

Battalion Award

BY MIKE WRIGHT
Assistant Sports Editor

The time has come again to bring on the trumpets to announce the more or less monthly winning of The Battalion Award. The award is given to an organization or individual who has... in their own way... contributed to their cause in the field of public relations and in the process has shot everybody else down in flames.

In awards past, there has been only one clear-cut winner for each announcement. For example, last year when Land Commissioner Jerry Sadler issued the order to cut the hair and lower the hemlines in his office, well there was no doubt that The Battalion Award was winging its way to that celebrated elected official. Also last year, when The Daily Texan Editor ran a picture of herself in defining her editorial policy, the lovely leaflet was an automatic.

But this time, never have so many been within the realm of such an award. It would be only fitting to at least list the honorable mentions, since they did at one time have an open shot to win, but were outdone.

The bumper sticker craze has reached down south to the University of Houston as the scholastic minded Cougs have come up with the quotation "University of Texas Number 1 in Football, University of Houston Number 1 in Education". Oh, come now!

The second honorable mention goes to Assistant Sports Information Director Bill Little of the University of Texas at Austin. Little was so upset at the awarding of last month's paper wad to Texas pitcher James Street that he used taxpayer money to call the A&M Publicity Office and file his gripe. Finally the third runner-up slot goes to none other than Sen. Ralph Yarborough. The Texas senior senator was so upset at his stunning defeat that he declared that he'd been beaten by a well-organized political machine. How was he elected to the post in the first place, by bubble gum wrappers?

The May Award goes to the Chairman of the University of Texas System Board of Regents, Frank C. Erwin, Jr. Erwin outclassed all takers with this statement:

"James Street and Tommy Harmon have brought great credit to the University of Texas at Austin and they have the complete confidence and support of the Board of Regents of the UT system. They are good students, fine athletes and outstanding competitors. At the time when many of our young people are engaging in campus riots, and disruptions these two are young men in whom not only all Texans but all of the people of this country can take pride."

There is no doubt whatsoever that Street and Harmon are great athletes. The seven other conference members will acknowledge the fact that Street is a great competitor and

will back up Harmon as a good catcher. But it may be going too far to say that the two are good students. The class attendance of Harmon is unknown, as are his marks, but Street made national headlines when the senior signal caller for the national champions dropped out of school before final exams and received no credit for the fall semester, or strikes against him for returning in the spring to remain eligible for SWC baseball. A conference rule sanctions such withdrawals, provided that the athlete is in good scholastic standing at the time.

There has been some expressed doubt that Street was in such standing. A national legendary figure such as "Old Slick", could perhaps deserve some consideration by a prof if confronted with the issue.

If Street were a good student, as the statement testifies, he would not have accepted all those banquet speaking engagements in the first place. He would have been in class where a good student belongs.

College Administrations all over the country are worried with the attitudes and actions of their students. When students see another of their ranks merely get his hand slapped with a verbal "No! No!" for striking another person in the "impulsive spirit of competition," well the Administrations really have no reason to fuss at the actions of their student bodies, because they are merely in competition with the National Guard, campus police or whatever. Of course, in these cases the students always lose.

The University of Texas at Austin had a chance to let the whole matter blow over and resolve the differences quietly at the Southwest Conference spring meeting. Street, Harmon, and Texas Coach Cliff Gustafson were all called down for their conduct either in the incident or doing nothing to punish the players. Texas could have accepted the conference ruling and went about its way of winning championships and return to the good guy image around the state.

But that would be too easy. The University promptly informed the conference that it felt that it had been dealt with too severely. It also reminded the conference of the income from the TV games brought into the conference by Texas appearances and that it had to split the loot with the conference members, not being able to keep the payola for its own use. But it failed to mention that the other conference members also had to split up their loot with Texas. No conference team gets to keep the full share from a TV appearance or bowl appearance.

So the feud continues, with Texas's statement of threatening to leave the conference because of the "harsh" treatment of its players by the smaller schools and church schools, it would seem as if the Horns picked up seven quick enemies. The Southwest Conference is made up of eight teams, not seven teams and a griper.

Pro linebacker now a hippie

MILL VALLEY, Calif. (AP)—The scene was an old Victorian house on a Marin County hillside a few miles north of here.

In the basement, a girl washed clothes. In the kitchen, two young men baked bread for two health food restaurants. In the backyard, a girl sunbathed in the nude.

In his drab room, Ralph "Chip" Oliver sat on his bed—three mattresses stacked on the floor—and tried to explain why he traded the violent but lucrative world of professional football for long hair, a beard and life in a 13-member hippie commune.

"There's no way I'll return to training camp," the 26-year-old, first-string Oakland Raiders linebacker vowed Tuesday in an interview.

The story of Oliver's transition from linebacker to hippie was revealed Sunday by the Oakland Tribune in a copyrighted article.

"Football dehumanizes people," Oliver was quoted by the Tribune. "They've taken the players and made them into slabs of beef that can charge around and hit each other."

Oliver said he told Raiders' general manager Al Davis and coach John Madden that football "is a silly game. It's irrelevant

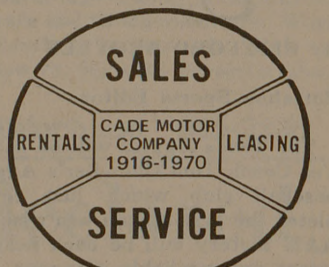
and I don't need it anymore." He went on a vegetarian diet and dropped from 230 to 200 pounds. Now the 6-foot-2 Oliver is down to 180.

He joined the commune, called the One World Family, last January.

In two years with the Raiders, Oliver says, he earned \$50,000, counting playoff bonuses.

"Material things just hold you back," he said. "Give me a couple of pairs of jeans and a good pair of boots. That's all I need."

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