

# Cowboys to scrap artificial turf

□ Jerry Jones said Texas Stadium would be grass by 1997.

IRVING (AP) — Emmitt Smith should be running on grass in Texas Stadium by 1997 if he can escape being injured again until then.

At least that's what Dallas owner Jerry Jones promised on Tuesday, saying, "there will be grass, make no mistake about it."

The NFL's leading rusher was injured trying to make a cut on the slick artificial Texas Stadium turf in the third quarter of a 24-12 victory over Kansas City on Thanksgiving Day. Smith suffered a sprained left knee and could play on Sunday against the Washington Redskins.

The near miss sent shudders through the Cowboys organization.

"There is a concern (about the turf) because we don't have the traction that should be out there," Jones said. "The turf is worn out enough that we're pushing the envelope. The turf is too slick."

However, Jones said he didn't think the turf caused Smith's injury.

"I don't think it's an issue

with Emmitt's injury," Jones said. Smith didn't blame the turf but did say the injury probably wouldn't have happened on grass.

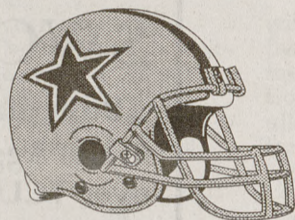
"I think grass would have given when I planted my foot," Smith said.

Smith played all of the 1994 season battling hamstring problems which were aggravated by the artificial surface.

Jones said he hoped construction would begin at the end of the 1996 season to lower the field by 15 feet and plant grass. He also wants the roof of the stadium closed. The Cowboys would have to find a strain of grass that grows indoors or put grass in for every game and remove it.

"I think grass is safer and I like the aura of it," Jones said. "You go to ice hockey games to see play on an artificial surface. You go to a football game to see a game on grass. We want it (grass) in there and I hope we'll have the grass surface ready to go by 1997."

Jones put a price tag of about \$35 million on getting a roof over the doughnut hole in Texas Stadium, lowering the field 15 feet, putting in grass, and renovating some lower level seating. He said the funds would come from his own pocket, an Irving bond issue, and business partners.



# Baseball salaries dip in 1995

□ The average major-league salary was \$1,110,766 last season.

NEW YORK (AP) — The average baseball salary went down by nearly \$58,000 this year, the first substantial decline in 30 years.

The average salary was \$1,110,766, according to final figures released Tuesday by the Major League Baseball Players Association at its annual meeting in Aventura, Fla. That was a 5 percent drop from the 1994 average of \$1,168,263.

Clubs spent more money on players this year — about \$924 million, an increase of \$15 million. And the New York Yankees became the first club with an average to top \$2 million — \$2,000,271.

But the average declined because there were far more players in the majors on Aug. 31, the last day before rosters expanded. While there were 762 players in the majors on Aug. 31, 1994, there were 824 on Aug. 31 this year. The increase was caused by more players on the disabled list.

This year's decline also was due to the huge increase in rookies, caused by the teams' desire to reduce payrolls following the 232-day strike.

There were 238 players with less than one year of major league service on Aug. 31 major-league rosters, an increase of 100 from 1994.

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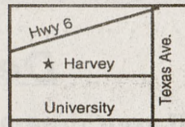
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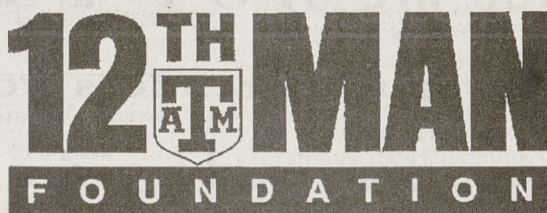
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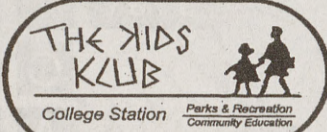
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