted in high school as a tailback on the football team and never played baseball in high school, although he played in summer leagues.

Anthony showed up at an Astros tryout camp in the Astrodome and although he was out of shape and rusty, his skills were impressive enough to earn him a contract.

He spent most of the 1989 season at Class AA Columbus where he hit 28 homers to lead the minor leagues and drove in 79 runs. He also struck out 127 times.

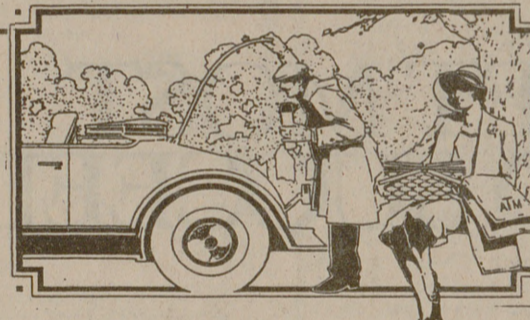
He had 11 hits, four of them home runs in 61 at-bats with the Astros in the final month last season.



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