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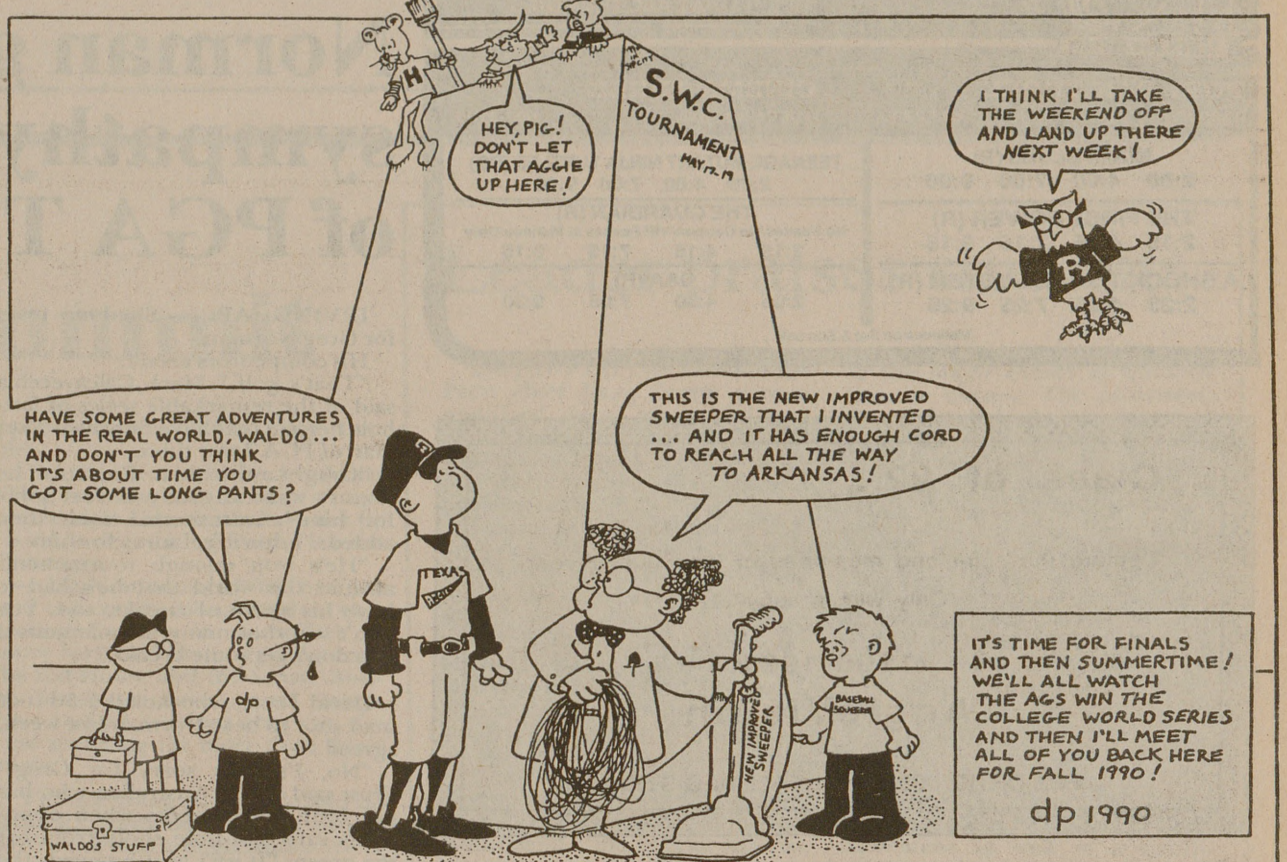
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Valenzuela working on comeback

LOS ANGELES (AP) — After a rapid rise and a fast fall, Fernando Valenzuela is working his way back to the top. Valenzuela, one of baseball's best pitchers before going into a three-year slump, pitched his second straight complete game Wednesday, scattering eight hits in the Dodgers 6-2 victory over the Pittsburgh Pirates. The left-hander, just off a four-hit, 5-0 victory over the Chicago Cubs, hadn't pitched consecutive complete games since September 1987. "He seemed to be in real good command of both sides of the plate and he changed speeds," Pirates outfielder Andy Van Slyke said. "Those are the three things you need to do to win, and he did those three." Valenzuela, whose career was threatened by a 1988 shoulder injury, doesn't throw as hard as he once did. But Dodgers pitching

coach Ron Perranoski said it doesn't matter. "I don't think velocity means a thing," Perranoski said. "John Tudor's pitching great for St. Louis with, what, a 76 mph fastball. "Fernando's arm is getting stronger. He's throwing in the mid-80s. You can throw the ball 84 mph and have nothing on it. He's throwing 84 with something on it. "These two back-to-back are his best games since before he got hurt. He was outstanding in both games." From 1981 through 1986, Valenzuela was 97-68 with 84 complete games. He fell to 14-14 with a 3.98 earned run average and 12 complete games in 1987; 5-8 with a 4.24 ERA and three complete games in 1988, and 10-13 with a 3.43 ERA and three complete games last season. Some thought Valenzuela was finished after he missed nearly half the '88 season with an injured pitching

shoulder. But he never lost faith. "I listen to me," he said. "The injury is in the past." Valenzuela, known for throwing a lot of pitches, needed just 113 to beat the Pirates and 119 in his shut-out of the Cubs. He's 2-2 with a 2.83 ERA this year. "He's pitching crafty. He's getting them out with his know-how," Dodgers manager Tom Lasorda said. "He doesn't have the velocity he once did." The 29-year-old Valenzuela said he feels stronger because he's throwing fewer pitches. "I'm trying to throw more strikes, throw a strike on the first pitch," Valenzuela said. Valenzuela said that pitching only three complete games and 196 2-3 innings last season is helping him now. "That's why I'm stronger this year," he said.

Dressendorfer suffering from hurt shoulder

AUSTIN (AP) — A preliminary examination of the junior All-America pitcher Kirk Dressendorfer's right shoulder indicates no tear to the rotator cuff, Texas Longhorns coach Cliff Gustafson said. The injury, however, will keep Dressendorfer out of this weekend's Southwest Conference series with Texas Christian. Dressendorfer experienced pain in his pitching arm in a series against Texas A&M on April 13, and had to come out in the first inning of a loss last week to Arkansas. "We are going with the original diagnosis of tendinitis," said baseball trainer Eddie Day. "We will have two more specialists look at the pictures, but right now there is no apparent tear." Dressendorfer is 11-3. Last year he was 18-2. Fifth-ranked Texas is one-half game behind Arkansas in the SWC. Gustafson said he was confident Dressendorfer would be able to pitch in time for the SWC tournament May 23.

UT expected to appeal Penders' suspension

DALLAS (AP) — Texas is expected to appeal the one-game suspension next season of basketball coach Tom Penders, who openly criticized Southwest Conference officiating last season. Texas plans to appeal the ruling by SWC Commissioner Fred Jacoby before the SWC Compliance Committee May 16 in Dallas. "We are appealing the commissioner's ruling, and it would be inappropriate to comment further until it is resolved," Texas athletic director DeLoss Dodds said in a statement. Under SWC regulations, the committee's decision is final. The suspension applies to the Longhorns' first SWC game next season against Texas A&M on Jan. 2 in Austin. If the ruling is upheld, Penders "cannot be present in the playing arena for the suspended game, but may conduct practice sessions," according to Jacoby's report, a copy of which was obtained by The Dallas Morning News. Penders and assistant coach Jamie Ciampaglio have been placed on probation for the entire season and further criticism of SWC officials could result in future suspensions. Jacoby informed Dodds of the ruling in a four-page report dated

April 9. It focused on actions of Penders and Ciampaglio, pertaining basically to two Texas losses, a March 5 regular-season game at Houston and a March 10 game against Houston at Reunion Arena. Jacoby's letter said Penders was in flagrant violation of the SWC Sportsmanlike Conduct Rule 21.02. Penders was cited for being "unduly critical of game officials" after the loss to Houston on March 10 when Penders "berated the officials" in a post-game news conference. Jacoby also cited Penders for "working the officials with verbal abuse and demonstrably giving hand signals and gestures from the bench area to 'show up or upstage' the officials in a negative manner." Penders received three technical fouls and was ejected from the game. Jacoby cited Penders' actions after the loss March 5 at Houston as reasons for his suspension: "Coach Penders, acting in an extremely belligerent manner using a combination of profanity and negative comments, began accusing Mr. (Mike) Tanco (a conference official) of cheating his team out of a win over Houston." The report said that Penders had to be "physically restrained" by University of Houston police.

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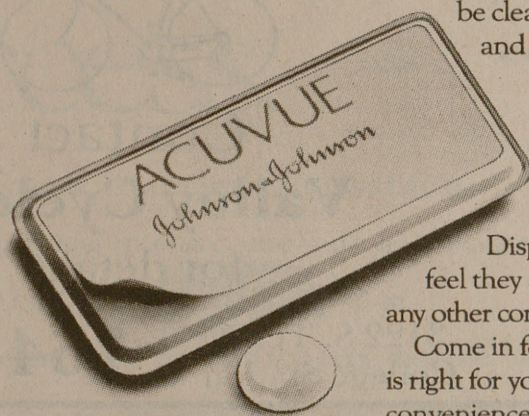
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