

# Battered Smith keeps going and going ...



**□ Smith is on a pace to challenge Eric Dickerson's rushing record.**

IRVING (AP) — Emmitt Smith had a sore left elbow and a big smile.

Pointing to the swelling still evident on his elbow, the NFL's leading rusher said Monday he got lucky with the injury sustained in the fourth quarter of a 34-20 Dallas Cowboys victory Sunday over Arizona.

"It's doing fine, believe me," Smith said. "I'll be at practice Wednesday and I'll play against the Washington Redskins."

Smith, who has been hampered the last two seasons with shoulder and hamstring problems, was at Valley Ranch late Sunday night undergoing ice and pressure treatments.

"It's gone down a lot," Smith said. "I was worried there might be some bone fragments floating around in there. But there's no problem. It will be back to normal by Sunday."

It's going to take more than just a banged-up elbow to keep Smith, who had 116 yards rushing on Sunday, on the bench.

"You're talking about one tough man," said offensive tackle Nate Newton. "He's a football player, a tough customer."

Smith, who has three rushing titles in five years, is off to his best start with four straight 100-yard rushing games. He has 543 yards rushing and at his current pace would finish with 2,172.

Eric Dickerson has the NFL record of 2,277 yards in one season.

The Cowboys have a three-game lead, in the NFC East but Switzer said it doesn't mean a thing.

"I don't think about being ahead in the division with this many games to go," Switzer said. "I just hope we stay healthy."

Although Smith was injured with the Cowboys owning a 14-point lead late in the game, Switzer said he had to leave Smith in the contest.

"We had a ballgame on our hands," Switzer said.

Cowboy running back Emmitt Smith breaks tackles en route to a 60-yard touchdown against the Giants on Sept. 5.

AP Photo

## Born to Be WILD



Charting the Houston Astros and Texas Rangers' quests to earn wildcard spots.

National League				American League			
Colorado	74-64	.536	—	New York	74-65	.532	—
Houston	73-65	.529	1	California	73-65	.529	1/2
Chicago	69-69	.500	5	Texas	70-68	.507	3 1/2
				Kansas City	69-69	.500	4 1/2

## Astros blast Pirates, hang tough in wildcard hunt

**□ Houston now trails the Colorado Rockies by one game for the final NL playoff spot.**

HOUSTON (AP) — The Houston Astros nearly blew a six-run lead before pulling away from the Pittsburgh Pirates in a 10-5 victory Monday night that kept them close in the wild card race.

Brian Hunter had two hits and three RBIs and Dave Magadan had two hits and two RBIs for Houston, which began the night 1 1/2 games behind Los Angeles.

The Dodgers beat the Rockies 4-3, taking over the NL West lead.

The Astros now trail Colorado by one game for the fourth and final NL playoff spot.

Houston got three runs in the first and three in the third for a 6-0 lead, but Pittsburgh got five straight singles off Shane Reynolds in the fifth and scored five runs.

Rick Wilkins' RBI single in the sixth gave Houston an insurance run, and the Astros scored three more in the eighth.

Doug Brocail (6-3), who relieved Reynolds in the fifth and allowed a pair of run-scoring groundouts, got the victory. Rick White (1-3) took the loss for Pittsburgh, which dropped its fourth in a row.

John Cangelosi singled to start the Astros' first and was sacrificed to second base by Craig Biggio.

After Jeff Bagwell walked, Derrick May's double scored Cangelosi. Magadan followed with a single to center, scoring Bagwell and May.

In the third, Bagwell and Magadan and Hunter had singles and Ricky Gutierrez had an RBI groundout. Hunter also scored on the groundout as shortstop Jay Bell had a throwing error.

Pittsburgh scored five in the fifth on a single by pinch-hitter Mike Cummings, a two-run double by Al Martin and grounders by Orlando Merced and Jeff King.

## Oilers finally get offense together

**□ Houston ran up over 400 yards of offense against the Bengals Sunday.**

HOUSTON (AP) — Kevin Donnalley's helmet told the story.

The Houston Oilers offensive guard pointed to his black streak-marked headgear and told coach Jeff Fisher: "See, this is what happens when you run the football."

Scarred helmets weren't the only results

of the Oilers' surprising offensive performance in Sunday's 38-28 victory over the Cincinnati Bengals.

The m a - ligned offensive line finally meshed and provided a running game and that opened up the airways for Chris Chandler to complete 23 of 26 passes for 352 yards and four touchdowns.

"At least yesterday, they've arrived," Fisher said. "Now we have to take the next step and get some consistency."

The Oilers (2-2) have been waiting since training camp for their star-studded offensive line to solidify in the new offensive scheme of offensive coordinator Jerry Rhome.

"We've got to stay consistent now to make the running game go," Donnalley said. "There is no reason we can't do this on a regular basis against a lot of teams in the NFL."



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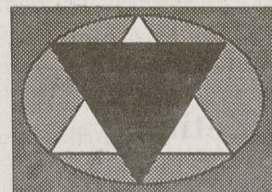
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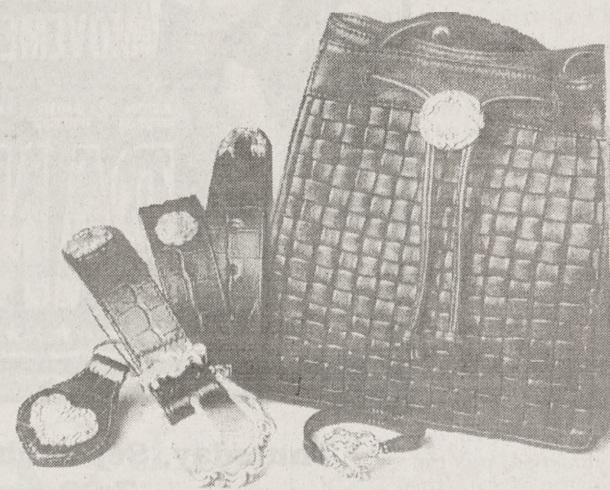
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