

# Mavs lose

DALLAS (AP) — Larry Nance and Brad Daugherty scored 21 points each as the Cleveland Cavaliers used a late 14-point run to win for only the second time in 14 games, beating the reeling Dallas Mavericks 99-85 Wednesday night.

Nance's follow shot put Cleveland ahead to stay at 76-74 with 7:10 left, and Dallas went 5:19 without a point as the Cavaliers broke a nine-game road losing streak. The Cavaliers, who also got 19 points from Darnell Valentine, went on their decisive run after Randy White's jumper put Dallas ahead 74-73 with 7:34 left.

Nance, Daugherty and Valentine combined for all the points in the run before Brad Davis broke the drought for Dallas on a jumper with 2:15 to go.

Rodney McCray led the Mavericks, losers of six of seven overall and five of six at home, with 16 points. Rolando Blackman and Derek Harper, Dallas' leading scorers with 21.4 and 20.5 averages, were held to 10 and 11 points, respectively.

Harper fouled out for the first time this season.

Herb Williams returned to the Dallas lineup after missing 22 games with bursts of the knee and scored eight points, all in the second half.

Daugherty was pleased with his team's turnaround.

"Late in the game, we were able to play some real good defense and dictate what we wanted to do with our offense," Daugherty said. "It just worked out."

"Somebody had to win tonight. I'm just glad it was us."

Cleveland coach Lenny Wilkins was satisfied.

"Our defense didn't break down at all," he said. "We kept people in front of us."

"I thought Larry got every big rebound, and when he wasn't getting them Brad was. We executed on offense and got good shots and handled their press and double-team real well."

"Our backcourt has been a little weak because of inexperience, but tonight they really came through," Wilkins said. "Craig (Ehlo) did a good job of handling Blackman, and Darnell did a good job of using his speed, passing, and looking for the shot."

Dallas coach Richie Adubato was impressed with the Cavaliers.

# Herrera will leave Spain to join Rockets

HOUSTON (AP) — Carl Herrera, a second-round draft pick last year whose NBA rights belong to the Houston Rockets, is planning to join the team once he completes a two-year contract with Spain's Real Madrid, a Houston television station reported.

Herrera, 24, told Houston's KRIV-TV from Madrid Tuesday that he looks forward to playing for the Rockets.

"It is real important to me because that is part of my dream that is part of a lot of things that I have been planning for," Herrera said.

Herrera, a former star forward for the University of Houston, turned pro after his junior year and was a second-round draft choice by Miami in the 1990 draft.

Herrera was traded along with Miami's first-round pick, Dave Jamerson, to the Rockets for Alec Kessler, Houston's first-round pick.

But Herrera opted to sign a 2-year contract with Real Madrid for a European tour.

"I'm gonna stay here for one more year and then go ahead and play in Houston," said Herrera, who is averaging 14 points and seven rebounds a game with Real Madrid. "Of course, I think I could help a lot. That is part of why I want to go over there, too."

Herrera, a native of Caracas, Venezuela, has been hampered by shoulder and leg injuries this season, but he has recovered.

Herrera played two years for Jacksonville Junior College in Jacksonville, Texas. He was named to the first-team All-American by the National Junior College Athletic Association.

According to NBA rules, the Rockets own rights to Herrera's U.S. play for a year after he completes any foreign contract.

# Huson

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And playing so much in the major leagues gave Huson something he lacked: confidence.

"I finally realized that I could play in the major leagues," he says. "When you're a rookie, you think that you belong, but you're not sure."

"The confidence that Bobby showed in me made me feel great. I knew that even if I had a bad game, I would be in the lineup tomorrow."

Playing in 145-of-152 games, he was indeed in the lineup almost every day.

But being a shortstop — the position counted on for leadership in the infield — and a rookie in an infield with All-Stars Palmeiro and Franco couldn't be easy, right?

Wrong. Huson has adapted to the demanding role with ease.

"For the first couple of weeks the guys helped me learn the opposing hitters' and pitchers' tendencies," Huson says. "But after a while, they let me call all the coverages."

"It was an honor for an All-Star like Julio (Franco) to let me make the calls. It made me feel better to know that he thought I was capable."

Although he's a good fielder and leader, Huson struggled with the bat

late in the season and his average plummeted from above .300 early in the season to .240 at the end of the year.

But even worse was the fact that Huson hit no home runs in 396 at-bats last season, more than any other major leaguer.

"I hit the fence four or five times," Huson said with a smile.

Admitting that he takes a lot of ribbing from his teammates for his lack of home run power, Huson says that he'll hit some this season.

"I was joking with (Rangers catcher) Geno Petralli, who also didn't hit one last year, either," Huson says. "So we made a bet that which ever of us hit a homer first gets free dinner from the other."

"He'll be owing me," Huson says with a smile.

Since modern baseball is geared toward home run hitters, Huson will no doubt get more recognition if he clubs a few homers in 1991.

"I'll hit two this year," Huson says. "That way, I'll make up for last year."

If Huson does, and remains a fixture at shortstop, he won't be such a stranger to the media. But he'll still be happy.

# Ryan considers buying Astros; says McMullen has 'dismantled' team

HOUSTON (AP) — Texas Rangers pitcher Nolan Ryan confirmed that he has been approached about buying his former team, the Houston Astros, and said he is interested.

"I've had a couple of people that are trying to put groups together that have contacted me to see if I had any interest," said Ryan, who lives in Alvin, 26 miles south of Houston.

"I told them that I would certainly have an interest in visiting with the parties that are trying to do something to see if I would like to participate in some manner, although I wouldn't have any idea what that would be."

Ryan, 43, told the Austin American-Statesman Tuesday that he expressed some interest when approached by the two groups before the Christmas holidays, but he has not heard anything recently.

John McMullen, owner of Houston Sports Association, and Robert Harter, president of HSA, which owns the Astros, announced Nov. 24 that the team was for sale. HSA also holds the lease on the Astrodome and two other buildings in the same complex, the Astrohall and the Astrena. It also owns properties in Florida and various

cable television interests.

Louis B. Susman, managing director for Salomon Brothers Inc., which represents the Astros in the sale, said Texas and Houston investors would have the inside track in making a deal for the National League team.

Ryan, the major league's strikeout king, pitched for the Astros from 1980-88 and ranks fifth on the club's all-time victories list with 106.

Astros Manager Art Howe said last week that he had heard that McMullen had "not had a nibble" from any interested buyers. The estimated pricetag of the franchise has ranged from \$75 million to \$100 million.

Asked if he would like to own a major-league franchise, Ryan said: "It would depend. I would certainly never be in a position to be a majority owner of any ball club. But it would depend on the situation and the organization."

Ryan, who has won 302 games and thrown an unprecedented six no-hitters, said he is disturbed by McMullen's recent unloading of players who make almost \$50 million collectively.

"When I left there, he (McMullen) had said they were not going to get involved in the salary escalation," Ryan said. "I felt like that was probably true, that they were going to take that position. But I didn't expect him to dismantle the ball club as badly as they have."



# O'Brien

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to the freethrow line for his jump shot. He also had the best left-handed layup that I ever saw.

But when we played at my house or in the school parking lot, Nick wasn't that good.

The Bills hold an advantage over teams at Rich stadium kind of like Nick had an unfair advantage over me.

Don't believe me?

On ESPN, an NFL coach said that he noticed every time the Bills had the ball, the two ramps that led down to the field from opposite ends of the stadium would be closed off to stop wind gusts from blowing across the field.

The same coach noted that when his team was on offense, the doors to the ramps would be opened, creating wind gusts that could have affected his teams passing game.

Also, Buffalo head coach Marv Levy learned that when the field at Rich Stadium froze, his runners couldn't get any traction when they made cutbacks on plays to the right side. So, Levy knew to run ground

plays to the left on exceptionally cold Sundays.

But let's forget these little things for a minute and look at the Bill's two playoff games. Both games were cakewalks for Buffalo, but remember who they were against; the Raiders and the Miami Dolphins.

These two teams are not used to playing in temperatures below 20 degrees and when the Dolphins hosted the Bills during the regular season, they dominated the game from start to finish.

But this Sunday in the Super Bowl, Buffalo will be in for a shock.

They line-up against a New York Giant team that can play in rain, sleet, snow and even warm, sunny weather.

During their regular season matchup, the Bills beat the Giants at home 17-13 after a number of key Giant turnovers.

Lastly, Marv Levy, who complained when the Cincinnati Bengals

used a no-huddle offense during one of their games, developed a no-huddle offense that confused and frustrated the Raiders last Sunday.

The Raiders were unable to get specialized players on the field, like pass-rushing linebacker Aaron Wallace on short notice, but this won't bother the Giants.

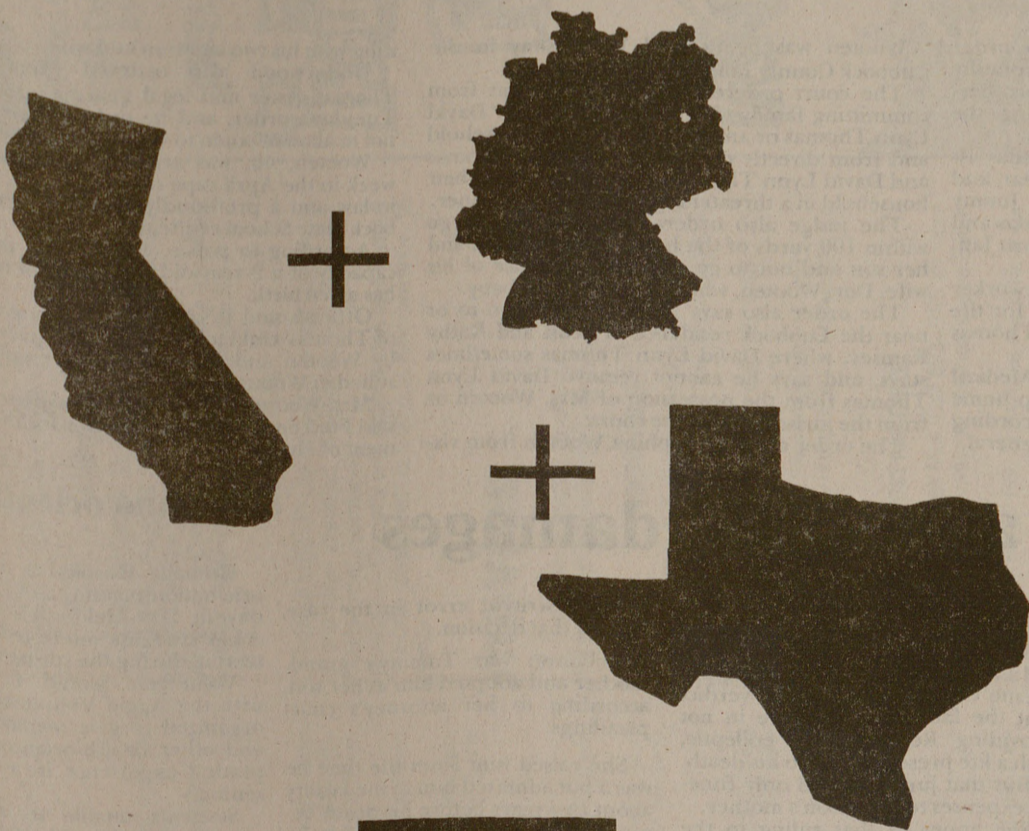
With linebackers like Lawrence Taylor, Pepper Johnson and Carl Banks, who can play any position from down linemen to defensive backs, the Giants will prevail.

What key to the game will be is the Buffalo first offensive series. They've scored on their first possession the last 12 games of the regular season.

If the Giants keep Bills from scoring on their first possession, they'll go back to New York wearing their second Super Bowl ring.

The Bills won't have the advantage of playing in their own driveway this Sunday.

It's unlike anything you've ever seen, where the West meets the Southwest at the Berlin Wall.



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