



john harris

A Rolls-Royce in a demolition derby

Don Coleman took a pitch from tailback Ed Radcliff and began skirting right end. Suddenly, he cut back against the pursuit of Washington State's defense, eluded a tackler and whoosh, he was gone — a 59-year touchdown run.

"He's beginning to look like a football player," Oregon coach Rich Brooks said with a smile after the game.

Coleman, a world-class sprinter on the Ducks' track team, has emerged so quickly as a game breaker for the Oregon offense that he will start Saturday when the Ducks meet UCLA in Los Angeles.

This is only the second year Coleman has participated in football in his entire life. The last time he played the game was in 1969 when he was a junior at Shawnee High School in Louisville Kentucky.

But Coleman's meteoric rise in a relatively unfamiliar sport is nothing new to him. He never ran track until three years ago when he was 24 years old and a freshman at Pima Junior College in Arizona. He was fresh from a four-year hitch in the Air Force and was looking forward to continuing a basketball career that had gained him a degree of notoriety in high school. There were troubles between the players and the

basketball coach at Pima, however, so Coleman decided to try track instead. He tried out in tennis shoes and ran a 9.8 hundred. By the next spring his time was down to 9.3.

"I think I've been blessed with some athletic ability," Coleman says. "Every sport I step into I seem to do well at. I guess the Lord just blessed me with some athletic talent."

Coleman has by no means established himself as a football star, however. In fact, he was a bit amazed when the coaches told him he would be in the starting lineup come Saturday.

"I was the most surprised person when they told me that Monday," he says. "Heck, I'm still learning the game."

Coleman's decision to attempt collegiate football was made just a week before Oregon began practicing in August. He approached backfield coach Ron Hudson, who took him out behind Mac Court to see if he could catch a football. Coleman passed the initial test and was given a uniform.

Things did not go easily in the beginning. Coleman stretched ligaments in his foot and missed two weeks of practice during which time he thought about quitting and also learned a lot about how football

coaches react to injuries.

"The football coaches said, 'Get up and get back in there' I said, 'these guys are crazy.' Football players play with pain. They're not like track men. Before I played football, if I had any little pain I wouldn't run."

"In track you're a Rolls-Royce. Football's a demolition derby. I've taken some bumps, so I guess I'm a stock car."

Once healthy, one of the first things Coleman had to learn, and something he is still working on, was to combine his speed with the vagaries of playing wide receiver. At his first meeting with Hudson, who has worked extensively with him both during and after practice, Coleman took his right index finger and drew a straight line on the blackboard. "Can't we just do this?" he asked.

"That's what he had envisioned as playing football," laughs Hudson. "You just don't run out and catch it; there's a lot more to it than that. The fact is that you have to recognize the (defensive) coverage before the play even starts. The defense often dictates the (pass) route."

Hudson began Coleman's cram course by breaking down the structure of defense to the very basics. He started by having Coleman run pass patterns against a single

defender. Next, he showed how coverages can be disguised as either man-to-man or zone, and then introduced a second defender, the safety. Next came what Hudson calls "under coverage," which is the linebackers' responsibility, and how it affects the coverage.

All this prompts Coleman to comment, "I don't know the ins and outs of this game yet, but I feel confident running the long patterns."

Coleman is surely becoming a long ball threat — last week he touched the ball twice against Washington State and picked up a total of 105 yards — and for this reason he has moved ahead of Curt Jackson at flanker.

"He may make a mistake, a fumble or something like that," explains Hudson, "but he might make the big play. You can't coach speed; that's what it comes down to."

UCLA, the nation's tenth-ranked team, would seem to be an unwelcome team to make your first collegiate start against, but Coleman is unawed.

"We're gonna go up against the Bruins; so what? They don't mean anything to me. I'm just going to try to get open."

And if he does, ain't nobody gonna catch him.

MVP award next for Guidry?

NEW YORK (AP) — Lafayette, La., turned City Hall over to Ron Guidry Wednesday after the New York Yankees' left-hander was named a unanimous winner of the American League's Cy Young Award.

Guidry made himself comfortable behind Mayor Kenny Bowen's desk and explained his feelings after being officially certified as the best pitcher in the AL during the 1978 season.

"I kept hearing for the last month how I had the award wrapped up," Guidry said softly at a press conference relayed by conference phone call to Yankee Stadium. "It was almost as if I had won it already. They took away some of the surprise."

It was Guidry himself who destroyed the suspense that usually accompanies the post-season award. The slender left-hander compiled an awesome 25-3 record that included a 1.74 earned run average, the lowest by an AL left-hander since Dutch Leonard's 1.01 in 1914. He had nine shut-outs, tying the AL record set by Babe Ruth in 1916. His .893 winning percentage was the highest in baseball history by a 20-game winner.

Those are impeccable Cy Young credentials, and Guidry was only the second unanimous winner in AL history, collecting all 28 first-place votes in the election by the Baseball Writers Association of America. Mike Caldwell of Milwaukee finished second and Jim Palmer of Baltimore was third.

The only other unanimous AL winner was Denny McLain of Detroit in 1968 when he won 31 games.

If it's suspense Guidry wants, he will have plenty of it next week when the AL Most Valuable Player Award is announced. Unlike the Cy Young balloting, he has

a legitimate battle on his hands in the one against Boston's Jim Rice, who had the kind of year at bat that Guidry had on the mound.

"Jim and I have done pitching and hitting like what hasn't been done before," said Guidry.

One of us will get the MVP and the other will get a pat on the back."

What if the MVP vote ends in a tie? Would sharing the MVP bother Guidry?

"No, that would be fine with me," he said. "But you'd better clear it with Jim first."

Guidry was asked if he ever thought he could produce the kind of year he had.

"I've read stories about great seasons that pitchers have had in the past," he said. "I wondered to myself what it would be like. Now I know. I experienced it. It hasn't sunk in yet, though. I guess it will when I'm out hunting in a duck blind some day."

The problem with the kind of season Guidry had in 1978 is what he does for an encore next year? The left-hander laughed at that problem.

"I'm going to approach next year the same way I did this season," he said. "My goal will be to get New York to the World Series again. If I win 15 games and those 15 wins play a role I'll be satisfied."

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Running clinic planned

Bill Bowerman, Kenny Moore and Dr. Stan James will be the featured speakers at the Carson Hall Running Clinic to be held Nov. 5-10, in the Carson Hall cafeteria.

The clinic, sponsored by the University's "Personality in Residence," will include a training run led each day at 4 p.m. by the residential staff of the dorms.

On Sunday at 7 p.m., Bowerman, former Oregon track coach and coach of the 1972 U.S. Olympic team, will speak

on "Jogging — From a Professional Perspective."

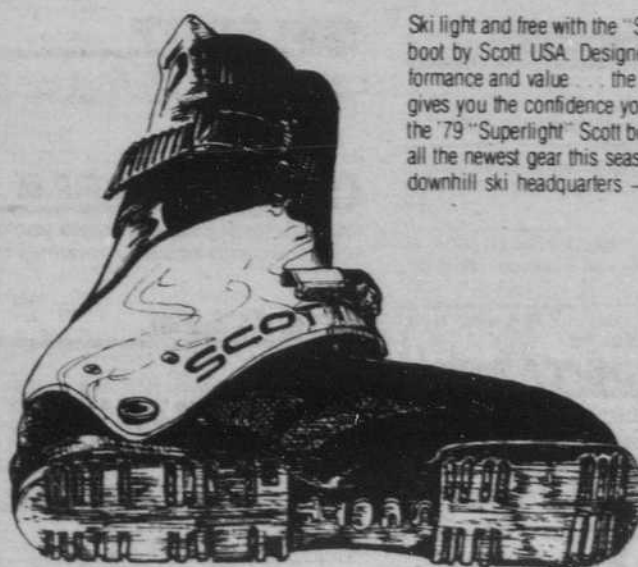
Moore, a special reporter for Sports Illustrated and a two-time Olympic marathoner, will speak on "Patterns of Training" Tuesday at 7:30 p.m.

James is the senior clinical orthopedist at the Orthopedic and Fracture Clinic in Eugene. His presentation will deal with "Running Injuries" and will be given Nov. 9 at 7:30 p.m.

The clinic is open to all University students.

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