

SWC Means Top Football

Frank Broyles looked like a pedestrian trapped on the freeway at 5 o'clock when he uttered the words that thousands of television viewers may be repeating this year:

"A 35-point lead just isn't safe any more."

The Arkansas coach had just watched his Razorbacks hold off SMU, 35-28, in last year's highly improbable comeback. Early in the fourth quarter Arkansas feasted on a 35-0 lead, but the

Mustangs rallied for four quick touchdowns and threatened twice more.

That was just one sample of the biggest offensive season in Southwest Conference history. With all eight teams returning big offensive guns from record-setting performances, 1969 promises to rewrite records that have not had time to collect a trace of lint, not to mention a venerable layer of dust.

And the '69 season will definitely set a record for being chronicled by television cameras.

The American Broadcasting Company (ABC) will feature SWC teams on eight of its 14 afternoons of televised college football. A ninth game could be added to the schedule, since Nov. 15 is the national "wild card" date—ABC picking the game it wants to telecast a few days beforehand.

It marks the heaviest concentration of national and regional television exposure ever by SWC members and, fortunately for fans of wide-open football, the timing could hardly be better.

Four of the eight scheduled games will be on national television — Air Force-SMU Sept. 13, Texas-Oklahoma Oct. 11, Arkansas-Texas Tech Nov. 27, and Arkansas-Texas Dec. 6.

Games scheduled for southwestern and other regional telecasting are Texas-California Sept. 20, Nebraska-Texas A&M Sept. 27, Texas Tech-SMU Oct. 25, and Texas A&M-Arkansas Nov. 1.

Likely pre-season candidates for the wild-card game are the Arkansas-SMU and Texas-TCU games, November 15. Other games that afternoon currently appearing to be of top national interest include Ohio State-Purdue, Mississippi-Tennessee and Oklahoma-Kansas.

SWC representatives bring impressive credentials to the telecasts, both in the field of recent post-season successes and eye-catching styles of play. Texas, Arkansas and SMU climaxed the 1968 season with conquests over highly-ranked teams in the Cotton, Sugar and Bluebonnet Bowls, respectively.

In their 28 conference games last year, the schools put points on the scoreboard at the rate of 49.6 an outing.

They ranged from a high of 58.3 points per game for the Longhorns' seven games to a low of 40.4 for Texas A&M and its opponents. In 17 of the 28 games, the two schools totaled at least 50 points, in seven they scored 60 or more, and twice they went 70 or better.

If the viewers aren't dizzy by the end of this season, the ABC camera views are sure to be.

Astros Begin Longest Stand

The longest (and, without the shadow of a doubt, the most critical) 1969 home stand for the Houston Astros will find them playing a dozen games against five clubs in the Astrodome between Aug. 29 and Sept. 11.

Opposition lines up this way: —The Pittsburgh Pirates, night games on Aug. 29-30, plus a day game Aug. 31.

—The St. Louis Cardinals, night games on Sept. 1-2.

—The San Francisco Giants, night games on Sept. 5-6, plus a day game on Sept. 7.

—The San Diego Padres, night games on Sept. 8-9.

—And the Los Angeles Dodgers, night games on Sept. 10-11.

In addition, there'll be two big special added attractions. The first will be "Bike Night" on Saturday, Aug. 30, when 25 free bicycles equipped with Good-year's "Crazy Wheels" will be given away to lucky youngsters. The other will be the annual "Oldtimers Game" on Labor Day (Monday, Sept. 1).

All the Astros, of course, hope that the home stand goes a long way toward solidifying their dreams of a possible National League Western Division pennant.

With Houston currently playing the best late-season ball it has ever played and with the Astros enjoying such outstanding home success (43-20), there is reason for optimism.

It won't be an easy home stand, by any means. All five clubs coming in for the 12 games have been playing good ball against Houston this season. But the Astros have been improving constantly, and expect to make September pay off big—especially when they resume playing against the Western Division clubs in the series against the Giants.

The Astros will have two September home stands. The second one, a short six-gamer, will bring Cincinnati and Atlanta to the Astrodome between Sept. 19 and 24.

Bobby Thomson, the man who hit the most climactic home run in baseball history, has joined Roy Campanella and Stan Musial in the Houston Astros' annual Oldtimers Game in the Astrodome on Monday, Sept. 1.

This year's Oldtimers Game will reunite the 1952 National League All-Star Team, who will play the Houston Oldtimers in a 5:30 p.m. game prior to the Astros-Cardinals game at 7:30 on Labor Day.

Thomson's three-run homer in the final inning of the 1951 NL playoff series gave the New York Giants a 5-4 victory over the Brooklyn Dodgers and propelled them into the World Series. "The Flying Scot" played 15 years in the majors with the Giants, Braves, Cubs, Orioles and Red Sox, finishing with a .270 lifetime average and 264 home runs.

Campanella, the ex-Dodger catcher whose baseball career was cut short by an automobile accident, and the great "Stan The Man" were inducted into baseball's Hall of Fame just last month.

"Campy" was one of the game's best catchers for 10 seasons before his tragic accident after the 1957 season. The stocky Campanella played his entire major league career with the Dodgers, compiling a .276 average with 242 homers.

Musial, of course, is one of the great players in the history of the game, owning an impressive array of career records set during his 22 distinguished seasons with the St. Louis Cardinals. A seven-time NL batting champion, "The Man" finished up with a .331 career average and 475 home runs. He collected 3,630 total hits and drove in 1,951 runs before retiring after the 1963 season.

This year's Oldtimers Game will honor retiring National League President Warren Giles, who is winding up 50 years in baseball (exactly half the pro game's existence). The 1952 All-Star Team was the first one during his tenure as league president.

Tickets to all these games are now on sale daily at the Astrodome, all Foley's stores in Houston and Pasadena and the Houston Bank and Trust Building. They also may be ordered by mail (Tickets, Box 1691, Houston, 77001), and may be charged on Texaco credit cards.

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