# FISH'S WEEKEND WRAPUP

Contributed by Mike Fisher
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A skillion assorted Weekend Wrap-Up links and thoughts and whatnot. ... and a reminder: Starting Monday afternoon, occuring at all hours and lasting FOREVER, check DallasBasketball.com often for up-to-the-minute updates from Media Day and training camp. ...

* Tony Cubes has a bail-out solution – and $50 mil of his own money to get the ball rollin.’

* Old friend John Elway is getting re-married. … to a Raider! But most notable here (if you’re in a mood for an R-rated laugh): Deadspin’s quick one-liner about how John might’ve celebrated.

OK, maybe it’s just me. But I laughed out loud.

* Rick Carlisle’s view of Josh Howard after spending a few days with him recently in Winston-Salem: “All I can tell you about is the Josh Howard I've come to know,’’ Carlisle told SAS. “Josh has been working extremely hard on his game. He's getting better every single day. He may not be our very best player, but he's certainly our most important player. I can speak about him in that regard and can tell you, from what I know, he's about doing whatever he can to help this franchise.’’

Well said. If only Rick could continue serving as J-Ho’s spokesman.

* In case you are wondering? Yes, I am EXTREMELY uncomfortable with The UberMan speaking so openly about someday not being a Maverick. I mean, how can we start planning the retirement party when it seems like just yesterday we were hosting the Welcome To Dallas party?

* Devin Harris leads the Nets players to a softball game win over the Nets coaches and staff.  A couple of things:

1 Devin played third base. The Nets have somebody on their roster more qualified to play shortstop than Devin Harris?

2 What was essentially a “company softball game’’ was staged at … Yankee Stadium? Really?

3 I’d forgotten until I read the story: Eddie Najera is a Net.

4 Check out the purple prose in the story describing Devin fielding a grounder: The pitch floating through the air Wednesday at Yankee Stadium, it was a fat one. A bat whipped around, and the ball rocketed down the third-base line, destined for the outfield corner. And then – intercepted. Leather flashed, a back-handed stop impeded the ball’s progress, and as the fielder’s momentum carried him toward the foul line, he pivoted, leapt into the air and buzzed a throw to first base. The runner was out by a step.

Um, chill, dude.

Really, I played competitive softball for 30 years. I took it WAY too seriously. But not as seriously as this writer apparently takes it. Leather flashed?

* To prove to his players that goals can be accomplished, Toronto coach Sam Mitchell pledges to go the entire season without cursing. F--- that.

* My quick thoughts on Sunday’s Cowboys loss to Washington:

Far too often in Sunday’s 26-24 loss to the Redskins, members of the Cowboys defense simply didn’t show up. And then, on one key boneheaded play, a full dozen of them did.

Of course, NFL rules prevent teams from lining up a dozen people on defense. Those 12 Angry Men – with safety Pat Watkins mindlessly making himself available when his presence was not warranted – provided Washington with the opportunity to eat more late clock, to kick a chip-shot field goal and to drop the Cowboys to 3-1.
“I thought they outplayed us,’’ said Dallas coach Wade Phillips. “I thought they outplayed our offense. I thought they outplayed our defense. They outplayed our special teams and our coaching. All of it. So take your pick.’’
OK. I pick defense.
Yes, Tony Romo tossed yet another ill-advised interception. Yes, the gameplan and the circumstances combined to limit Marion Barber to just eight carries (and just 26 yards). And his backup, explosive rookie Felix Jones, didn’t touch the ball at all. Oh, and yes, Terrell Owens griped following the game because he didn’t get enough touches, either. … though he was allowed seven catches, a touchdown, and even a couple of carries.
But no, I pick defense – and I do it despite the fact that when coaches study film, they are likely to provide good grades to Zach Thomas, Jay Ratliff, Bradie James, DeMarcus Ware and a few others.

As a unit, the Cowboys' run defense was putrid, allowing Clinton Portis to pick up 121 yards on 21 carries. It simply didn’t look like the same bunch that had manhandled Cleveland, Philadelphia and Green Bay.

Pass coverage was just as lame. Kid QB Jason Campbell was allowed to look completely in control, pulling off big play after big play to his army of undersized receivers.

Ball control? Dallas permitted Washington to own the ball for 38 minutes. Big plays? Santana Moss pretty much owns the Cowboys at this point. Turnovers? We’re four games in now, and Dallas’ star-studded secondary has yet to record an interception.
Terence Newman deserves special attention here. He was completely outclassed by every receiver Washington lined up opposite him. James Thrash beat him for a short TD catch. Antwaan Randle El beat him for another. Moss used a double-move to embarrass T-New for a 53-yard gain.
And that was all just in the first half.
"The first half was basically a terrible half for me," Newman said.
Being behind 17-7 at one point in that half … while at home. … against a Redskins team that probably came in lacking the confidence to believe it could pull this off. … qualifies as a terrible half for all involved.

“The little things can get you beat,’’ Thomas said. “That's what happened today. We've just got to learn it's not going to be easy.’’

Well, it could’ve been easier. Watkins’ error was committed following a timeout, meaning the Cowboys, their players and their staff had ample time to get its stuff together, to get everything exactly right. But third-and-long turned into a gimme first down. That first down allowed Washington to milk another three minutes off the clock. Shaun Suisham made a 29-yard field goal instead of having to try one that would’ve been 20 yards longer. And the Cowboys spent the final 3:22 in desperation mode, in the end failing to execute an onside kick.

“It's my fault,’’ Watkins said. “I take the blame for it.’’

Naw, Wade is right. It’s a lot of guys’ fault. Take your pick.

* Here’s a darn good obit on Paul Newman. Of course, everyone in the sports world makes the tie to Newman’s work in “The Color of Money’’ and “The Hustler,’’ and “Somebody Up There Likes Me’’ and “Winning’’ and most of all, “Slapshot.’’ And then regular movie fans are all over “Cool Hand Luke’’ and “Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid’’ and “The Sting,’’ in which Newman played alpha-male winners.

Want something more? May I recommend “Hud,’’ “Cat On A Hot Tin Roof’’ and “The Verdict’’? He plays, respectively, a caddish loser, a homosexual loser and a drunken loser – and does all those winningly, too.