

SPORTS

Harris, Johnson decide to ride with Ponies

By Phil Foster
THE TERRELL TRIBUNE

Sterling Harris and Devonric Johnson had no intentions of signing with the same college. Next Wednesday, Feb. 3, the two former Terrell High School football stars will do just that.

Harris and Johnson, who are adopted brothers, will sign NCAA national letters of intent to play football at Southern Methodist University in Dallas.

They are the sons of Charlie and Jamie Harris. Harris gave an oral commitment to SMU on Jan. 11. Johnson committed on Jan. 10.

"God meant for us to go to the same school," Harris said. But he added that, "We wanted our own individuality. We had been Sterling and D.D. for so long. We not going to room together. We're not even in the same dorm. We requested that."

Harris, a 6-6, 275-pound offensive lineman, and Johnson, a six-foot, 215-pound linebacker, were both heavily recruited. Harris was a Top 100 recruit while Johnson was a pre-season All-American.

In addition to SMU, Harris

was recruited by Texas Tech, Notre Dame, Nebraska and Texas A&M. He visited Texas Tech and Notre Dame.

Johnson was recruited by Yale, Arkansas State, Iowa State, Louisiana Tech and Southwestern Louisiana.

Harris made his first visit to SMU on Dec. 4-6. Johnson did not visit until Jan. 8-10.

In considering colleges, Harris said he had four criteria. The first priority was academics. The others were a commitment to football at the college; as well as "clicking" with the coaches and players.

Johnson's main criteria was the academic programs. He was leaning towards Yale but decided he did want to travel that far from home.

Both found what they were looking for at SMU.

"They have great football tradition and great academics," Johnson said. "I want to be part of the new tradition. I love the coaches and the players who are already there. They are all genuine people."

Harris was torn between Notre Dame and SMU. He researched the two universities.

"I was stressed out," Harris said. "I was trying to figure it out. Notre Dame met two of the criteria. SMU met all four."

Both are glad the decision is made and the recruiting is done.

"I did feel some relief," Johnson said. "I'm happy."

Harris felt the pressure a lot more.

"I didn't want to make the wrong decision," Harris said. "I was almost tired of the recruiting process. When I made a decision, the weight was lifted from me."

One factor that weighed in both brothers' favor was their academic standing.

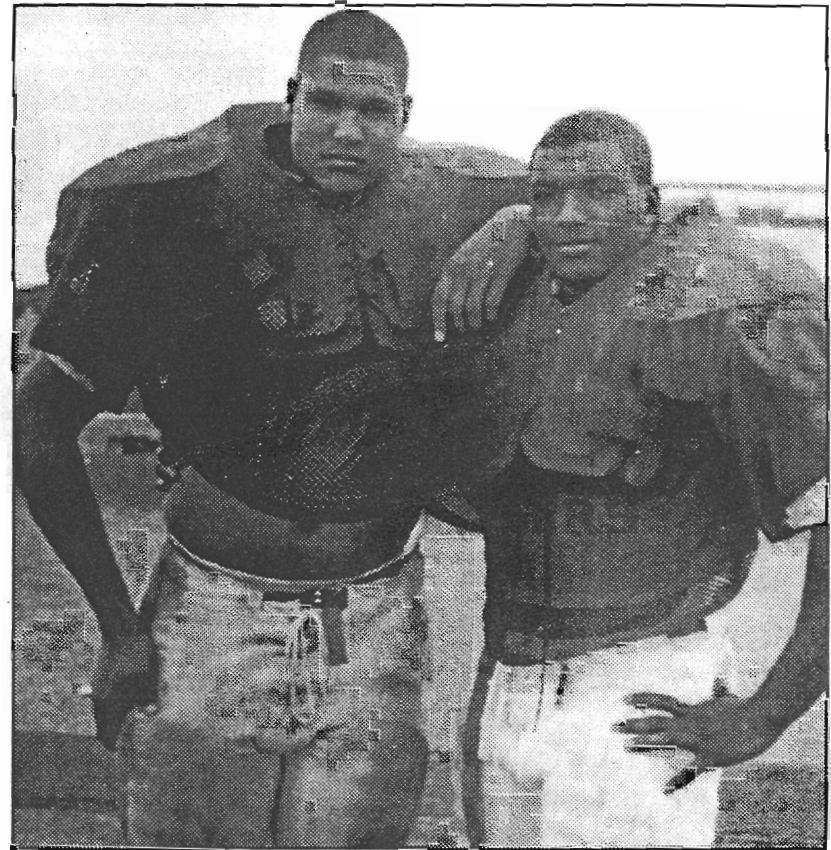
Harris carries a 3.5 grade point average. Johnson, has a 3.92 GPA.

"That took a lot of pressure off us," Harris said. "You've got to stress grades."

Harris plans to pursue SMU's five-year MBA program. Johnson, who has a photographic memory, is considering premed as a major.

Their father, Charlie said now that the process is over, he can gloat that his sons are going to his alma mater.

"This is the climax of a par-



Tribune Photo by Phil Foster

Terrell's Sterling Harris (left) and Devonric Johnson will continue their football career at SMU. Both will sign Feb. 3.

ent's life," Harris said. "This is one of the greatest awards a parent can get. The biggest rewards is that the kids thanked us for

stressing academics. One of the best things that happened to our family was the addition of Devonric."