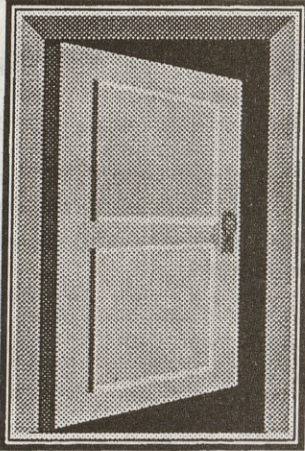


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6:00 P.M.



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# 10 SPORTS

Wednesday • September 10, 1997

## Dallas set for Philadelphia

IRVING, Texas (AP) — Most coaches don't talk about the third game of the season being a "must" win. But that's what Barry Switzer is calling Monday night's game against the Philadelphia Eagles.

The Dallas coach, mindful of last season's sorry September that put the Cowboys in a deep 1-3 hole, said Tuesday: "We've got to have this one."

Switzer's observation came after his team blew a 15-point lead Sunday to lose 25-22 in overtime to the Arizona Cardinals, leveling the Cowboys record at 1-1.

"Our goal is the home-field advantage," he said. "This is a must win. Our (home-field) fate was determined in September last year."

Dallas finished 10-6 last year, winning a fifth consecutive NFC East title but entering the playoffs as a wild card. The Cowboys beat Minnesota 40-15 at home in the first game, then tumbled 26-17 to Carolina on the road.

Puzzling Switzer is the Cowboys complete turnaround from two weeks ago when they opened with a 37-7 thumping of Pittsburgh.



The Dallas Cowboys and quarterback Troy Aikman will try to get their offense going again after a poor showing against the Arizona Cardinals.

"We went from the castle to the privy," Switzer said. "This is an important game for us, and they (the Eagles) are a dangerous opponent."

The two teams traded out in their divisional series last year with Dallas winning 23-19 at Philadelphia and the Eagles winning 31-21 at Texas Stadium.

Switzer said also underlining the importance of the Eagle visit is the division standings.

"It's our first home game and a division game," he said. "Our opponent is one who has a chance to win the division along with the Washington Redskins. Anyone can beat anyone."

The Cowboys were early eight

point favorites over the Eagles, who have lost nine of their last 10 games to Dallas.

The Dallas offense collapsed in the second half against the Cardinals. Sorely missed wide receiver Anthony Miller, who played only two downs before he was

alarmed by a tight hamstring injury. Miller was working out on Tuesday at Valley View and even though the Cowboys had a day off.

"It's going to be a day-to-day thing with him," Switzer said. "We had a true pulled hamstring. Anthony Miller could tell you when he might be back. But this thing just tightens up. He's a Pro Bowl player and he's been playing in this league for years, so he knows his body better than anybody."

Miller, who caught a touchdown pass against Pittsburgh in the opener, helps stretch the defense and take the heat off Michael Davis.

If Miller can't play, Billy Davis is the third receiver. "Billy didn't get that much practice last week," Switzer said. "He's

## Young's condition still questionable

SANTA CLARA, Calif. (AP) — The 49ers are considering giving Steve Young another week off, whether he receives medical clearance to return from his latest concussion or not.

"That certainly will be something that we will talk about to the doctors," coach Steve Mariucci said Monday. "Will another week minimize (risks) even more? I'm going to ask that question, so I can't give you an answer until I hear from the doctors."

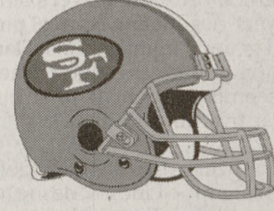
Mariucci didn't rule out the 35-year-old Young's return for Sunday's home opener against the New Orleans Saints. Team officials also wary of the implications of exposing Young to the risk of another concussion.

Young has suffered three in his last 12 games, and his agent, Leigh Steinberg, has said another concussion would trigger a serious look at retirement for the two-time NFL MVP and five-time passing champion.

Young sustained his latest concussion when he was kneed in the head by Hardy Nickerson during San Francisco's season-opening 13-6

loss at Tampa Bay. He sat out Sunday's 15-12 win at St. Louis on the recommendation of his neurologist, Dr. Joseph Lacy.

He visited Lacy on Monday and went over



the results of a brain scan taken last Thursday. The scan found no abnormalities and Young was scheduled to see a neurosurgeon for a second opinion. He has not yet received clearance to resume playing.

"If the neurologist says I sit, I sit," Young said. Mariucci said the visit with the neurosur-

geon was part of the team's cautious approach in handling Young's head injury.

"We want to be right. We want to do the right thing so I guess we're taking extra precautions," Mariucci said.

There are concerns that repeated concussions can cause permanent brain damage. Mariucci did not rule out starting rookie Drew Brees for a second straight week.

Druckenmiller for a second straight week, having Young as his backup. Reserve quarterback Jeff Brohm has a broken bone in his right hand and remains questionable this week.

Druckenmiller, the first rookie to start for the 49ers since Joe Montana in 1979, was cool and unflappable in his debut, but also made youthful mistakes. He had 10-of-28 for 102 yards, including a 25-yard touchdown pass to J.J. Stokes. He was intercepted three times.

"He grew up a ton," Mariucci said. "He gained some real good experience. The next time, he has an opportunity to play, he should be much better."

## Griffey faces tough September stretch

(AP) — A day before the All-Star game, Ken Griffey Jr. was talking about why Roger Maris' home run record will be so hard to break.

"If they don't pitch to you, you can't do it," he said back in July at Jacobs Field.

Boy, did he hit that one right on the nose.

Case in point: On Monday night, in his first game after reaching 50 home runs, Griffey drew a not-even-close, four-pitch walk in the first inning at Kansas City, drawing boos from the crowd at Kauffman Stadium.

Not that the Seattle star was complaining. "You know, we do the same to their players as they do to me," he said. "With first base open, the big RBI guy comes up, he's going to first base. Those things happen."

But what about breaking Maris' mark of 61 set in 1961? Will that happen this year?

Both Griffey, who had 18 games left going into Tuesday night's date in Kansas City, and Mark McGwire, who had 48 home runs and 19 games left for St. Louis, face tough tasks.

For Griffey, who has already homered six times this month, it would take a total of 18 home runs in September to pass Maris. Only once in baseball history has a player hit 18 homers in any month — Rudy York did it for Detroit in August 1937.

Griffey's job isn't getting any easier, either.

On Wednesday night at the Kingdome, he will face Tigers left-hander Justin Thompson, who has faced Griffey six times this season and struck him out in every at-bat.

"If I go in there looking just to do that, I'm going to get beat," Thompson said. "Even if I accomplish what everybody wants me to do, then I still have to focus on the other eight hitters."

Pitching to Junior, however, gets him juiced up.

"I can feel more adrenaline rushing through my body," Thompson said. "It is big to get a guy like that out, especially when you have men on base."

On Friday night, the Mariners take on Roger Clemens, who is 21-5 for Toronto and has not allowed a home run in 56 1-3 innings. But Griffey has done quite well against the Rocket, going 22-for-53 (.415) lifetime with five homers and 12 RBIs.

Griffey gets to play 11 more games at the Kingdome, a good park for hitters but not necessarily a big advantage to Junior. Of his career-high 50 home runs this season, 26 have come on the road.

Whether Griffey thinks he can reach Maris, though, is a mystery. He ducks, as best as he can, all questions pertaining to the home run chase, and instead prefers to focus on the Mariners' pursuit of the AL West title and their first World Series appearance.

Last week, in the midst of a four-game series at the Metrodome in which he hit four home runs against Minnesota, he kidded that he should wear a T-shirt that would list his most-used answers on the back.

Those answers included "having fun," "enjoying myself," "whatever happens, happens" and "be consistent."

Note that there was nothing about topping Maris.

"The only thing I want is to be holding that World Series trophy," he said.

No matter what occurs in October, Griffey may well be holding his first MVP award. He is batting .307 with an AL-leading 134 RBIs going into Tuesday night's game

for the first-place Mariners.

Griffey is the 15th different major league player to hit 50 home runs in a season, a feat that has been accomplished 22 times overall. It has been done three years in a row — McGwire and Brady Anderson did it in 1996 and Albert Belle did it in 1995 — the first time in history.

Griffey hit No. 50 on Sunday, making him the fastest to reach the mark since Maris and Mickey Vernon did it in 1961.

McGwire, meanwhile, is on deck to hit 50 again this season. He had 34 for Oakland before being traded to St. Louis on July 31. He has since hit 14 more. At the time of the deal, the Cardinals had three more games left than the Athletics, giving McGwire a few more swings at Maris.

But to hit 61 or more will take a lot of good pitches. Which Griffey did not see Monday night, much to the detriment of the Kansas City fans, who cheered for him rather than the Royals.

"Under the circumstances, I can see it," Griffey said. "Everybody wants to see the home run. You know it's a big thing for baseball. You've got a couple of guys going for something that's been standing for a while."

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Wednesday •

Reveille

h, the grand of traditions

Of the national's finest universities: the 12th Man, the Fightin' Texas Aggie Bonfire. But, let's not forget dear old Reveille, our beloved American college mascot, who has given frustration and alumni nothing better to do than was over a few decades ago. Lets face it. It does scientist to realize the in six-feet under. I did the Grim Reaper can you expect Reveille the Aggies battle on. They have ceased to be. Even if the dogs were sight would not be see the scoreboard. T yards from the north scoreboard. Back the 30 yards to the form would be impossible the length of the field new Sony Jumbotron can't see the scoreboard to keep up with the game. Assuming the dog they would have rolled graves with the way this season at home. Druckenmiller for a second straight week. Kansas State University would've

Mascot

There she was day, the First Aggie, around Kyle Field at the Sam Houston University football and making herself. With the beginning fall semester and the season, Aggies are reacquainted with beloved mascot Reveille and making herself. While Reveille A&M, it is never to the future. When Reveille, the dog mascot should Obviously man the next Reveille most dominant force assistance to change is an idea whose First, mixed-b-

MAIL C

Aggies first campus organ

In response to Dan Co 5 column:

Fraternities have t weed out the "differer they exercise this opt ten than not. Instead tossed salad of budd