Astros re-sign

Berry for a year

man Sean Berry, who underw

shoulder surgery last October

HOUSTON (AP) — Third ba

After 14-year absence, Vermeil anxious to prove self ST. LOUIS (AP) — Dick Vermeil tions from exhausted reporters.

returned to coaching after a 14year absence on Tuesday, burning to prove to the St. Louis Rams and the NFL that the game hasn't passed him by.

Vermeil, 60, was so fired up during a news conference to announce his five-year, \$9 million deal as coach and president of football operations that he spoke for a half-hour before taking ques-

"Ladies and gentlemen, you can't imagine how exciting it is to be here today," said Vermeil, who nearly broke down twice during a monologue that was equal parts inspirational message and schmaltz. "I have never been, in my life, more confident or better prepared."

Vermeil made an immediate impression on two players who

attended the news conference, defensive end Kevin Carter and tight end Aaron Laing. Laing said he was so inspired he wanted to play right now.

"He got me excited," Laing said. "There's definitely an energy about him, no doubt about that. It's not the same old mundane speech." Players didn't seem too worried

about his lengthy absence, either. "George Foreman came back,"

really lose the fire.'

Vermeil led the Philadelphia Eagles to their only Super Bowl berth in 1981. He resigned after the 1982 season complaining of burnout and has been working as a college football analyst for CBS-TV and ABC-TV.

Though he's been gone from the sidelines, Vermeil said he's

was the reasoning of defensive learned plenty. A shameless tackle D'Marco Farr. "You don't name-dropper, he mentioned literally dozens of coaches he's dealt with during the past 14 years.

"People are going to say Dick's a retread, a has-been, almost a never-was because I lost the Super Bowl, and possibly over the hill," Vermeil said. 'I've received a Ph.D. from the greatest graduate school in pro-

fessional football.'

agreed Tuesday to a one-year tract with the Houston Astr worth \$2.2 million. The Astros also agreed to on year contracts with catcher To Eusebio (\$650,000) and outfiel James Mouton (\$415,000). Euse earned \$300,000 last season

Mouton earned \$196,000.

Berry earned \$995,000 with the Astros last season when he had career high 17 home runs and season when the season with the season wit RBIs last season despite play the entire year with a torn rotat

cuff in his right shoulder. Berry played in 132 games an had a slugging percentage of .492 second best on the team.

Eusebio was on the disabled list twice last season, once to have a cys removed from his left wrist and late with a broken bone in his left hand He hit .270 in 58 games with the Astros and had a .415 average in Is games at Triple-A Tucson.

·Mouton was hitting .218 when he was optioned to Tucson last season but he hit .289 the rest of the season after being recalled on June 20. He finished the season with a career high .263 and 34 RBIs.

ONES

Continued from Page 7

"His approach to the academics last year was a little bit sketchy," Barone said. "He wasn't as consistent as he needed to be and this past semester he really did a good job."

Jones said he has been focusing on the student part of student-athlete.

"I just sat myself down and tried to study a little bit more," Jones said. "I'm getting better academically. I'm pushing myself. trying to make myself study. Before transferring to A&M,

Jones played in all 27 games as a freshman at Stetson, but said he wanted to move closer to home. "I came here because I want-

ed to step up in competition and play closer to home," Jones said As a senior at The Colon High School, Jones was a three time all-district selection and

was named honorable mention lists. All-American. Since arriving at A&M, Jones

has come a long way in a short time, but the coaches feel that ment of A his best is yet to come. "I think he's grown up, he's

maturing," said Barone. "He's a man. He's taking care of business. Those are the kinds of players we like, the kind who take care of their own business."

AGGIES

Continued from Page 7

In addition to KU's frontcoo tandem of Raef LaFrentz and Scott Pollard and backcourt sharpshooters Jerod Haase and Paul Pierce, one returnee in particular causes the most gray hairs on the heads of opposing coaches

point guard Jacque Vaughn.
"They've got five starters back, and any time you go up against a team that has that kind of veteran nature, you just have to go out and enjoy playing the game," Barone said. "We've got to stop Vaughn from making all

of their other players better." "He's an awesome poin guard," adds senior guard Trac Anderson, who will draw the majority of minutes guarding Vaughn. "To be able to match up with a guy like him, and

that's a once in a lifetime thing. A&M will be looking to stop a seven-game skid that has seen the Aggies lose three of their last four games in the final seconds. A win over

Kansas would obviously be a huge step in the right direction "If you go in and get a win

against them, that can get your season rolling in a hurry - especially for us because we've been playing in some close games and haven't been able to pull them out," Anderson said. "I feel if we go in and play our best, we can come out with a win."

The Aggies' remain confident they can pull off the upset, but more than anything else, the players and coaches are excited about testing themselves against the best team in the country.

"It's not often that you get the opportunity to go in and play against a No. 1 team," freshman guard Jerald Brown said. "We see them as another team, not a No. 1 team. I've seen them on TV a couple of times this year and I believe they are beatable. Any team is beatable.'

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