

# Texas' MVP

By JOHN PLATZER

After a few winks like those of someone who has just awakened from a long nap, the lights on the Tower of Texas University at Austin came on Saturday night to cast an orange hue over the area.

In times past, the lighting of the tower was used to signify a special victory. Victories of any kind, especially those over A&M, have become so rare, however, that Saturday's lighting can be traced to either: 1) Texas seeing if the bulbs still work, or 2) the Austin school saying thanks to its most valuable basebatter, Torrential Downpour (rain).

It was the weekend rain combined with a Southwest Conference rule, archaic from its conception, that allowed t. u. to crawl backwards into the conference baseball championship. The combination also bestowed upon Texas the dubious distinction of being one of the few teams in history to win the title while losing the season series to both major challengers.

The rule in question has just completed its initial season in the SWC, with its only accomplishment being to prove itself completely absurd. In short, the rule says that canceled games in the second half of the season cannot be re-scheduled, except by moving them back one day to make a doubleheader out of a single game.

With the passing of this rule, the conference fathers known for bad decisions in the past, completely outdid themselves. Conditions arising where a team less than the conference's best can slide into the throne room are numerous under the act.

Among the possibilities are a team winning the crown while playing only the league's lower teams and a school taking the championship only because the better teams couldn't get in enough games.

The conference seems to be applying a variation of a famous Grantland Rice quote to the awarding of the baseball championship: "It matters not that you win or lose, but rather when it rains."

Texas, always quick to obey the SWC standards to the hilt (that is when they are to t. u.'s advantage), was the rule's beneficiary in its first year.

The Aggies and Texas were to play Friday and Saturday games last week that would decide the SWC championship between Texas and Texas Christian (the rule had already eliminated A&M). Either a sweep of the two games by the Aggies or a split would have given TCU, who defeated t. u. two out of three times this year, the title.

Outside of a double rainout, Texas' only chance of winning the championship was a sweep. The odds against such an occurrence were astronomical, to say the least. A&M defeated Texas the only time the teams met in the season.

The slim hope Texas had began to materialize Friday as heavy rains blanketed most of Texas, including Austin. T. U. did nothing outwardly to help along the rule (although students wearing strange costumes were reported doing strange dances in parts of the city) but they certainly didn't try too hard to get the games in either.

By the time the downpour quit, around 4 p. m. Saturday, there was no question that the games could not be played because of the condition of the field. The fact is, however, that if the rains had stopped within hours after starting, the games could still not have been gotten in.

Few precautions, if any, were taken to keep the field in a playable condition. A small tarpaulin was noticed over the pitcher's mound while the rest of Clark Field was left completely susceptible to the elements. By 4 p. m. Friday, the infield around shortstop was under water and looked as if a group of young children has used the area to make a box full of mudpies.

Every time a situation arises where the SWC baseball crown is awarded through a conference misjudgment in rules, t. u. seems to be first in line with its hands out. This was the third time in eight years that Texas has won the title through a rule technicality.

In 1966 they won a coin flip (an obvious way to tell the best baseball team) after they had tied with A&M, TCU and Baylor for the crown.

Baylor was denied the championship in 1961 in favor of Texas because of its exam schedule. Texas went to Waco to play the Bears in the final two games of the season, needing a split to take the crown. Baylor won the first game and then the teams started a marathon which was called in the eighth inning because of darkness, with the squads tied 9-9.

Final exams started at Baylor the next day and SWC rules say that a game cannot be played after exams begin. Baylor asked that the called game be moved to a lighted field but Texas refused because of obvious reasons.

Considering the success Texas has had in beating the Aggies in face-to-face athletic competition during the "Year of the Horns", it is not hard to realize why they have reverted to lighting the Tower in honor of their ability to control the weather.

The people who predicted the t. u. year, probably the same ones who said Landon would defeat Roosevelt and originated the Suberbill Bradley label, have a hard time explaining why no Texas varsity team has defeated an Aggie team all season.



A GAME OF TAG

Adolfo Phillips (20), Chicago Cubs, goes like a streak, but is tagged out by New York Mets' Bud Harrelson in a run-down between second and third bases in second inning of National League game in Chicago. Phillips doubled to get in. He was caught between bases when Bill Hands tapped back to pitcher Tom Seaver. Hands was safe at first. Umpire is Lee Weyer. Cubs won, 3-1. (AP wirephoto)

# Basketball Program Gets All-American

Texas A&M's basketball recruiting program was boosted Saturday with the signing of Joe Hamilton, an All-American junior college player from Christian College of the Southwest.

Hamilton is the first Negro basketball player to be recruited by Texas A&M.

The 5-10, 170-pounder is from Louisville, Ky., and was a high school All-America at nearby Lexington Dunbar High School.

Hamilton entered Christian College, located at Mesquite, two years ago and led the junior college to two straight winning seasons. This season, his team made the quarter-finals of the National Junior College Basketball Championships where they were eliminated by the subsequent champion, San Jacinto of Pasadena.

Following the JUCO championships, Hamilton participated in the Olympic basketball team tryouts. After the completion of the

tryouts, he was named as an alternate to the 1968 Olympic team. He will compete in all the team's practices but would only participate in the Olympics should one of the regular members of the team be unable to compete.

In his first year at Christian College, he averaged 32.3 points-a-game, while last season he hit at a 31.3 average. In those years, the team finished 25-6 and 30-6 respectively.

Head Basketball Coach Shelby Metcalf, who signed Hamilton, said that he (Hamilton) will be able to play next season and be eligible for post-season play.



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