

Might Be Best To Forget, '62 SWC Football Flopped

By HAROLD V. RATLIFF
Associated Press Sports Writer

It might be best to just forget the 1962 Southwest Conference football campaign. Frankly it wasn't very successful. For the first time in years it finished behind in inter-sectional football, winning 8, losing 11 and tying 1.

Texas' victories over Oregon and Oklahoma were the only triumphs of importance. Rice tied Louisiana State for another bright mark. But kickings were absorbed from Southern California, Maryland, Louisiana State (two), Oregon, Florida, Pittsburgh, Miami, Penn State, Boston College and Air Force. So the league just didn't win many of the big ones that would have given it national prestige.

THEN, CAPPING it all off, the conference lost its two bowl games—Texas falling before Louisiana State and Arkansas succumbing to Mississippi.

It was obvious from the start that the conference was down in strength but Texas and Arkansas looked like they might stand up with the top teams. They didn't.

A check of the rosters shows that no school has fewer than 31 players with experience returning. Rice and Texas show 51 apiece, Texas Christian 47, Texas Tech 45, Baylor 42, Arkansas 37, Texas A&M 34 and Southern Methodist 31. And there were some pretty bright names among the freshmen of last fall. Texas, for instance, will have the biggest linemen it ever got from its first-year team.

Texas again appears to be the most-loaded outfit but Baylor could be the greatest improved team in the league with its Don Trull, who should be the big man of the conference next fall. There's no reason to believe that every team in the conference won't be better.

THE TOP PLAYERS of 1963 appear to be Don Trull and Larry Elkins of Baylor, Walt McReynolds of Rice, Danny Thomas and John Hughes of Southern Methodist, Tommy Joe Crutcher of Texas

Christian, David Parks of Texas Tech, Jerry Lamb and Bill Gray of Arkansas and Duke Carlisle, Tommy Wade, Ernie Koy, Tommy Ford, Scott Appleton and Sandy Sands of Texas.

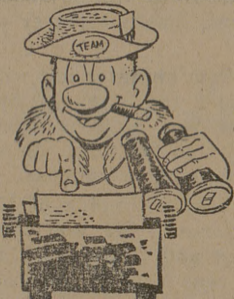
With what they had, it appears the conference coaches did a good job indeed. Jess Neely of Rice managed some showings, such as ties with Texas and Louisiana State, although he had only 12 lettermen—the smallest number of experienced boys in the league.

Hayden Fry of Southern Methodist turned in an outstanding job with little material and a dearth of manpower.

Darrell Royal at Texas certainly did a lot with what he had. Any team able to go through the season undefeated without a single breakaway threat has accomplished plenty.

FRANK BROYLES at Arkansas did a fine job but, of course, he has done it so many times it seems like routine for this young coach.

John Bridgers made a fine finish with his injury-wracked squad at Baylor. Hank Foldberg at A&M did wonders with a team that had little offense. Texas Christian was as good as expected. There was no lack of effort at Texas Tech.



FROM THE

Sidelines

By Van Conner

Football hardly seem an appropriate subject what with basketball season in full swing and the Aggies possessing the top team in the conference and one of the better teams in the nation. However, an Associated Press story (adjoining column) received at the sports desk prompted a few comments.

It seems to this writer that the poor showing by the Southwest Conference in inter-sectional football clashes points up the fact that the SWC is far from the best conference in the country. Texans appreciate SWC football because of its unpredictable finishes, hard-fought battles and stirring displays of school spirit. This makes for interesting football.

But to expect national championships, undefeated seasons and sky-rocketing scores from teams that are outweighed by more than half the teams they play is pretty unrealistic.

A look at professional football stars gives a vivid illustration of the strong and weak points of the SWC. Pro rosters abound with Texas grads—John David Crow, Bobby Layne, Don Meredith, Bobby Joe Conrad, Ray Berry, Ronnie Bull just to name a few. But the big boys in the line that make a great football team come from the East and Midwest or the deep south.

On the bright side, and there always is one to Texans, the losses came at the hands of the top squads in the country—Southern Cal, Penn State, LSU, Mississippi, Alabama, Florida and Miami, all of which played in bowl games.

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