

Montana garners Male Athlete of the Year award

NEW YORK (AP) — While the San Francisco 49ers are trying to threepat as Super Bowl champions, their quarterback, Joe Montana, has repeated as The Associated Press Male Athlete of the Year.

Montana became the fifth athlete to win the award twice and the fourth to win it consecutively, edging out Texas Rangers pitcher Nolan Ryan in balloting announced Monday by the AP.

Last week, Montana was named the NFL's Most Valuable Player for the second straight season by the AP. Montana, 34, who passed for 274 yards and two touchdowns in San Francisco's 28-10 playoff victory over Washington on Saturday, received 33 of a possible 138 first-place votes and 259 points.

"He's special," former 49ers center Randy Cross said. "He has an

aura about him. It's an air. O.J. had it. Namath, Staubach, Graham, Luckman, guys like that. With Joe, you almost felt if every game were a Super Bowl, you'd be undefeated. It's almost not fair. He's never played a huge game that he hasn't won."

Ryan, 43, who surpassed 5,000 career strikeouts and pitched his sixth no-hitter last season, had more first-place votes (36) but wound up with 254 points. Wayne Gretzky of the Los Angeles Kings was a distant third with 11 first-place votes and 104 points.

AP-member sports writers and broadcasters were asked to vote for three athletes, with a first-place vote worth five points, second three and third one.

Montana, who already has led the 49ers to four Super Bowl titles, is the

first man since sprinter Carl Lewis to win consecutively. Lewis won the award in 1983 and '84. Also two-time winners are pitcher Sandy Koufax (1963-65), golfer Byron Nelson (1944-45) and tennis player Don Budge (1937-38).

Montana is the 12th football player to win the award, although none other than Montana has won it since O.J. Simpson in 1973. The award, initiated in 1931, has gone to baseball players 22 times.

Montana started his career with the 49ers in 1979. Since then, he has been the Super Bowl MVP three times, last year setting Super Bowl records with 13 consecutive completions and five touchdown passes in a 55-10 victory over Denver last year. He has thrown for 34,998 yards and 242 touchdowns in his career.

This season, he led the 49ers to a

14-2 record and was the league's seventh-leading passer with an 89.0 rating, one year after setting an NFL record with a 112.4 rating. He led the NFC with a completion rate of 61.7 percent, threw 26 touchdown passes, and set a club record with 3,944 passing yards.

Last August, Montana signed a four-year contract extension through the 1994 season, when he will have played 16 seasons in the NFL.

"I've played for so long it's actually part of my life," Montana once said. "... Eventually, it's going to be over, and when it is over, there is no coming back to it."

Rounding out the voting for those receiving more than two votes is Bo Jackson of the Los Angeles Raiders, 77 points; cyclist Greg LeMond, 77.

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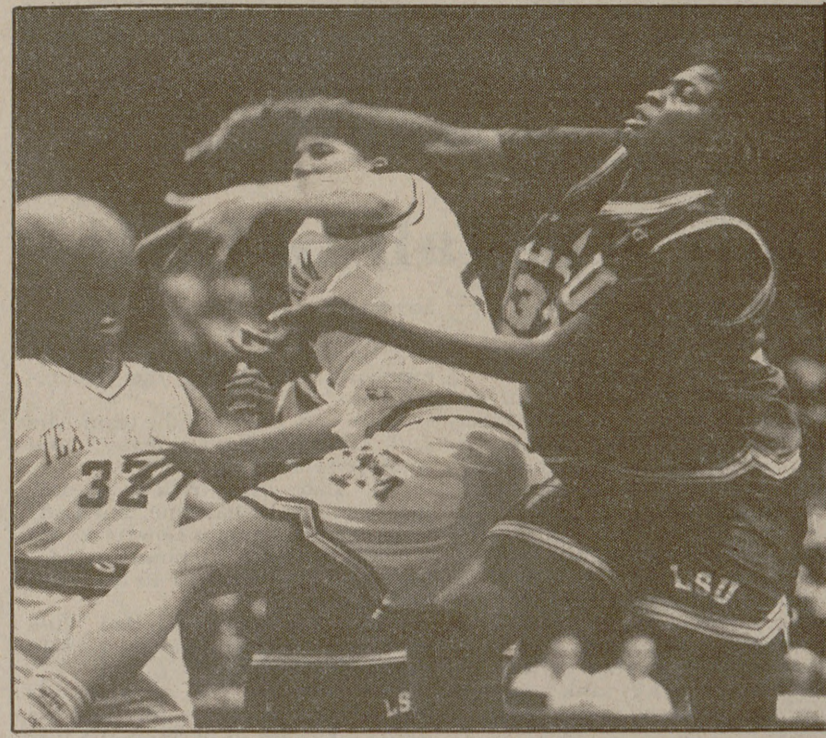
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JAY JANNER/The Battalion

Texas A&M forward Dena Russo and LSU center Sheila Johnson battle for a rebound in Monday night's game at G. Rollie White Coliseum. The Lady Aggies lost 90-75.

Lady Ags

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minutes," Russo said. "We could have easily come back but we're just not getting back on defense."

Senior Wendy Jennings, a 5-11 forward, scored nine points, all on three-point field goals, and provided some needed spark for the Lady Ags.

"Wendy and Dena did a great job in pulling us back," Hickey said. "I want to give Wendy Jennings a lot of credit. She came in and competed and that's what we needed."

Also scoring in double-figures for the Lady Ags were Yvonne Hill and Sheri Dillard with 20 and 13 points, respectively.

Sheila Johnson led the Lady Tigers with 25 points and 14 rebounds. The Lady Aggies return to Southwest Conference action Friday night when they host the Baylor University Lady Bears in a 7:30 contest in G. Rollie White Coliseum.

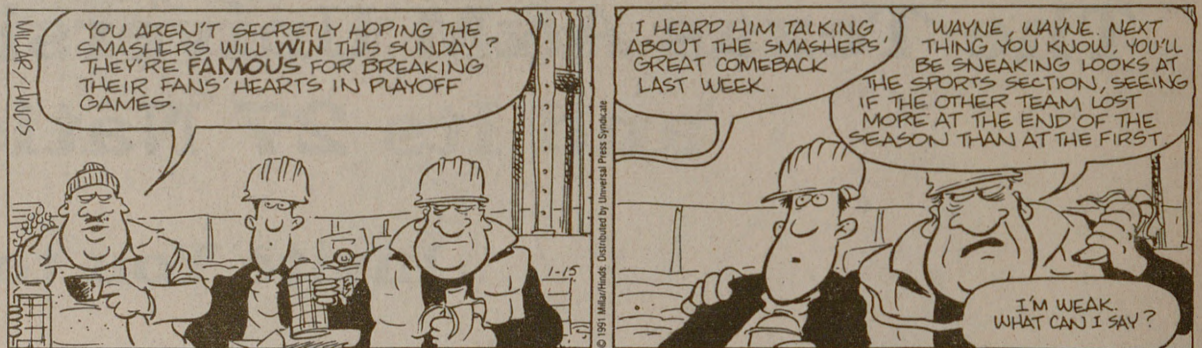
A&M, which now owns a three

game winning string, will bring a 2-2 SWC mark into the tilt.

The Lady Ags are tied for fifth place with the Texas Christian University Lady Horned Frogs.

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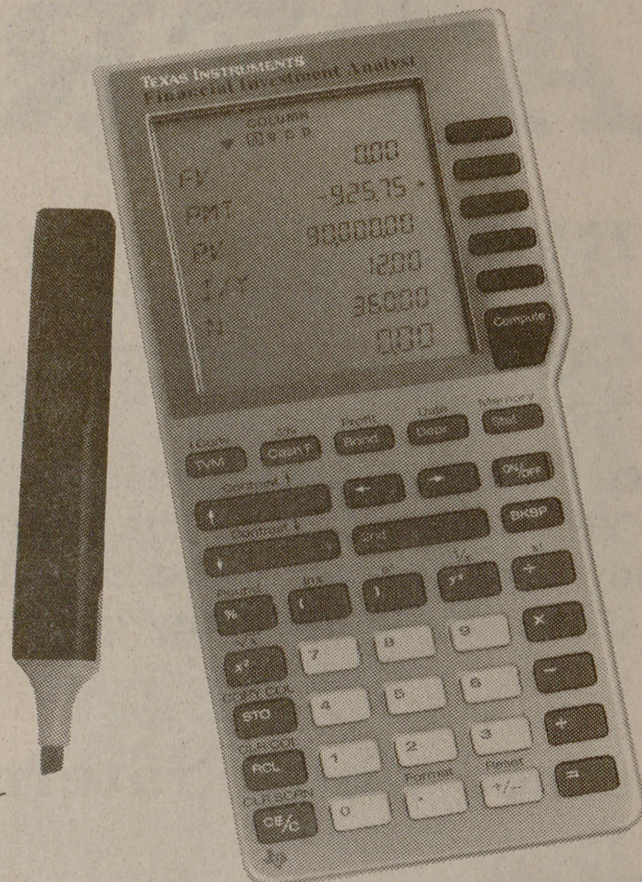
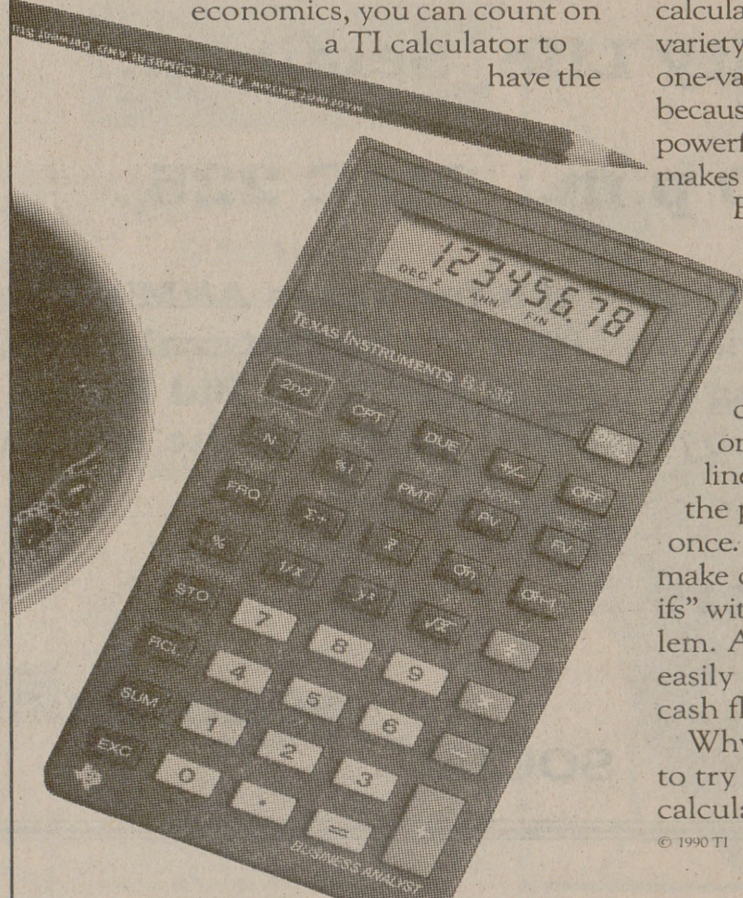
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