

# Cowboys have desert mission

Continued From 8B

"This is what you work for starting in training camp in July. It's hard to get here. We're going to try to mix a little pleasure with a lot of business. It's great to be back for the third time in four years."

The Cowboys, coached by Jimmy Johnson, beat Buffalo

in the Super Bowl in 1992 and 1993. The only Super Bowls the Cowboys have lost were under coach Tom Landry and all three were in Miami. The Steelers defeated Dallas twice in the 1970s in Miami.

"Those were great games against the Steelers and I

know a lot of our longtime fans would like to see us get even like we did against Green Bay last week," said safety Bill Bates.

The Cowboys beat the Packers 38-27 in the NFC championship game last week. In the late 1960s, the Packers

beat the Cowboys in two NFL title games.

Aikman has added incentive to play well. He is promised a set of golf clubs by former Dallas quarterback Roger Staubach if the Cowboys win. "I need that set of clubs," Aikman said.

# Mailman wants special delivery for Jazz

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ing 25 points as Utah went 1-2, but shot just 40 percent doing so.

"Obviously, I'm not where I want to be," Malone says. "There are a lot of things right now that I'd like to do better. I'm just going to keep working and see what happens."

A 10-2 start, coming off a club record 60-win season, had the Jazz looking every bit like NBA contenders as the 1995-96 campaign began. But Utah lost four of its next six and has played .500 basketball since, tumbling into third place in the Midwest.

Malone hopes for a resurgence. After all, the Jazz stood just two games better at this point last year before winning nine in a row.

"The important thing is, don't push the panic button," he declares. "You're going to go through some slumps. What I

work for is the standards that I believe in, and that's just (to) keep working and get at it."

He finds a soulmate in Stockton, whose uncanny assists to Malone, along with driving layups and outside shooting have been his ticket to seven All-Star games. A starter for 10 of his 11 Jazz seasons, Stockton's performance remains steady: His 11 assists and 15 points per game is on par with his career averages (11.6 assists, 13.5 ppg).

"You can be playing well statistically and still not be getting it done as a team," Stockton shrugs. "We're not ready to start blaming anyone. We just need to start playing good ball and things will take care of themselves."

"Everybody has moments of consistency and inconsistency. We just haven't really clicked as a team yet."

Coach Jerry Sloan is more

concerned with his two stars' supporting cast. He has experimented with newcomer Chris Morris, using the 6-8 former New Jersey Net at both the No.2 guard spot, shared with Jeff Hornacek, and small forward, in conjunction with David Benoit.

At center, 7-foot Felton Spencer is back from an Achilles tendon injury, but his backups - rookie Greg Ostertag and Greg Foster, a sixth-year pro acquired last October - are still learning the Jazz system.

"Being able to make the right play, being able to make the right stop defensively, that's been basically the problem," Sloan says. "If even one guy breaks down, the whole thing falls apart on you. You have to have everybody to make it work."

While the coach tries to fine-tune the Jazz, at least he can

be fairly certain of having his two stars on the roster for some time to come. Stockton, though a free agent at the end of this season, is negotiating a new contract and has made it clear he wants to stay with Utah.

Malone also expects to finish his career with the Jazz. Last week, he signed a contract extension reportedly worth up to \$20 million that runs through the 1999 season.

"Will I play that long? I don't know, I'll see. Maybe four more years," Malone smiles.

As for the NBA ring, the Mailman remains faithful to his dream.

"No predictions, except for a long season," he says. "(But) it's still possible. Yeah, we're not playing great basketball right now, but we still have a lot of talent.... We just need to go out and get it done."

# Smith lacking confidence, coach says

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61 points. The 6-8 Harris dominated in the paint, lighting the Bulls for 26 points on 12-of-15 shooting.

The Bulls, who rank ninth in the CIAA in defense, allow an average of 80.8 points a game, haven't proved it can stop opponents on a consistent basis.

"If you go back to look at our defense, you see that's where our problem lies," Joyner said. "With our defense, I think it's more emotional than anything

else. We're just not a confident basketball team right now, and we're look for a solution to that problem."

Smith, which puts one of the CIAA's smallest teams on the floor, is still a young squad searching for identity. St. Augustine's Harris didn't have a problem figuring the shorter Bulls could be exploited, spinning in the lane for easy layups and short jumpers. His consecutive three-point plays on a dunk and layup over the last two minutes short-circuited a late Smith comeback try.

"Our coach (Norvell Lee) was like 'go to the hole, go strong and get and dunk and the (three-point play),' he said. "I was trying to get the (three-point play) all night and I

finally got it."

Bigger opponents are a fact of basketball life, Joyner said. The Bulls have to realize out that defense is the key to winning.

"Night in and night out, somebody's going to have an advantage somewhere, so that's not it," he said. "Most of the clubs we face this year are going to be larger than we are, but that's not it. The thing is we're not playing with confidence. We're a little to concerned with what outsiders are saying to us and about us and things like that and we have to focus in on how we feel about ourselves."

The next week will be important to Smith's season. If they get a split on the road, the

Bulls could get out of the division cellar. Four losses will reduce them to the spoiler's role.

"If the guys can stay focused and get their confidence back," Joyner said, "I think we'll start to play better."



Joyner

# Dungy takes over Buccaneers

Continued From 8B

coaches in the past 10 years, the longtime assistant was beginning to wonder if he'd ever get his chance.

"I'm a firm believer that the Lord has a purpose for everything," he said. "I had been close on a couple of other jobs, jobs that I thought I might have a chance for. But in the final analysis, looking back now, I know why things took place the way they did."

His low-key personality was blamed for his lack of success at advancing to the top of his profession. But that's how he has been since childhood, said his father, Wilbur Dungy of Jackson.

"When Tony was in elementary school, our home was a gathering place for a lot of kids. And they looked up to him as a leader even at that time," Wilbur Dungy said.

Dungy was born in Jackson, but lived in East Lansing for five years while his father attended graduate school at Michigan State University.

"When Tony was five, I would do my schoolwork on Sunday afternoon while keeping an eye on the football game on

television," Wilbur Dungy said. "Tony would sit there watching the game, and he knew all the players."

"After the game he could tell us every play that happened from inside the 20."

The Dungy family returned to Jackson, where he remained until his graduation in 1973 from Parkside High School. He quarterbacked Parkside for three seasons and earned all-state honors in both football and basketball.

Dungy received a football scholarship from the University of Minnesota, where he started at quarterback for the Golden Gophers for more than two seasons.

Dungy was not chosen in the 1977 NFL draft, but made the Pittsburgh Steelers as a free agent. He had a three-year playing career in the NFL and appeared in Super Bowl XIII with the Steelers, who beat the Dallas Cowboys 35-31.

His coaching career began in 1980, shortly after being waived by the New York Giants. He became the NFL's youngest defensive coordinator when Pittsburgh promoted him in 1984 at the age of 28.

Dungy replaces Sam Wyche, who was fired Dec. 27 after compiling a 23-41 record in four seasons. The Bucs were 7-9 last year, their best record since 1982, but lost seven of their last nine games.

Dungy emerged as the leading candidate to replace Wyche after Florida's Steve Spurrier rejected a \$2 million per season offer, and talks with Jimmy Johnson were short-circuited by Don Shula's retirement in Miami.

"We did a lot of research and talked to a lot of people and didn't find a negative thought or comment about Tony Dungy," Bucs general manager Rich McKay said. "He's the right man for the job."

Dungy began working on assembling a staff last week but said he hasn't officially contacted anyone. He anticipates being a hands-on coach, but stressed his assistants will have room to do their jobs.

"You teach guys what you want them to do. If you can do that, and you can communicate your ideas to the players, the players will get the job done."

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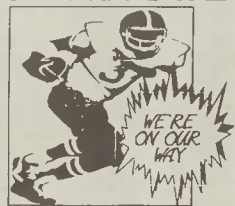
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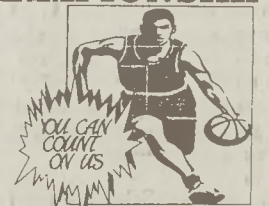
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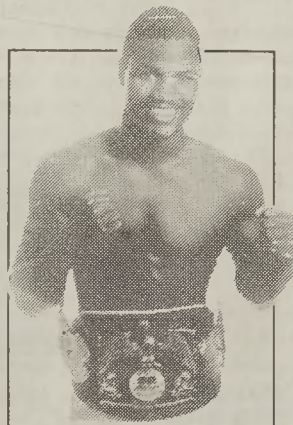
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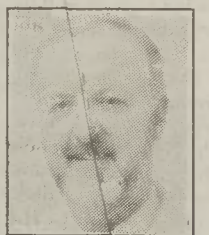
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