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Texas signs Incaviglia

NEW YORK (AP) — Texas Rangers outfielder Pete Incaviglia and the team avoided arbitration Wednesday and settled on a one-year contract for $1.67 million, more than double his 1990 salary of $825,000.

Incaviglia, 27, the Rangers' left fielder since 1986, settled shortly before an arbitration hearing was scheduled to begin. He had asked for $2.1 million, and the club had offered $1.35 million.

As late as Tuesday, it appeared the two sides would be unable to settle before the hearing and Incaviglia said, "For them to take me to a hearing tells me they have no plans for me after this year."

He took the Rangers to arbitration before the 1989 season, the only player on the team to go to arbitration in the past four years. He lost his bid and slipped into a funk and finished with a career-low 21 homers.

Incaviglia has a team-record five consecutive 20-homer seasons.

TANK McNAMARA® by Jeff Millar & Bill Hinds

Only the Battalion has Alan Lehmann. Read his thoughts on baseball, football and other campus sports every Monday in the Battalion's Sports section.

Gooden desires huge contract like Clemens'

PORT ST. LUCIE, Fla. (AP) — The New York Mets offered Wednesday to make Dwight Gooden the third-highest paid player in baseball, but the pitcher's agent immediately said the offer was unacceptable.

Gooden says that if he doesn't get the extension by Friday, he will file for free agency following the World Series and won't negotiate during the season. The proposal, the third by the team in recent weeks, is being sent to Gooden's agent by overnight mail.

"It's a start," the agent, Jim Neader, said from his office in St. Petersburg, Fla. "I haven't seen it yet. Those numbers would make it less than $4.7 million and more than $4.1 million. That's a wide range and it is not acceptable."

Roger Clemens will average $5,380,250 per season in his four-year extension with the Boston Red Sox and Jose Canseco is averaging $4.7 million a year in his five-year contract with the Oakland A's. Former Met Darryl Strawberry, now third in the salary standings, averages $4.05 million a year with the Los Angeles Dodgers.

Mets general manager Frank Cashen criticized Boston's $21,521,000 contract with Clemens as "inappropriate" and said it showed "questionable wisdom." He also vowed that "we will not collapse under artificial deadlines."

Gooden will make $2.25 million this season, the last year of a three-year $6.7 million deal. Complicating the Mets' situation is that Frank Viola also wants an extension. Viola will make $2.8 million this season, the last year of a three-year $7.9 million contract.

"We would like to sign both of them," Cashen said. "We will attempt to sign both."

"I'll talk with Dwight tonight and discuss our strategy," he said. "The deadline depends on how we're doing. If there's a chance to cut a deal, it can be extended. If there is progress, the deadline is moot."

Sports Mail

Football coaches not racist

EDITOR:

This letter is in response to Craig Wilson's February 19th column regarding Tommy Preston. In his column, Wilson made many questionable points concerning black quarterbacks.

Wilson states that Preston may fall into a (Chris) Osgood-syndrome; basically saying that Preston might not play because he is black. Mr. Wilson, we ask, why even bring the issue of race into question? We don't think race is the problem for quarterbacks at A&M — competetion is.

You imply that Osgood did not follow (Lance) Pavlas as quarterback because he was black, when in actuality he was less qualified, less experienced and possibly less confident than Bucky Richardson. Why waste Richardson's talent in order to play a less qualified quarterback?

Your accusation that black NFL quarterbacks are blamed for losses more than their white quarterbacks is unwarranted. Every quarterback is criticized after a loss because of the simple fact that they are in the middle of the action for the entire game. Montana, Everett and Aikman are scrutinized after a loss just like Moon, Peete and Williams. After all, they're only human. It doesn't matter what color their skin is if they don't perform.

We are offended by your implication that our coaching staff is racially motivated in choosing positions for players. You mention Kevin Murray's reign in Kyle Field, and Richardson would reign whether he was black, white or Hispanic. Players are judged on ability, not skin color it is ridiculous to think otherwise. If Tommy Preston is the best man for the job, he will play. Our conference has too many tough teams for us not to play the best man. Aggies have too much pride in their team to let racism impede a tradition of excellence.

Tony Nash '93
Chris Lorek '93
Trey Wood '93

The Battalion is interested in hearing from its readers and welcomes all letters to the editor. Please include name, classification, address and phone number on all letters. The editor reserves the right to edit letters for style and length. Because of limited space, shorter letters have a better chance of appearing. There is, however, no guarantee letters will appear. Letters may be brought to 216 Reed McDonald or sent to Campus Mail Stop 1111.

Olajuwon cleared to resume play

HOUSTON (AP) — Houston Rockets center Akeem Olajuwon was given doctor's approval Wednesday to resume playing Feb. 28 against the Los Angeles Clippers, the NBA club announced.

Olajuwon has been on the team's injury list since Jan. 4 while recovering from surgery to repair damage to his right eye socket suffered when he was hit in the face by the elbow of Chicago's Bill Cartwright.

The Rockets have a 12-10 record without Olajuwon in the lineup and they will play three more games before he returns in Los Angeles.

Olajuwon started working out with the team last week but he doesn't expect to step right into the starting lineup.

"That wouldn't make any sense. You see how the guys have been playing," Olajuwon said. "It's going to be very difficult if you guys expect a miracle. I'm going to have to work my way back."

Rockets coach Don Chaney said Olajuwon's playing time would be gauged by his progress.

"I'll use him the same as I use any other injured player whose been injured as long as he has," Chaney said. "I'll put him in the game and see how he's playing and if he's not getting the job done then he sits down and goes back later on."

Arkansas side-steps upset scare

DALLAS (AP) — Oliver Miller and Todd Day fueled an Arkansas second-half surge that overcame an eight-point halftime deficit and led the No. 3 Razorbacks to a hard-earned 79-70 Southwest Conference victory over Southern Methodist on Wednesday.

Arkansas improved its record to 26-2 and 13-0 in the SWC while SMU dropped to 11-14 and 6-8. The 26 victories tied an Arkansas school record for regular season victories set by the 1978 Razorbacks.

Miller, held to only four points in the first half, led a charge after the intermission that included four straight baskets.

Miller scored 21 points and Day added 20.

After Miller picked up his fourth foul with 14:26 left, Day took over. Day's two free throws with 13:55 left gave Arkansas the lead.

SMU stunned the Hogs before the sellout crowd of 9,007 fans in Moody Coliseum by scoring its most points of the season in a first half to lead 45-37 at intermission. The Mustangs never trailed and built their largest lead with 28 seconds to go when Troy Valentino hit two free throws.

It was the most points Arkansas had trailed at halftime and the second fewest the Hogs had scored all year in the first 20 minutes.

Lewis, Ditka honored

DALLAS (AP) — Texas A&M running back Darren Lewis was honored at the 26th Dallas All Sports Association as college athlete of the year.

Chicago Bears coach Mike Ditka accepted the most prestigious award, the Field Scovell Award, and lavished thanks on former Dallas Cowboys coach Tom Landry.

"The greatest thing that ever happened to me was when I was traded to the Cowboys, because I was basically a washed-up football player," Ditka told an audience of about 750 sports fans at the Tuesday night dinner.

"I could never thank Coach Landry or the Cowboys enough for what they did for me."

Jimmy Johnson, the Cowboys' coach the past two seasons, was presented the "Big D" award. Texas Rangers first baseman Rafael Palmeiro and pitcher Bobby Witt were co-winners of the association's award for professional athlete of the year.

University of Texas football coach David McWilliams was honored as coach of the year.

Ditka turned the crowd on — and occasionally off — with his dry humor, poetry reading, solemn demeanor and tough talk.

Ditka pointed to Lewis and said he wished the athlete would become a Chicago Bear next year. But Ditka quipped the Bears probably couldn't afford Lewis.

Ditka said the Bears also probably couldn't afford Palmeiro and Witt. He capped it off by looking at a player honored as male high school athlete of the year, Huntley Baker of Dallas W.T. White, and remarking, "I'm not even sure the Bears could afford him, if he's going to Notre Dame."

Ditka made a bold prediction about next season.

He noted the New York Giants "kicked our butts, 31-3" in the NFC playoffs, but said he was proud of his team. He said the Bears and Giants will play again next season, "and I'm going to say this right now; we're going to kick their butts."

O'Brien

Continued from page

is Portland's Clyde Drexler.

Drexler is a better shooter, more versatile and plays better defense than any other small forward in the NBA.

The second thing Daly needs to think about when choosing his guards is the 3-point line.

In international basketball, the 3-point line is 20 feet 6 inches from the basket, 3 feet 3 inches closer than in the NBA.

At the off-guard position, Jordan will start. No dispute there, but others will get playing time.

Detroit's Joe Dumars and Golden States' Chris Mullin have no problem scoring at will. The advantage they have over Jordan is that for every 2-point dunk he makes, they can sink a 3-pointer from the outside.

Magic will start at point guard. For years he has ruled the NBA. But this year, he's not the best player at point guard.

Utah's John Stockton is the best player in the league right now, and not only will he be able to drive past his foreign admirers, he'll shoot 9 percent from 3-point land.

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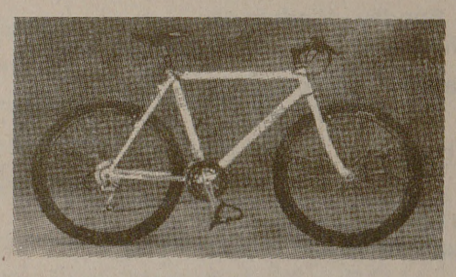

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