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CHRISTIAN ROCK/Alternative

Cowboys' Maryland jumps feet first back into starting role

The Associated Press

IRVING — Russell Maryland third string? That's what the Dallas Cowboys depth chart read.

The ultimate humiliation had hit Maryland, a former first round draft pick and Outland Trophy winner from Miami. He had gone from starter at defensive tackle for the world champion Dallas Cowboys to a part-time player.

"It's kind of humbling for sure," Maryland said. "You see your name on the depth chart like that and it's tough."

But Maryland didn't get mad at his former collegiate coach Jimmy Johnson. Maryland's feet healed.

On Sunday, he'll start in Phoenix against the Cardinals because of his play in a 13-10 loss to Buffalo in which the Cowboys' defensive line held Thurman Thomas to 75 yards rushing on 25 carries.

"I couldn't get in the Army with my feet," Maryland said. "In fact, I'd trade my feet for yours right now. I've got bad feet."

Toes actually. Maryland has bad big toes on both of his feet. They were so bad in training camp that Maryland could barely move during two-a-days.

"That's when I lost my starting job," Maryland said. "Training camp just kills my feet and toes."

The same thing happened to Maryland last year. He missed the first

two games of the season with a toe injury and played the rest of the year with a dislocated toe. Maryland had off-season surgery to correct the problem.

But Maryland is on the prowl again and Johnson has taken note.

"I think sometimes we underestimate what Russell can add to a defense," Johnson said. "On one play against the Bills, he made a tackle 20 yards down the field on a screen. He always seems to get a hand up to tip a pass, or recover a fumble, or make a hit to cause a fumble. We need Russell in there."

Maryland knows why. Emmitt Smith his holding out and the Cowboys offense doesn't win the time of possession war anymore. It means more playing time for Russell and his defensive buddies.

"The heat is on the defense for sure," Maryland said. "We've got to carry the team until we get Emmitt back."

Maryland said he doesn't mean to be unfair to rookie running back Derrick Lassic.

"He's only been a professional for a couple of months and you can't say the lack of offense is his fault," Maryland said. "But everybody on this team knows we need Emmitt."

"The defense will have to be proving itself now. We're going to be out there longer and longer. I think we showed against Buffalo we can play. They only got four first downs in the second half. That showed we were hanging in there pretty good."

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Rangers rally in seventh to top Indians; Astros drop third straight to Rockies

The Associated Press

Rangers 7, Indians 4

ARLINGTON — Third baseman Jim Thome's throwing error on a sacrifice bunt opened the door for four seventh-inning runs Wednesday night as the Texas Rangers rallied for a 7-4 victory over the Cleveland Indians.

With Texas leading 3-2 in the seventh, David Hulse led off the inning with a single and Doug Dascenzo was safe on a bunt. Butch Davis put down a bunt which Thome threw past first, allowing Hulse to score.

Rafael Palmeiro hit a sacrifice fly, Julio Franco hit an RBI double and Dean Palmer singled in the seventh run.

Jeremy Hernandez (4-3) was charged with the four unearned runs.

Cris Carpenter (3-1) picked up the win in relief of Roger Pavlik, who went six innings and allowed two hits and two unearned runs.

Rockies 6, Astros 4

DENVER — Charlie Hayes hit a club-record three doubles and Andres Galarraga drove in three runs, rallying the Colorado Rockies to their third straight victory over the Houston Astros, 6-4

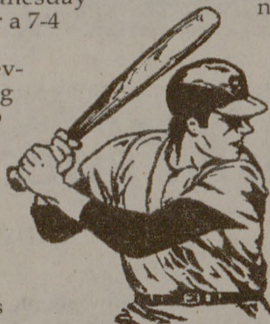
Wednesday night.

Luis Gonzalez went 4-for-4 and had two RBIs, giving the Astros a 4-2 lead before Colorado scored three runs in the seventh.

Mike Munoz (2-1) earned the victory with 1 1-3 innings of relief. Darren Holmes pitched the ninth for his 22nd save.

Eric Young led off the seventh with a single off Greg Swindell. After a strike-out, Brian Williams (4-4) relieved and surrendered a single to Dante Bichette, with Bichette advancing to second on center fielder Steve Finley's throwing error.

Galarraga's grounder produced the first run. With two outs, Hayes hit his third double of the game for a 4-4 tie. Jerald Clark singled up the middle for the go-ahead run.



Baseball Roundup

White Sox 10, Royals 6,

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — Lance Johnson singled with the bases loaded to drive in two runs in the 11th inning Wednesday night as Chicago beat Kansas City 10-6 to maintain a 3 1/2 game lead in the AL West.

Tim Raines doubled home two more runs as the White Sox batted around against Mark Gubicza (4-7).

Injuries cut Ryan to four starts left in baseball career

The Associated Press

ARLINGTON — Barring another injury like the three that have stolen much of his farewell season, Nolan Ryan will make four more career starts before retiring to his ranch.

Texas manager Kevin Kennedy has decided on a four-man rotation for the pennant stretch that would make Ryan's last start Oct. 3, the last game at Arlington Stadium. The park is to be replaced next year by a \$173 million ballpark up the road on Ryan Expressway.

As the Rangers try to catch the AL West-leading Chicago White Sox, Kennedy said he'll go with a starting staff of Ryan, Kevin Brown, Kenny Rogers and Roger Pavlik when off-days permit enough rest for Ryan, 46, and spot start Charlie Leibrandt when they don't.

Ryan will take his next turn Friday at California, where he pitched in the 1970s and where he always draws big crowds and big cheers.

Ryan would then pitch Sept. 22 at Seattle, Sept. 28 at home against Oakland and Oct. 3 against Kansas City.

With that schedule, Ryan wouldn't get a much-anticipated rematch with the White Sox and Robin Ventura, whom he pummeled a half-dozen times after Ventura charged the mound during a brawl in June.

Ryan reported a clean bill of health two days after coming off the DL for the third time this season, saying his post-start routine "went all right, I feel good. I'm ready to go."

Ryan has missed starts this season because of knee, hip and ribcage injuries, all incurred while trying to field his position.

Ryan, pitching for the first time since going on the disabled list Aug. 23 because of a muscle pull in his ribcage, was clocked at 96 mph during Sunday's 4-2 loss to Minnesota on Nolan Ryan Appreciation Day.

Ryan (5-4) gave up four runs on four hits, walked five and struck out three in 5 2-3 innings.

In 11 starts this season, Ryan, baseball's career leader in strikeouts and no-hitters, has 36 walks, 41 strikeouts and a 4.70 ERA in 59 1-3 innings.

Tom Schriever, director of ticket operations at Arlington Stadium, said he didn't expect a big run on tickets for Ryan's scheduled Sept. 28 start until a few days before the Rangers return from a nine-game road trip.

The last game at Arlington Stadium has been a sellout since mid-July.

"It would be fitting for both Nolan and the ballpark to go out together," Schriever said.

Ryan, of course, would prefer to extend the Rangers' season and get another start or two in the postseason.

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