

### Spurs look to backcourt

SAN ANTONIO, Texas (AP) — A changing of the guard doesn't seem imminent for the San Antonio Spurs, but head coach Larry Brown is making it clear he plans to solidify his backcourt this season.

The case was strongly supported when the Spurs opened their 1991 rookie camp with 10 guards among the 16 players invited.

The team already has veteran guards Willie Anderson, Rod Strickland and Paul Pressey.

Following Saturday morning's workout, Brown said he intends to take five guards into the '91-92 season, leaving a host of veterans, free agents and rookies fighting for the two slots.

Heading the struggle are Avery Johnson, Kevin Pritchard and second-round draft pick Greg Sutton.

"I don't know where the competition lies right now," Brown said. "Right now we just want to see what all these players can do. I know I want to carry five guards, and we'll just keep looking."

"I liked what I saw today. The condition of most of the players tells me they are here to play. A couple of players stood out, but I'm not going to start naming names just yet."

Speculation the Spurs would sign unrestricted free agent John Battle came to an abrupt end earlier in the week when the former Atlanta Hawk signed with the Cleveland Cavaliers.

### Warren Moon run-and-shooting for the stars

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — Houston quarterback Warren Moon is still reaching for outer space.

Moon launched the Oilers' run-and-shoot offense last season, leading the NFL in completions (362), attempts (584), touchdown passes (33) and interceptions (13). He amassed 4,689 total yards, the fifth highest total in NFL history.

Moon became the only quarterback to throw for more than 20,000 yards in both the NFL and Canadian Football League. His 527 passing yards against Kansas City was the second highest total in NFL history.

The Oilers led the league with 388.9 yards per game, 300.3 passing yards per game, 23.5 first downs per game, 6.2 average gain per play, and 52 percent third down efficiency.

Get the picture?

Those extraterrestrial numbers would guarantee satisfaction for most quarterbacks, but Moon expects to reach deeper space in 1991.

"A lot of people said I had a pretty good year last year but looking at the film, there are a lot of places I can get better to help this team," Moon said. "I have to take my game to another level and every player on this team should feel the same way."

For all of their gaudy numbers, the Oilers did sputter and wheeze at times last season. They lurched into the season with losses to Atlanta and Pittsburgh.

After winning four of their next five games, the offense clunked again in losses to the New York Jets (17-12) and Los Angeles Rams (17-13). But the fault was not with the system, Moon said.

"I wouldn't change anything, we just need to execute," Moon said. "I think with this offense it's going to take more than I did last year. In this offense, you're going to compile a lot of yards if you're doing the right thing."

Fine-tuning could make the Oiler offense even more devastating, Moon said.

"We need to make the plays early in the game to put a team away," he said. "When you have a team like the Jets and Rams, and you've got plays that you can put them away early and make it an easy game, you've got to do it."

Moon had his career season in 1990, resulting in his third straight Pro Bowl appearance, after recovering from a broken thumb suffered in the 15th game of the season.

Moon's soaring success made him even more popular in the off-season when he was in constant demand for charity functions, banquets and speaking engagements.

"It was a very hectic off-season for me," Moon said. "I didn't say no a whole lot, but more than you would think. I even turned down some awards banquets for other commitments I had."

"It was tough physically but I managed to get my work done. I managed to find a gym or stayed at hotels where I knew they had a workout room. I really got back to throwing the ball before minicamp started and worked on mechanics and tried to improve."

Moon's leadership skills have grown with his passing skills in recent seasons. He arrived at camp on Thursday and called a team meeting Thursday night. He feels comfortable in his role as team spokesman, a quality that has been acquired.

"I try not to make a big deal out of meetings," Moon said. "Some players take team meetings as panic. Some times you can settle things just by going around to different groups on the team and taking care of it that way."

### Sports Mail

#### National League criticism off base

**EDITOR:**

It has come to my attention that one of your sportswriters has downgraded the National League of Major League Baseball. As an avid baseball and sports fan, I find this insulting to the game of baseball.

As far as I am concerned, scoring runs is not what baseball is all about. I would much rather see a classic pitching duel between Nolan Ryan and Ramon Martinez than see a couple of bash brothers hit towering home runs. It obviously takes a little bit of intelligence to pitch in the majors than it does to go to the plate and swing a piece of wood. The pitcher is involved in every pitch of the game. A hitter may be involved in about four to five at bats per game.

On the issue of designated hitter, I am for this position. For one thing, it takes a lot of pressure off the pitcher. However, it does have its disadvantages, such as the strategy is somewhat diminished. Much of the coaching is taken away from the manager. A manager is limited to the changes he can make during the course of the game. The designated hitter does pose some advantages, such as giving the pitcher a chance to rest, and preventing additional injury possibilities while running bases or taking his cuts at the plate.

However, the National League is not inferior to the American League in any way. I don't think there is a superior league because they are so different and have such contrasting characteristics.

Speaking of scoring runs, over the past week the winning teams of the National League scored five runs or more nine times as opposed to the winning teams in the American League scoring five runs or more just five times. And for your information, the all-time homerun leader, Henry Aaron, came from the National League. Future Hall of Famer Nolan Ryan spent most of his career in the National League where he hurled some of his famous no-hitters. Hall of Fame inductee Mike Schmidt is one of the few hitters ever to hit 500 home runs in his career. Another Hall of Famer, Ernie Banks, is also among the elite of hitting 500 home runs. What about Willie Mays, Willie Stargell, Roberto Clements, Lou Brock, Jackie Robinson (the first black player), and the list goes on.

Did these players play in the National League, or was I just dreaming?

My point is the American League is not any better, past or present, than the National League. There was one statement I did agree with: The commissioner needs to go!!!

Vance Skidmore  
Grad student

*Editor's Note: Nolan Ryan threw one no-hitter during his nine year stint with the National League's Houston Astros.*

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### Johnson impressed with veteran arrivals

#### Cliff Stoudt fills quarterback hole

AUSTIN (AP) — Cliff Stoudt hopes to become Jimmy Johnson's 1991 insurance policy.

When Troy Aikman was driven into the turf by Philadelphia's Clyde Simmons in the 15th game of last season, the Dallas Cowboys' playoff chances also went south.

The Eagles beat the Cowboys that day, and with Babe Laufenberg at the helm, the Atlanta Falcons destroyed Dallas in the season finale.

Although Laufenberg is in camp, Johnson is running him at the fourth position. Stoudt, picked up as a free agent, was on the bench for the Atlanta game.

Johnson shook the NFL bushes for help and found Stoudt, who has been around for 11 years and spent some of his career backing up the NFL's greatest quarterbacks. Stoudt last threw a pass in the NFL in 1988 at Phoenix.

"He's a pro, a poised guy," Johnson said. "He's been in NFL battles and he's smart. He's also healthy. It's like buying a car that's been in the garage a long time. There aren't many scratches on it, and the mileage is good."

"He throws well, and he's a cool customer. I'm impressed."

Stoudt is relatively unmarked in his NFL career.

#### Casillas arrives at Cowboys' camp

AUSTIN (AP) — Coach Jimmy Johnson was pleased Tuesday with his first look at newly acquired defensive tackle Tony Casillas in a Dallas Cowboys uniform.

Casillas, obtained Sunday night from the Atlanta Falcons for two draft choices, participated in contact work Tuesday morning with the Cowboys.

"In one day's practice, he was everything we were looking for and more," Johnson said. "He's really going to help our defense."

Casillas and Russell Maryland, the first overall pick in last spring's NFL draft, are competing for the starting job at left tackle. Upon arrival, Casillas was elevated to the first unit.

"That's real respectable," Casillas said. "I'm glad they think that much of me. I want to show them that I can play."

Casillas' presence eases a shortage at defensive line due to the holdouts of veterans Danny Noonan, Dean Hamel and Danny Stubbs.

"Right now, I'm just trying to get acclimated and learn the system," Casillas said. "I got a little winded at one point, but I'll be OK. Out in this heat and humidity, you've got to keep plugging away."

### Detmer looking for peace and quiet on the gridiron

LAHAINA, Hawaii (AP) — Ah, for the peace and quiet of a college football season. It's a time Brigham Young quarterback Ty Detmer awaits longingly, a time when he can finally get some rest.

Since winning the Heisman Trophy at the conclusion of the 1990 season last December, Detmer has undergone shoulder surgery, converted to Mormonism, grieved over the death of his grandfather, been married and made hundreds of speeches and appearances throughout Utah.

"It's been a full year," Detmer said Saturday during the Western Athletic Conference Football Media Kickoff on the Hawaiian island of Maui.

"Football season is really my quiet time. I don't have to worry about speaking anywhere — it's hard for me to say 'no' to people — and my Sundays and week-nights are free. The only thing is, it messes up my hunting season."

But make no mistake: This is no ordinary football season coming up. Detmer, who played high school football in San Antonio, has a chance to become only the second two-time Heisman winner ever. Ohio State running back Archie Griffin did it in 1974-75.

And Griffin will attest to the fact that winning it a second time is

harder than the first. "Having that tag 'Heisman Trophy winner' means that everybody wants a shot at you," Griffin said. "Opponents will nail you and say, 'How'd you like that, Mr. Heisman?'"

Opponents already began taking shots at Detmer late last season. Just hours after he was announced as the Heisman winner, Detmer was harassed into throwing four interceptions in a 59-28 thrashing at the hands of Hawaii. Then, in the Holiday Bowl, Detmer managed to pass for only 120 yards before leaving the game early in the third quarter with separations of both shoulders, and BYU was pummeled by Texas A&M 65-14.

Detmer had a pin inserted in his throwing shoulder to aid healing. It has been removed now, and his left shoulder was allowed to heal on its own.

He insists he feels stronger than ever and is throwing the ball with more zip than before, thanks to a rigorous off-season weight-lifting program that added 10 pounds to his slight frame. The 6-foot Detmer will play at all of 185 pounds this fall.

Because of the surgery, Detmer missed spring practice.

### Little's out as Hornets' coach

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (AP) — Gene Little, who battled with his bosses over the Charlotte Hornets' first-round draft choice, was replaced as coach of the team today by Allan Bristow, who will step down as the vice president in charge of player personnel.

Little's will become a team vice president and a special assistant to club president Spencer Stolpen, it was announced at a news conference.

The new director of player personnel will be Dave Twardzik, formerly a scout for the team.

The personnel shuffle came after Bristow and Little had what Little described as a "misunderstanding" earlier this summer over the team's first pick in the NBA draft. Little reportedly told two newspapers that he preferred Syracuse forward Billy Owens, but that the team would select UNLV forward Larry Johnson.

Johnson was eventually selected by the Hornets, who picked first in the draft. He remains unsigned.

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