

Cowboys trounce Pittsburgh in opening game

Dallas defense sacks quarterback Neil O'Donnell nine times

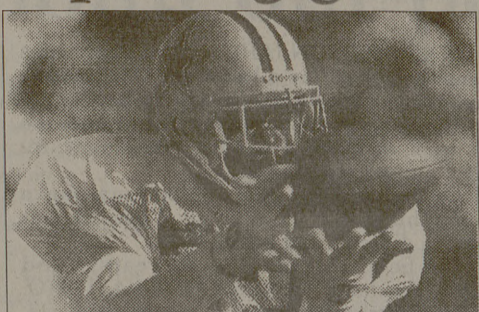
PITTSBURGH (AP) — Dallas Cowboys fans waited nervously for months to learn what effect new coach Barry Switzer would have on the two-time defending Super Bowl champions. The answer: None.

Emmitt Smith and Troy Aikman were as good as ever and a question-mark Dallas defense led by Charles Haley was even better, sacking Neil O'Donnell nine times and disrupting Pittsburgh's game plan in the Cowboys' dominating 26-9 victory Sunday.

Smith ran for 171 yards and a touch-

down and Aikman directed scoring drives on Dallas' first four possessions as the Cowboys, acting like they'd taken only a week off since the Super Bowl rather than eight months, won their ninth in a row over two seasons.

Aikman was 21 of 32 for 245 yards, many on timing pattern throws to Michael Irvin, who made eight catches for 139 yards, as Switzer and the Cowboys passed a critical opening day test by outgaining Pittsburgh 442-126.



Emmitt Smith catches a pass during AP photo practice. He rushed for 171 yards Sunday

Colts rolls over Houston

Rookie Faulk rushes for 143 yards, three touchdowns in first regular season game

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — The new-look Indianapolis Colts made quick work of the Houston Oilers' 11-game regular-season winning streak Sunday.

Marshall Faulk, one of 13 new starters, rushed for 143 yards and three touchdowns in his NFL debut as the Colts shocked the error-plagued Houston Oilers 45-14.

Indianapolis played nothing like the team that was 4-12 a year ago. The Colts scored after each of three Houston turnovers and set a team record for most

points in a season-opening game.

All six Indianapolis touchdowns were scored by players who had joined the team since the end of last season.

Faulk, the second overall pick in the draft, ran for touchdowns of 1, 2 and 11 yards. Linebacker Tony Bennett, a free agent from Green Bay, returned a fumble a Colts-record 75 yards for another touchdown, and Bears castoff Jim Harbaugh passed for two touchdowns to Floyd Turner, a free agent from New Orleans.

Sampras advances again

Loses first set of Open to Smith

NEW YORK (AP) — Annoyed by an off-kilter court, perplexed by a swirling wind, and teased by an inspired qualifier slicing, dicing and pureeing him silly, Pete Sampras had a day he'd like to forget at the U.S. Open on Sunday.

Not that he lost. Sampras is so much better than everyone else, he turns heads when he drops a set.

He rarely loses his cool about anything, but on this day even the vagaries of the net cord threw Sampras off. It got so frustrating for the defending

champion and top seed that at one point he bent down to measure the net with his racket.

Roger Smith, ranked No. 187 from the Bahamas, had just hit a baseline shot that clipped the net and flopped over. Sampras darted in to scoop it up, only to see the ball hit the net cord again and fall back on his side.

Sampras finally asserted himself after losing his first set of the tournament, but never had it easy in a 4-6, 6-2, 6-4, 6-3 victory over the second qualifier he's played in three matches.

Sampras ripped the condition of the stadium court, saying it wasn't level near the baseline and was making balls skid in that area.

Mavericks take Kidd

DALLAS (AP) — The Dallas Mavericks signed All-America guard Jason Kidd to a nine-year, \$60 million contract Saturday, hailing it as a gift to the city that for two straight years has been stuck with the worst team in the NBA.

Kidd, 21, was the first of the top eight 1994 draft choices to sign. He was selected second overall in the June draft.

"It's a tremendous pleasure for me to present to the city of Dallas what I think is one of the nicest gifts we can give — and that's a long-term commitment to one of the foundation pieces of this franchise, and that is Jason Kidd," Mavericks chief operating officer Norm Sonju said at a news conference.

The team would not divulge the contract's worth. But Kidd, when asked about reports the deal was worth \$60 million, said, "It's close."

The Mavericks said the contract forced them to renounce their rights to unrestricted free agent forwards Tony Campbell and Randy White and guard Fat Lever. White will play in Greece next season.

The 6-4 Kidd, who turned pro after his sophomore year at California, signed the contract during the news conference at Reunion Arena.

Immediately afterward, he made a \$46,100 donation to a Dallas church to purchase a basketball court for a gym, which will be one of the sites for the Mavericks fall Midnight

Basketball League. Kidd will serve as honorary commissioner.

Kidd led California into the NCAA tournament in each of his two seasons. The Mavericks, with only a total of 24 victories in the past two seasons, hope he can make the same impact for them.

"Hopefully I can do what I think I'm capable of doing for this team — and that's taking leadership right off the bat and directing this team back to where it's capable of being," Kidd said.

Kidd averaged 14.9 points, 8.4 assists and 5.9 rebounds in 59 collegiate games. He led the nation in assists last season at 9.1 per game.

Kidd angered the team in July by not showing up at a voluntary minicamp after it offered him a \$36 million insurance policy to attend the four-day camp.

He's also had other problems.

Last month, a California judge ordered Kidd to pay \$4,000 a month to support his 9-month-old son. But Alameda County Superior Court Judge Roderic Duncan said the monthly figure would be reevaluated after Kidd signed the expected multimillion-dollar contract with the Mavericks.

Kidd also faces misdemeanor hit-and-run and speeding charges in connection with a May 22 high-speed collision on an Oakland freeway.

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