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# Baylor football player in critical condition, but improving slightly

WACO (AP) — Some vital organs of a Baylor University football player who collapsed during a workout are not functioning, but his condition is slightly improved, a school spokesman said Tuesday.

Reserve offensive lineman John Karkoska was in critical condition at Hillcrest Baptist Medical Center with liver and kidney failure, said Baylor sports information director Maxey Parrish.

Karkoska, who collapsed Thursday, had been in extremely critical condition after his admission to the hospital.

Parrish said Tuesday that Karkoska's liver is "not functioning at all, but the kidneys did function a little (Monday), but not to any great degree."

Calls to the hospital were referred to Baylor officials. "The team physicians have requested that we be the source," Parrish said.

A highly recruited lineman from Aldine two years ago, Karkoska finished a two-hour workout Thursday by running wind sprints called "gasers" with the rest of the squad, Baylor coach Grant Teaff said in a news conference Monday.

"One of the assistant coaches heard him say 'My bowels are about to burst,' and he went into the restroom," Teaff said. "When he came back he ran a lap around the field and that was when it happened."

Dr. R.V. Covington, team physician, said Karkoska's body temperature and heart rate were "extremely elevated."

Covington, an orthopedist, said he and the trainers treated the red-shirt freshman at the scene. Karkoska later was taken by ambulance to Hillcrest.

Teaff said Monday that Karkoska's illness might have been caused by some ailment existing before the workout.

"That's the crux of the whole problem," Parrish said Tuesday. "They're trying to find the underlying cause. Obviously, he collapsed at the end of the workout ... you could say the workout triggered the problem."

"But, whatever it was, it was pre-existing," Parrish said. However, he couldn't say how that had been determined.

He said various medical specialists have been examining Karkoska, asking his teammates, trainers, friends and relatives if he complained of any ailment before the workout. So far, nothing has turned up.

"It's got them all kind of baffled," Parrish said, adding that doctors don't believe dehydration was a factor. "They're looking for something on a very complex and deep level. We're not talking about simple cause."

"From a medical standpoint, nothing adds up right now."

Teaff, who had stayed at the hospital since Thursday night, returned to practice Monday.

"We need to try to have some form of normalcy or consistency in our preparation," he said. "That's what I've got to do this afternoon: get out there and get things straightened out."


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# Johnson says Highsmith will start against 'Skins

IRVING (AP) — Fullback Alonzo Highsmith, who was obtained in a trade from the Houston Oilers but has yet to play a down for the Dallas Cowboys, will get his chance on Sunday against the Washington Redskins, coach Jimmy Johnson said on Tuesday.

Highsmith, who started all 16 games for the Oilers, was dismayed he didn't get into Sunday's game, a 28-7 loss to the New York Giants.

Johnson tried to put aside rumors that Highsmith had knee problems.

"We're disappointed Alonzo didn't get a lot of action," Johnson said. "We anticipated playing him a lot more against the Giants. We'll make sure Alonzo gets into the lineup about half the time against the Redskins."

"He's healthy but he doesn't know the entire offense. He hasn't run a pass route in three years. He's obviously rusty."

Highsmith and quarterback Troy Aikman were unhappy with Johnson after the loss.

"I thought I was going to get to play and I was ready," Highsmith said.

Aikman was mad because Johnson yanked him out of the game in the second half after Lawrence Taylor returned an interception 11 yards for a touchdown. Steve Walsh came in and threw an interception.

"I didn't feel like a change was in order," Aikman said after the game. "I was throwing the ball well."

Johnson reiterated on Tuesday that Aikman was the Cowboys quarterback of the future.

"Troy is the key guy," Johnson said. "Troy and I are fine. More was made out of him coming out of the game than should have been. The media played it up. I thought he did a good job. He could have had an outstanding game if the receivers held onto the ball."

Aikman will start against the Redskins in RFK Stadium on Sunday.

Johnson said he understood why Highsmith and Aikman were complaining.

"I'd be disappointed if a player said he was happy not playing," Johnson said. "If we start winning, we'll all be one big happy family."

Johnson also said rookie wide receiver Alexander Wright, who returned a kickoff 90 yards for a touchdown against the Giants, would see more action.

"It's in our best interest to give players like Wright some experience," Johnson said. "We will have to pay our dues while we get some of our young players experience and getting on the same page."

Johnson said "I think Wright will be a bigtime receiver. The longer we hold him out the longer it will take for us to be a good football team."

The Cowboys trip to Washington last year brought fond memories, their only victory of the season.

Asked about it, Johnson said "my memory doesn't work that far back. I only remember last Sunday."

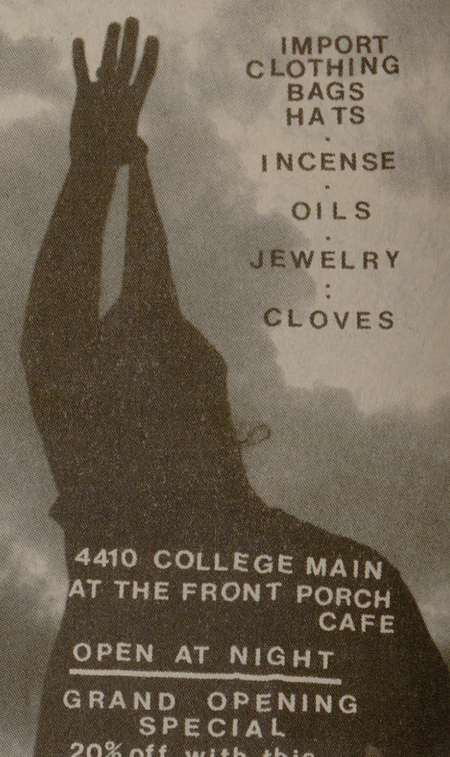
The oddsmakers didn't remember either. The Cowboys are 14-point underdogs.

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