

Tuesday
October 17, 1995

SPORTS
BRIEFS

Rockets waive Blanton,
cut roster to 13

HOUSTON (AP) — The Houston Rockets waived forward Ricky Blanton on Monday.
Blanton played a total of 12 minutes in three preseason games.
The roster stands at 13 entering the McDonald's Championship in London this weekend.

Astros add pitcher Small
to 40-man roster

HOUSTON (AP) — The Houston Astros bought the contract of right-handed pitcher Mark Small from their Tucson club Monday and added him to the 40-man roster.
Small, 27, spent the 1995 season at Tucson. He appeared in a team-high 51 games and had a 3-3 record with a 4.09 ERA and club-best 19 saves.
Small won 11 games in relief in 1994, including three with Double A Jackson and eight with Tucson.

Timberwolves re-sign
Gugliotta for five years

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — Forward Tom Gugliotta, a restricted free agent, has agreed to terms with the Minnesota Timberwolves.
Gugliotta is believed to have agreed to a multiyear deal. Terms of the contract were not available, although he was believed to be seeking at least five years at \$5 million per season. Gugliotta, acquired from Golden State in February in a trade for 1994 No. 1 pick Donyell Marshall, was to be joined at today's practice by free agent guard Terry Porter. Porter, who played 10 seasons with Portland, also was to practice with the Wolves for the first time after agreeing to terms over the weekend.
Along with the weekend's signing of center Eric Riley, the Wolves have made five moves to improve themselves since the NBA's labor dispute ended last month.
Under Kevin McHale, who became head of the team's basketball operations last spring, Minnesota re-signed Doug West to a long-term contract, and brought in free agent veterans Sam Mitchell and Porter to provide leadership to a young team.

Ugly duds,
SMU and
Vanilla Ice

PHILIP
LEONE

SPORTSWRITER

With the exception of war, cancer and Vanilla Ice, life is a pretty good deal. But just when you think you've got the whole thing figured out and going your way, BOOM, God thumps you on the head, knocks you on your tail and throws things out of whack again. For evidence, just look at the sports world — there's some goofy things going on.

After a tie in the Alamo Dome in 1994, SMU struts into Kyle Field and nearly prances out with a win over our Aggies Saturday.
I had my deer rifle in hand and was just about ready to climb the nearest tower, when Corey Pullig's pass found the leaping Albert Connell in the back of the end zone with eight seconds left.
Barely beating SMU speaks for itself, but a win is a win. I never thought I'd actually be nervous about next weekend's game at Baylor — of course, it's easy to bitch when you're sitting behind a computer.

So the Houston Rockets win their second straight

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Bench Brigade keeps A&M focused

Although they contribute little on the court, A&M's reserves are integral to team success.

By David Winder
THE BATTALION

Glory in sports usually comes from making the big play or winning the important game.

But in the case of Bonni Chaffe, Brooke Polak and Jennifer Wells of the Texas A&M Volleyball Team, the glory comes from watching their teammates make big plays and win important games.

"Our role on the team is important," Polak said. "We're always pushing people to get better. There's a strong sense of pride when we win. Every day at practice, we're there giving our all."

Only a few times this season have the players been able to give their all during a match.

Of the 58 games the Lady Aggies have played this season, Chaffe has played in 18, Polak in two and Wells in 28.

A&M Volleyball Coach Laurie Corbelli said she feels for the players because she was a reserve on the U.S. National Team for two years before finally getting a starting position.

"I've been there, and my husband (John, who was on the U.S. Men's National Team for the 1978-79 seasons) has been there," Corbelli said. "I know what they're going through. I sympathize because I know it's not easy."

"But I still have to keep the goal of our program in mind."

The players have the same goal, wanting the Lady Aggies to win every match.

But since the playing time is sparse Chaffe, Polak and Wells have to come up with different ways to help the team win.

"My philosophy is if the team needs a smile, I give them a smile," Chaffe said. "If they need anything, water, a

pat on the back or for someone to get in their faces, I'm there."

Wells said that even though she would like to play more she understands what she has to do.

"I'm comfortable with my role," Wells said. "There can be only six players on the court. I just cheer and help them keep their intensity up."

The shy Polak said she just tries to be there for her teammates.

"On the team, I'm the quiet one," Polak said. "I just try to help keep everybody pumped up. I try to be supportive to everybody on the team."

Wells may have had the hardest time adjusting to the lack of playing time since last year she was a regular off the bench.

"I think the team is a lot better this year," Wells said. "It's more cohesive. Plus, I think the coaches are more comfortable with this year's starters. I'm comfortable with it."

Polak said she accepts her role on the bench but it has been difficult.

"In high school, if you were physically good you could play," Polak said. "I never had to sit before."

"But in college everybody is good. I've had to say to

myself, 'Brooke, you are good, you can play.'"

Even though the players do not play as much as they would like, they do not separate themselves from the starters.

"There are no cliques on this team," Chaffe said. "My best friend is on the court and my best friend is on the bench."

"There are 13 players on this team doing the best they can. This team gets along great which is unusual for a girls' team."

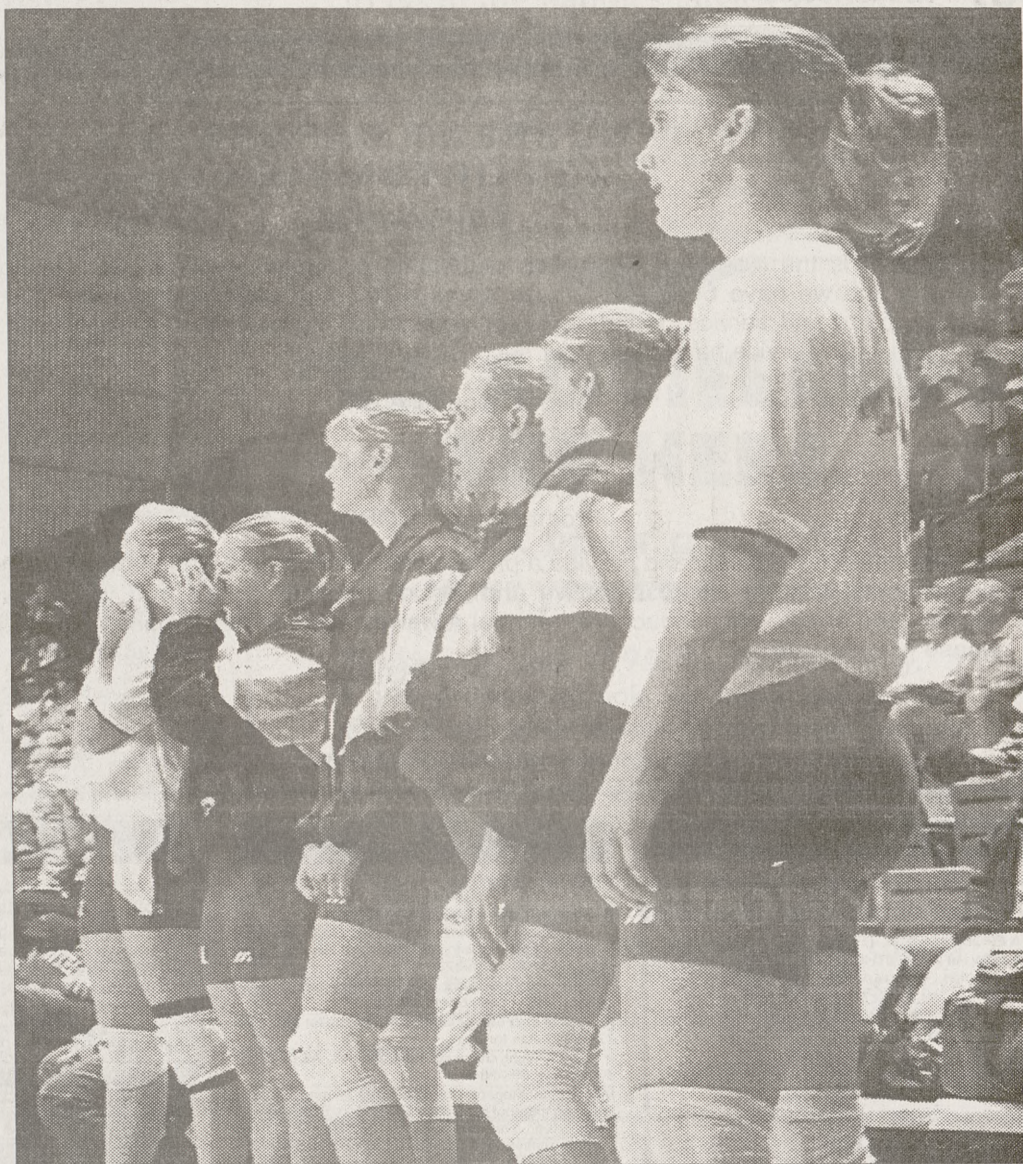
And the whole team shares the glory when Texas A&M wins.

"Laurie always tells us that only six players can play at one time," Wells said. "But with only six players, a team probably won't win a game."



"I just cheer and help them keep their intensity up."

— Jennifer Wells
A&M Volleyball Team



Evan Zimmerman, THE BATTALION

Members of the Texas A&M Volleyball Team's "Bench Brigade" watch in anticipation during the Lady Aggies' three-game victory over Baylor Friday night.

Coleman to miss start of NBA season with irregular heartbeat

The New Jersey Nets superstar will be on medication for the next several weeks.

NEWARK, N.J. (AP) — Derrick Coleman has a "minor heartbeat irregularity," and the New Jersey Nets star will miss at least the first five games of the season.

The team said Monday the 28-year-old forward will be on medication for several weeks and will be permitted to run and ride a stationary bike.

The ailment was never previously detected in Coleman, who is entering his sixth year in the NBA.

Team spokesman John Mertz said the exact diagnosis was not available, and league policy bars release of the medication Coleman will be taking.

The problem was detected by the Nets' medical staff when training camp began earlier this month, but Coleman was cleared to practice.

After a week, he was retested and sent to specialists, who agreed with the diagnosis.

The team said Coleman will be tested again after two weeks and could resume full workouts two weeks

after those tests are completed.
The NBA's regular season begins Nov. 3.

"We're just going to make sure everything is working," Mertz said.
Over the summer, Coleman asked the Nets to trade him, but reported for training camp on time early this month and refused to discuss the issue.

He missed 26 of the team's 82 games last season with assorted, numerous injuries.

Nevertheless, he led the Nets with by averaging 20.5 points and 10.6 rebounds a game.

The Nets missed the playoffs by five games.

Nets general manager Willis Reed was in Memphis, Tenn., for the Nets' exhibition game with the Orlando Magic on Monday night.

Coleman's agent, Harold MacDonald, did not immediately return a call.
Coleman, one of the league's highest paid players, is in the second year of a five-year contract that pays him a total of \$37.5 million.

The Syracuse star was the No. 1 overall pick in the 1990 NBA draft.

He went on to win that year's Rookie of the Year Trophy and has made the Eastern Conference All-Star Team three times, once as a starter.



Evan Zimmerman THE BATTALION

Texas A&M Volleyball players Kristie Smedsrud, Suzy Wentz, Stacy Sykora and Page White participate along with the crowd during a yell at G. Rollie White Coliseum Friday.

Yankees take chance on Gooden

New York signed the pitcher, often plagued by drug problems, to a one-year contract.

NEW YORK (AP) — Hoping Dwight Gooden can come back from the drug and physical problems that reduced a great pitcher to mediocrity, the New York Yankees on Monday agreed to a one-year contract with the 30-year-old right-hander.

The club has options for 1997 and 1998. Financial terms were not disclosed.

Gooden, who won the National League Cy Young Award in 1985, a year after he was Rookie of the Year, was suspended from baseball for 1995 because of violations of his drug aftercare program.

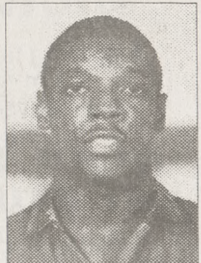
His signing with the Yankees reunites him with outfielder

Darryl Strawberry, his teammate with the New York Mets from 1984-1990. Like Gooden, Strawberry had been suspended from baseball for drug problems before the Yankees signed him last summer.

"We're very happy to have Dwight as a member of the Yankees," owner George Steinbrenner said. "Scouts from other organizations who have watched him pitch have been very, very pleased with his workouts and described his work as 'awesome.'"

"I also have been very impressed with the sincerity of Dwight's commitment to restructuring his life. He is a daily participant in the 12-step program of Narcotics Anonymous. He also has been a very active volunteer in working with youth groups in the Tampa (Fla.) area."

The Yankees' negotiations with Gooden were complicated when the players' union objected to Ray Neron's involvement in the talks. Neron is not a certified player agent and the union warned any contract negotiated with his input would be invalid.



Gooden

Both Gooden and Neron insisted the contract was put together by the pitcher.

"The chance to play for Mr. Steinbrenner is one reason I signed with the Yankees," Gooden said. "I like him, I respect him, and I want to play for him. I turned down offers from other clubs for the chance to play for the Yankees and to return to New York and play for the best baseball fans in the country."

San Francisco's Young out at least four weeks

The two-time MVP may miss the Nov. 12 game against Dallas.

SANTA CLARA, Calif. (AP) — Steve Young's battered left shoulder will sideline him for at least four weeks, meaning the San Francisco 49ers will be without their two-time NFL MVP for their Nov. 12 showdown with Dallas.

"Basically we're dealing with a strain and a bruise in his shoulder," 49ers coach George Seifert said today.

Young was sacked six times in Sunday's 18-17 loss at Indianapolis and left the field in visible pain on several occasions.

He underwent an MRI scan

after the game, which revealed the damage in his passing shoulder.

Team physician Dr. Michael Dillingham reviewed the results.

"He said, 'Don't plan on having Steve Young for a four-week period,'" Seifert said.

The injury ends Young's streak of 55 straight regular season starts, the longest among active quarterbacks.

Elvis Grbac will make his first career start Sunday in St. Louis against the Rams, who are one game ahead of the defending Super Bowl champions in the NFC West.

Young, who was 28-for-40 for 229 yards against the Colts, had been bothered by soreness in his left shoulder since the second game of the season.