

Pokes' Newton relieved nobody hurt in wreck

The Associated Press

CARROLLTON — Dallas Cowboys offensive lineman Nate Newton, arrested on DWI charges for the second time in 39 months, says he's grateful no one was seriously injured in an interstate accident late Tuesday.

"I'm sorry something like this happened, but I really don't care what happened to me. I just didn't want anything to happen to the young lady," Newton said Thursday.

Newton, 31, escaped injury and Angela Pustejovsky, 22, of Lewisville, the driver of another car, was shaken up in the accident about 11 p.m. Tuesday in Carrollton, a northwest Dallas suburb. Both were alone in their vehicles.

Newton practiced with the Cowboys on Wednesday, and club officials said he would play for the defending Super Bowl champions in their game Sunday in Minnesota against the Vikings.

"The organization is aware of the situation," said Cowboys spokesman Rich Dalrymple. "We understand that Nate and his legal representation have chosen to resolve the matter in court and we would have no further comment."

Newton was charged with investigation of DWI, a Class B misdemeanor. He was released early Wednesday without posting bond. Newton was arrested in Plano on a similar charge in September 1990, but was acquitted nine months later.

Police in Carrollton say one witness told them Newton's 1993 Mercedes 600 SL coupe was traveling at an estimated 100 mph. Ms. Pustejovsky was in a Mitsubishi Mirage sedan.

"We have not been able to substantiate that speed," police Sgt. Robbie Robertson said. "That's according to a motorist who observed the vehicle."

Newton said he was northbound on Interstate 35 in the left hand lane Tuesday night when another vehicle moved from the center lane into his lane, leaving him no escape route "and I rear-ended her."

Police said Newton brought his car to a stop on the interstate and that the other vehicle was forced to the right shoulder.

Irish's Becton overcomes doubters

By John Jensen

Special from the NOTRE DAME OBSERVER

It doesn't so much bother him anymore. In the beginning, the doubters would wear on him constantly. They lined up to take shots at the heir to the prestigious title of the starting tailback at Notre Dame.

"He's too slow to be a Notre Dame tailback," they said. "He'll never start there," they scoffed.

Lee Becton now has no reason to think about the many doubts that once circulated through the air around him, hanging on like a would-be tackler.

"At first, it did bother me," Becton said. "Once I got out there on the field, I saw that my speed wasn't diminishing my playing."

Most Irish fans will remember what one of his doubters joked when he was held out of a game last year with a hamstring injury.

"I didn't think he could run fast enough to pull a hamstring," deadpanned Irish head coach Lou Holtz.

Becton will agree he may not have the breakaway speed of former Irish runners Reggie Brooks or Ricky Watters, but his long strides, shifty style, and tremendous heart have convinced all his doubters.

"Things like that tend to make you want to work harder and establish yourself as a starter," Becton said of the challenge that awaited him before the season. "I went out and I practiced hard everyday to establish myself."

However, not only has Lee Becton silenced the critics with his emergence this season, he has gone beyond nearly all of the goals set by even his most fervent supporters. Becton has now carved a place for himself in the hallowed Notre Dame record books.

Becton put together a string of six consecutive games with at least 100 yards rushing. Becton's 122-yard performance in the Irish's 41-39 loss to Boston College was not only a high spot in an otherwise disappointing game, but it broke the record of five held by former Irish All-American Allen Pinkett.

Not Jerome Heavens, not Vegas Ferguson, not even Brooks was able to accomplish such a feat.

Furthermore, Becton's performance allowed him to finish the regular season with 1,044 yards, becoming just the fifth Notre Dame running back to rush for 1,000 yards in only one season. Only Brooks, Ferguson, Pinkett and Al Hunter can claim that distinction.

"It really feels good to have my name up there with Allen Pickett, who was a great running back here," Becton said. "I feel that it's a great honor to just have my name mentioned at the same time as him."

Another hamstring injury sidelined Becton for the Irish's week-four victory over Purdue, and he could manage 25 yards on just six carries.

Since those two games Becton has rattled of the improbable string, which includes a 16 carry, 142-yard game against Pittsburgh, a 20 carry, 177-yard performance against USC and a 122-yard effort in the Irish's 31-24 win over Florida State.

Becton's performance against the Seminoles is even more amazing considering that Florida State was leading the nation in rushing defense before the showdown.

Becton said he approached that game just like any other, and that allowed him to perform the way he did.

"I always want to do well, but I pretty much think that I can always improve on the things that I do," Becton says. "I'm always striving to do better."

Becton says that he formed that attitude through his mother, who has always told him to never be satisfied with being average.

"My mother had a great influence on me," remarks Becton. "She always told me that I'm doing good, but that I can't be satisfied, and to always do better."

Becton has strived to do his best. His running has been a major factor in the



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Notre Dame junior running back **Lee Becton** (4) is rumbling toward a 70-yard touchdown run in the Irish's 30-13 victory over Southern California on Oct. 23. Becton has been a pleasant surprise in Notre Dame's 10-1 season.

Irish's 10-1 season, which he saw them achieve their first No. 1 ranking since 1990. Long after he is gone, Becton will undoubtedly be tagged as one of the most memorable.

The Irish's loss to the Eagles cannot diminish Becton's record-breaking season and what the team has been able to accomplish. The Irish are heading to the Cotton Bowl, with the chance to post just the third 11-win season in Notre Dame history.

Becton's surprising success on the ground this year has paralleled the Irish's success on the gridiron, and he's loving every minute of it.

"I never really thought about it happening," says Becton of rushing for 1000 yards. "I always dreamed that it would be great to happen, but I never actually thought that it could or that it would."

"It's a great feeling, especially getting a thousand yards and the team's success being as it is. It really feels good."

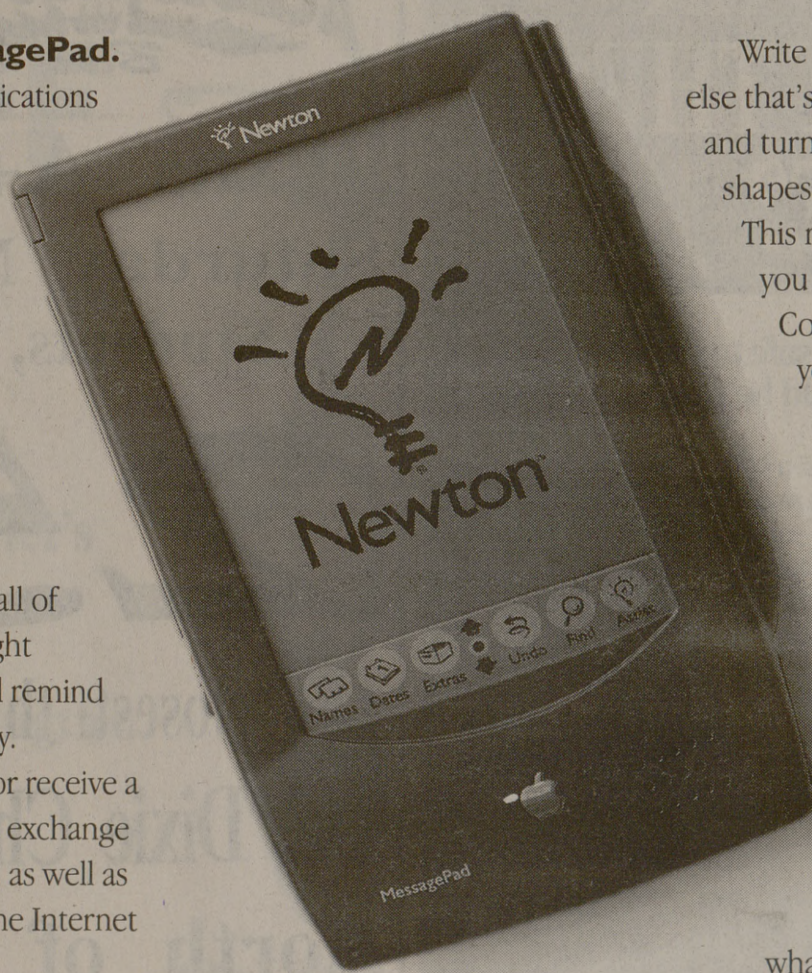
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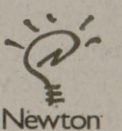


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