

# Valley Ranch quiet for now

## Cowboys

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ideas." Deion Sanders has created a stir within the Dallas organization by opting to play baseball for Cincinnati. It means Sanders, who was trying to be a full-time wide receiver as well as a full-time cornerback, won't be counted on as a two-way starter. Even with a training camp and daily work, Sanders caught only one touchdown pass as a starting receiver last year.

## NCAA regionals

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provides the opportunity to showcase N.C. Central and the city of Durham, while demonstrating the tremendous men's basketball talent in the region." Presbyterian (S.C.), which earned the No. 2 seed and the other first-round bye, will play the Elizabeth City-Elon game Friday at 6 p.m., while Central takes on the Georgia College-St.

It would stand to reason that with no work, Sanders could hardly be considered a primary target for Aikman's passes.

"I'm doing this to please myself," Sanders says from Plant City, Fla. "I will probably be there with the Cowboys for 16 games."

Probationer Michael Irvin, who missed the first five games last year because of drug-related problems, had to go back to court recently because he and several other Cowboys found they had been sold stolen airline tickets at a discount.

In this case, Irvin was testifying for the prosecution.

The Williamses, Kevin and Erik, also have made off-season news.

Free agent Kevin Williams has received an offer from Miami coach Jimmy Johnson, who drafted the speedy wide receiver for the Cowboys. The offer could be too high for the Cowboys to match.

Erik Williams has sued the Dallas Police Department and a local television station in the aftermath of the groundless rape charges.

Jones has decided to muzzle his entire staff so draft and free agent secrets won't be leaked to his enemies.

Kevin Williams, safeties George Teague and Brock Marion, and linebacker Darrin Smith are likely to be free agents who could be leaving Valley Ranch.

One top priority is to find a solid wide receiver. The other is to make Aikman happy.

"I don't know that we deserved to make it to the Super Bowl last year because of some of the things that we went through off and on the field," Aikman said.

If the Cowboys don't have a good off-season with free agents and the draft, they may not deserve it in 1997, either.

# Panthers get two men of Steel

## Mills, Seals headed to Carolina

By Herbert L. White  
THE CHARLOTTE POST

The Carolina Panthers' raid on the Pittsburgh Steelers' talent pool continues.

Carolina signed defensive lineman Ray Seals and wide receiver Ernie Mills this week, the latest Steelers to jump to the Panthers. Both were unrestricted free agents who were injured most, if not all, of the 1996 season.

"With these two players, we have added versatility at two key positions," said Carolina general manager Bill Polian. "They have played at a championship level and we're very pleased that they will be Carolina Panthers."

Seals' addition upgrades Carolina's pass rush, which led the NFL with 60 sacks last season. Although he missed all of 1996 with a rotator cuff injury, Seals amassed 29 sacks in the four seasons previously. He started for Carolina coach Dom Capers when Capers was

Pittsburgh's defensive coordinator. Seals' best season was in 1995 when he amassed 8.5 sacks, 48 tackles and a team-best 41 quarterback pressures.



Capers

"Ray Seals gives us a big, athletic playmaker on the defensive line who is able to rush the passer," Capers said. You can never have too many good defensive linemen."

Mills caught 127 passes for 2,003 yards in six seasons with the Steelers and turned in a 37-yard reception to set up Pittsburgh's game-winning score in the 1995 AFC championship game. His best season was in '95, with 39 catches for 679

yards and eight touchdowns. Mills missed most of last season with a torn anterior cruciate ligament in his left knee in the Steelers' Super Bowl loss to Dallas. He returned to the lineup late to record seven catches for 92, but is best remembered for dropping a sure touchdown pass in the season finale against Carolina that could've denied the Panthers the NFC West title and a first-round bye in the playoffs.

"Ernie Mills has the ability to help our speed at wide receiver," Capers said.

Mills and Seals join linebacker Michael Barrow as Carolina's unrestricted free agent signees. The Panthers have resigned four of their own free agents: cornerback Rod Smith, nose tackle Greg Kragen, receiver Raghib Ismail and running back Anthony Johnson.

# Bonilla is no fan of Orioles' skipper Johnson

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mightily before Johnson relented and made him the club's everyday right fielder.

For the season, Bonilla hit .221 with two home runs in 44 games as a DH. He batted .318 with 26 homers the rest of the time as a right fielder, third baseman and first baseman.

At one point last season, Johnson said that outfielder Luis Polonia had "Bobby Bonilla disease" when he went hitless in a few appearances as the DH. Johnson, general manager Pat Gillick and assistant general manager Kevin Malone decided to trade Bonilla or pitcher David Wells before the July 31 trading deadline, but Orioles majority owner Peter Angelos vetoed that decision.

Bonilla went 1-for-20 in the Orioles' five-game loss to the New York Yankees in the American League Championship Series and Johnson, Gillick and Malone decided they wanted a different kind of team this season.

They wanted a more athletic club that is less reliant on home runs, and they permitted Bonilla to depart Baltimore to sign a four-year, \$23.3 million contract with the Marlins. He'll play third base for Florida, which will

have Moises Alou, Devon White and Gary Sheffield in its outfield.

Gillick has said he believes that the Orioles have improved in right field because Bonilla's successor there, Eric Davis, is more athletic, better defensively and more of a threat on the basepaths. Last Saturday, Johnson said during a breakfast event at the Orioles' hotel in Fort Lauderdale that Alou had better be ready in left field this season, with all the ground balls that he'll be fielding with Bonilla at third base.

Bonilla said: "Somebody told me what he said. I think I played one game [actually four contests last season] at third base, so I don't know what he's talking about. He's entitled to his opinion. He's got a lot of them. He's managed in New York. He's a big hot air balloon, so I don't pay him any mind."

"I was kind of surprised" about Johnson's remarks, Bonilla said. "But then again, I shouldn't have been... I wouldn't have him manage my Rotisserie team."

Bonilla exchanged pleasantries with many of his former teammates. "They're good dudes," he said. "I had fun with them... It doesn't feel strange to be here. It's good to see everybody."

# Hayes having fun

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people said; I'm going to make my own opinion about you," Hayes said. "Then I knew Howard is where I wanted to be."

Last season, Hayes averaged 16.7 points, 7.2 rebounds and led the Bison in assists and steals. In the MEAC tournament, she was even better, averaging 19 points, 7.3 rebounds and 5.7 assists and winning the tournament's MVP award.

Since then, Hayes slowly has taken a leadership role on the team. That development has simultaneously excited and concerned Tyler, who is known for keeping tight control of her team.

"Sometimes I think, 'If this thing blows South, this could blow up in my face,'" said Tyler, who has only had three transfers in her 17 years at Howard.

"But Amanda will be the reason we go as far as we do. She is the glue that holds this team together."

Coming off their first NCAA tournament appearance since 1982, Howard won nine consecutive games during one stretch and has the top seed in the conference tournament. Hayes is leading the team in rebounds (8.8 per game) and steals (2 per game) and is the Bison's third-leading scorer with a 13.1 aver-

age.

Hayes became the 10th Howard women's player to score her 1,000th career point, and the third player on this season's team to do so. The 5-foot-7 Hayes, whom Tyler calls a "frustrated center that never had the height," joined 6-foot forward Alisha Hill and 6-5 center Denique Graves in the 1,000-point club. But Hayes reached the milestone in a manner that was a bit frustrating for Tyler.

Since Hayes was suffering from muscle spasms in her back, Tyler told her to avoid playing inside. Naturally, Hayes frequently drove to the basket. While attempting a layup that would have put her over 1,000 points, Hayes took a hard foul that sent her to the floor. She made 1 of 2 free throws for the milestone.

"I asked her why did she do that after I told her not to," Tyler said with a chuckle. "She said, 'I forgot.' She didn't forget, it's just that her aggressive instincts take over."

These are good-natured confrontations, of course, between a player and coach that have grown to trust one another.

"Before I got here, I had never been in the coach's office unless I was in trouble," Hayes said. "But here, with coach Tyler, we have a good relationship."

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