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Lewis working on unbreakable rushing record

Analysis
 By DENNE H. FREEMAN
 of The Associated Press

COLLEGE STATION (AP)—Records may be made to be broken, but Darren Lewis may be working on an untouchable down here at Kyle Field.

Lewis has become the Southwest Conference's career leading rusher, although the feat went basically unnoticed with Horned Frog Fever burning up the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex. David Klingler destroying Arkansas with a seven-touch-down bombing run at the Astrodome and the Longhorns' rejuvenation in Austin.

With four games left, Lewis has passed Eric Dickerson, Earl Campbell and James Gray, all three pretty fair running backs, with 4,453 career yards. Dickerson got 4,450 yards at Southern Methodist, Campbell had 4,443 yards at Texas, and Gray had 4,066 yards at Texas Tech.

Lewis, who has averaged 141.5 yards per game this year, stands a good chance of passing 5,000 yards.

It's going to take quite a career to wrest the SWC all-time rushing crown from Lewis, who has averaged 1,250 yards for each of his four seasons.

Lewis has 24 career 100 yard games. That's durability. You have to be built like a tank, which the 6-foot, 220-pound Lewis is, thus his nickname "Tank."

His 806 carries going to Saturday's game against Southern Methodist also is a conference record. That's a lot of attempts with people trying to wrench your head from

Can't touch this



PHILAN M. EBENHACK/The Battalion
 Texas A&M tailback Darren Lewis could pass 5,000 career yards this season. The yards could vault his title as the Southwest Conference's all-time leading rusher out of the reach of others.

your body.
 Lewis has been basically injury free. He's lost some time with an ankle injury after he came in overweight his junior year, which cer-

tainly didn't endear himself to the coaches or the All-America voters.
 Lewis went from first team All-America his sophomore year to unnoticed last season. Still, he rushed

for a respectable 961 yards. He's definitely been on a mission this season, rushing for more than 100 yards in seven of eight games. Lewis missed three quarters of the Louisiana State game after he was ejected for punching a tackler who had hit him with a fist.

Lewis is well on his way to surpassing his best season at A&M when he compiled 1,181 yards.

"He's never looked better," says A&M coach R.C. Slocum. "He's gotten his weight down and he's so much quicker. It's like his sophomore season. He bounces off tacklers and makes a lot of extra yardage. He's got such thick legs he's a load to tackle."

Even though Lewis has speed, durability and desire, the one big thing he has going for him in retaining the SWC career rushing mark is that he was at A&M all four years.

Recall, he had 714 yards rushing his freshman season. Great running backs don't stay college four years anymore. The Herschel Walkers and the Emmitt Smiths hit the gold bullion road after their junior seasons.

Career rushing records are nice bank accounts with six figures and a nice interest rate.

Also, more colleges are going the professional passing game, cutting down the rush opportunities.

Lewis thought about turning professional after his junior year, but mediocre junior season made him have second thoughts.

For Lewis, it may work out for the best.

The professional scouts are taking notice of his hard working habit, even in practice. He's headed toward a first round draft selection.

But don't look for anyone to call him for a long time. His 5,000 yards won't be as incredible as Nick Ryan's 5,000 strikeouts, but it's likely to ever be touched in the modern day world of college football and professional training ground.

Healthy Olajuwon key for Rockets' win

HOUSTON (AP) — Whatever other improvements the Houston Rockets made in the preseason, their biggest asset going into tonight's opener is a healthy Akeem Olajuwon.

Olajuwon hobbled into last season after missing five months of off-season conditioning because of a blood clot in his leg.

The Rockets will have no such handicap when they open the season at Portland.

Olajuwon has had an outstanding preseason that has Coach Don Chaney predicting a super season for his center.

"That's the way I'm looking at it too," Olajuwon said. "I'm starting my seventh year in the NBA, so the experience factor is there. Physically, I feel great and I'm playing with a good team. It should be a fun year."

Olajuwon averaged more than 25 points and 12 rebounds during the preseason, playing 10 minutes less per game than he will in the regular

season.
 "We had some adversity in this training camp, with guys like Buck Johnson, Vernon Maxwell and Sleepy Floyd not being available all the time," Chaney said. "But those things may be offset when you consider how much farther along Akeem is over this time last year. There's no comparison."

Maxwell sat out the preseason until the final game in a contract dispute and Floyd and Johnson were slowed by injuries.

Olajuwon criticized the organization last season for its handling of personnel and hinted he might request a trade. He's starting this season fresh with no complaints.

"The people on this team can play against anybody," Olajuwon said. Maxwell says he can contribute immediately, despite not being in top condition.

"I'm not in tip-top shape, but I feel I'm in good shape," Maxwell said. "Whenever Don wants to put me in there, I'll give it all I've got. There's no problem."

The addition of guard Kenny Smith in the off-season also has been a positive factor.

After opening the season at Portland Friday and Seattle on Saturday, the Rockets will play five of their next six games in the Summit. They host Denver in the home opener on Tuesday.

"Physically, I feel great and I'm playing with a good team. It should be a fun year."
 — Akeem Olajuwon, Houston Rocket

12th Man Scoreboard

Zisette falls in Volvo All-American

Matt Zisette, of the Texas A&M men's tennis team, fell to Louisiana State's Janni Holtari, 6-1, 6-2, in the qualifying rounds of the Volvo All-American Championships.

"He played an exceptional match," Zisette said. "I just couldn't seem to get started today."

"He's a very consistent player," Zisette said about LSU's Holtari, "and never gives you any easy points."

Held in Athens, Ga., the Volvo All-American is considered the most prestigious college tournament of the fall season and is the first leg of the ITCA's Collegiate Grand Slam.

Tech defeats Ag spikers

The Lady Aggie volleyball team dropped a close match to the No. 17 Texas Tech Red Raiders in Lubbock, 15-9, 6-15, 15-4, 15-7.

The loss makes Texas A&M's record 12-15 overall, 2-5 in the

Southwest Conference while the Red Raiders rise to 22-2 and 6-2.

Lady Aggie coach Al Givens said the team's biggest problem in the match was 11 serving errors despite winning the second game and leading the fourth, 7-0.

A&M swimmers face TCU

Texas A&M's P.L. Downs Natatorium will be aglow tonight as the men's and women's swimming teams take on the Texas Christian Horned Frogs at 6 p.m.

"TCU gets fired up for us and their men's team beat us last year

for the first time," said head coach Mel Nash.

Last week, the Aggie men's team defeated the Arkansas Razorbacks, 159.5-77.5, but the women's team came up short, falling to the LadyBacks, 168-88.

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