

During the break

Astros analyzing first half of season

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

HOUSTON — The Houston Astros' reached the half-season point counting their surprises and disappointments.

The surprises included the crash of last season's MVP closer Doug Jones, the All-Star season of pitcher Darryl Kile and the mixed reviews of the starting pitching.

The primary disappointment was the same inconsistency that plagued the youngsters of last season. An encouraging winning streak has been answered by the thud of a string of losses.

It all has to change in the second half of the season if the Astros are going to make an anticipated run at the National League West title.

They'll pick up after the All-Star break on Thursday in St. Louis.

Jones' 5.63 ERA is a primary concern.

"We have to find a way for him to get back to where he was last year and the start of this year," General Manager Bill Wood said. "He's working hard, Bob Cluck (pitching coach) is working hard. We need him, it's as simple as that."

Jones had 11 saves at end of May and appeared on track for a repeat of last season, when he was the club's most dependable pitcher.

The Astros thought starting pitching would be their anchor after signing premier free agents Doug Drabek and Greg Swindell. But Swindell has a 6-8 record and 4.95 ERA and Drabek is 7-8 with a 3.34 ERA.

"I would say we all expected more," Wood said. "In the first half, I don't think they deserve any more blame than any of the other segments because at times they've pitched good game and the runs haven't been there."

Wood said the Astros' run-production over

the past two months was spotty.

Add the inconsistency factor. In the month leading up to the All-Star break, the Astros had winning streaks of 8-2 and 6-2 and losing runs of 1-7 and 3-10.

"For the last month or so, we just haven't gotten consistent performances," Manager Art Howe said. "One night, we hit. The next night we pitch. It seems like we can't get them together. You can see that the ingredients are there. It's just a matter of putting them together."

Kile has emerged as a solid No. 5 starter with a 10-1 record and selection to the All-Stars, while shortstop Andrujar Cedeno has produced both at the plate and in the field above expectations.

Kile was in the minor leagues at last year's All-Star break. Now he's the Astros' most effective pitcher with a 2.26 ERA.

A Homecoming

Pacers' Davis leaves Europe for NBA

INDIANAPOLIS — After three seasons of professional basketball in Europe, Antonio Davis is ready to return home to play. A second-round pick for Indiana in 1990, Davis is hoping to impress new coach Larry Brown at the Pacers' rookie and free agent camp this week.

"It's always nice to be back in the United States, playing real basketball," said Davis, who played his college ball at Texas-El Paso. "I just want to show Larry Brown I can play. Hopefully, there's a spot for me."

The Pacers nearly found a spot for the 6-foot-9, 235-pound Davis last year. At the last minute, Davis opted for a nice offer from a Greek team.

It was Davis' rebounding and shot-blocking that initially attracted the Pacers. Since then, Davis has upgraded his other skills.

"There were question marks about me: 'Can Antonio score? Can he guard a bigger guy?' I'm not saying I'm a great shooter now, but I am saying I've improved a little bit," Davis said.

Brown will be able to assess that improvement in workouts that continue Wednesday at Park Tudor High School.

"We need to get bigger," Brown said. "We need to rebound and defend better, and those are two things (Davis) has always been able to do."

Foreman

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The series will make its debut in the fall and is scheduled for Saturdays at 8 p.m. CDT. Taping was originally scheduled to begin next week but has been postponed until late August. When taping begins, Foreman said they will put 13 episodes "in the can."

Foreman was in Hollywood this week to receive a Jim Thorpe Award as one of the legends who has made a tremendous career contribution to the field of sports. By the end of November, Foreman said, his commitment will be complete. Then, perhaps, he can get back to what he does best — "punching peoples' lights out."

There aren't enough hours in the day, Foreman said, to meld the two careers once taping begins.

"The producers are trying to make me swear off boxing," Foreman said. "I guess they want to do a lot of investing (of time and money) in the sitcom."

"But I'm a truthful man. I haven't got this stuff out of my blood yet."

Tony Danza, star of "Taxi" and "Who's The Boss," is executive producer of the new sitcom.

"It's called 'George.' I know, that's an odd name for this show, huh?" the 44-year-old Foreman said.

"It's about this ex-boxer, George Foster, who's made a lot of money, retires and has nothing to do but sit around the house all day. His wife is a counselor at an inner-city middle school."

"So he follows her to school a few times and gets hooked on the kids. He enjoys talking to the kids and sees how much of an impact an ex-fighter can have on their lives, a positive influence."

"George opens a community center where all the kids can come and play games after school, lift weights, box, listen to guest speakers who tell them about living right and growing up to be good citizens."

The story line sounds familiar. "Yeah, I guess you could say I'm playing myself," Foreman says with a laugh. "But I'm not retired."

"I'm not going to use that word. When one of the champions decides to give me another shot at the title, I'm going to hustle back into the ring in a hurry."

I'm not through yet."

Foreman's last fight was at Las Vegas on June 7 when he lost a unanimous 12-round decision to Tommy "The Duke" Morrison in "The Star Spangled Battle," a fight for the vacant World Boxing Organization heavyweight championship.

"You know, it's funny," Foreman said. "I've gotten a lot of fan mail since then from people who watched the fight. And none of them say that I lost. They tell me how much they love me."

"You put that together with another boxing show, these fellows that are champions, they can't overlook that. I'm still right in the hunt."

For much of the last eight months, Foreman has sandwiched his boxing career between planning and working toward launching the sitcom.

In December, while preparing to fight South African Pierre Co-



"Given George's popularity and given the show is pretty good, I think we have a good shot at making this thing a big hit."

-Tony Danza
Foreman's co-star

etzer at Reno, Nev., Foreman was in Hollywood filming the sitcom pilot.

He had a makeshift gym constructed on a back lot and worked out between taping sessions.

"We built the gym in a vacant rehearsal hall, next to where we worked and called it 'Big George's House of Pain,'" says Danza, a former professional fighter before he turned to acting.

"Given George's popularity and given the show is pretty good, I think we have a good shot at making this thing a big hit."

The series is set in Houston. A film crew has already visited the Bayou City taking shots of the Astrodome, NASA and other Houston landmarks that periodically will be used on the air.

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Camden

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land and Arlington, Texas, capture the old-fashioned feel that has helped make Camden Yards such a big hit. Both stadiums are scheduled to open next spring.

But he said the Cleveland and Arlington ballparks ignore another important reason for the success of Baltimore's stadium: fan intimacy.

A fan sitting in the third row of the upper deck behind home plate is only 182 feet from the field at Camden Yards. But in Cleveland, that same seat will be 195 feet

from play. In Arlington, the distance will be 200 feet, Pastier said.

"That's the most distant upper deck in all of baseball," he said.

The architect's comments came during a forum on the history and future of ballpark design. On the panel was J. Thomas Schieffer, president of the Texas Rangers, who bristled at the criticism of his new ballpark.

"I don't want to quarrel with John, but he's just not right," Schieffer said. "When you talk about this park, you're talking about my child."

He said upper deck seating will be closer to the action in the new park than in the current facility, although he offered no specific

Allison

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Relatives asked that his organs be offered for donation "so others may live," Smitherman said.

Davey Allison and racing veteran Red Farmer were the only people aboard the helicopter when it crashed near the NASCAR garage at Talladega. Farmer, who suffered broken ribs and a broken collarbone, was expected to be hospitalized several days.

Farmer told The Birmingham News the helicopter went out of control and crashed as Davey Allison was attempting to land. The two had flown to the track from Birmingham to watch driver Neil Bonnett's son test a car.

Farmer said he yelled to Davey Allison from the crumpled chopper: "Davey, let's get out of here, the motor's still running." But he said there was no response.

"Davey was hanging upside down, but I couldn't undo his

seat belts because he'd fall on me. I knocked the glass out and crawled out of the helicopter," Farmer told the News.

A helicopter landing pad was under construction at Davey Allison's home, where police were stationed following his death to keep away onlookers. The lawn was freshly sodded.

Davey Allison was born on Feb. 25, 1961. He grew up watching his father and uncle, Donnie Allison, race on the Winston Cup circuit. Bobby Allison is third on the Winston Cup list with 84 career victories, and uncle Donny Allison won 10 races.

Davey Allison quickly established his own identity. He made his debut in 1985, finishing 10th in the Talladega 500.

Davey Allison finished third in the Winston Cup points standings the last two years, and he was fifth at the time of his death. His only victory this year came at Richmond.

Davey Allison finished third in the Slick 50 300 on Sunday at Loudon, N.H.

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Investigation

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to students on campus, or release the records of the hearing if the law enforcement records are available.

An amendment to the Buckley Amendment passed last summer states that records of campus law enforcement units are not education records and therefore not protected under the Buckley Amendment.

Kelly said the front page of the University Police Department's incident report contains the names of both of the students involved. Even if the names and identifying characteristics are deleted from the hearing records, the names will be available through this incident report, he said.

Even though the names of the students are known, A&M's legal obligation is to protect the names of these students, Kelly said.

"This legal obligation is not lessened by virtue of the fact that the information contained in an education record is known by or available through other sources," the letter states.

Kelly said he does not recall the attorney general ever making an opinion on a case of this nature.

In December 1992, a female cadet in the Aggie Band told UPD she had been raped and harassed by a male cadet earlier in the year.

She told UPD she wanted the matter handled administratively, with no criminal charges being filed.

Violence

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However, he said, occasionally his station receives complaints on issues such as AIDS and sex.

Wilund said the "labeling" by the network would not effect viewership much. The people who are concerned about the violence are already monitoring the programs, he said.

Some family advocates said they thought the network agreement was a positive thing.

"Anything that gives consumers more information about the products they are buying is a positive thing," said Diane Sarver, president of the Brazos Valley Life & Family Advocates. "But ultimately it is up to the consumer; I am opposed to government control."

Sarver said the family should take more responsibility in the

home by limiting TV programs to wise choices. The family should control itself, she said.

She said the best way to protest violence on TV is to boycott the sponsors of questionable programming. Sarver said if the sponsors realize that by sponsoring the show they are decreasing their profits, they will not support violent programs.

Anne Newman, the director of Texas Council for Family Values said if the industry would govern itself no regulation would be necessary. The Constitution was made for a self-governing moral people not an immoral people, she said.

"It used to be there was a general consensus of what was right and wrong," Newman said. "Now people see evil as good and good as evil."

Newman said the constant exposure to TV violence has helped contribute to people being "desensitized" to the evil of violence.