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Hoosiers continue poll dominance

By The Associated Press
Indiana's Hoosiers strengthened their hold on the No. 1 spot while defending national champion UCLA moved up two spots from eighth to sixth in the major college basketball rankings released Tuesday.

The Hoosiers won easily over two Big Ten opponents last week — Michigan State, 69-57, and Illinois, 83-55 — and claimed 62 first places on the 63 ballots cast by a nationwide panel of sports writers and broadcasters. The 14-0 Hoosiers, one of only three ranked teams that remained unbeaten, collected 1,258 points in balloting.

Maryland, Marquette and Nevada-Las Vegas continued to hold down the second through fourth ratings, while North Carolina moved from seventh last week to fifth.

Maryland, 13-1, got 1,033 points; Marquette, 11-1, received 952, and Nevada-Las Vegas, 18-0 and the recipient of the only other first-place vote, had 816 points.

North Carolina moved into the spot vacated by the sporadic Deacons of Wake Forest, who lost a pair last week to Clemson and North Carolina and dropped all the way to 14th.

UCLA, 13-2, took over the sixth spot vacated by Pacific-8 rival Washington, which dropped to eighth after losing to Oregon State last week. It was Oregon State that beat the Bruins the week before and bumped them to eighth.

Rutgers was seventh, moving up from 10th last week, after rolling over Columbia and Bucknell. The Scarlet Knights, 13-0, are the third of the nation's Top 20 without a loss.

Washington, 14-1 after its 72-70 loss to Oregon State, edged St. John's, 13-1 and 12th last week, for eighth. Tennessee, 12-2, slipped from ninth to 10th after a tough Southeast Conference loss to Vanderbilt.

North Carolina State, 12-2, moved up from 13th to 11th after a stunning 68-67 upset of Atlantic Coast Conference rival North Carolina Sunday.

Alabama, 11-2, fell from 11th to 12th this week after a 71-70 loss to Florida; Oregon State, 11-4, climbed all the way from 17th to 13th; Wake Forest, 11-3, was 14th, and Notre Dame, 9-3, remained 15th.

Rounding out the Top 20 were Cincinnati, 13-2; Michigan, 11-3, 16th last week; Missouri, 13-2; West Texas State, 12-1, and newcomer Virginia Tech, 12-2.

The Top Twenty teams in The Associated Press college basketball poll with first-place votes in parentheses, and season records through Sunday:

1. Indiana (62)	14-0	1,258
2. Maryland	13-1	1,033
3. Marquette	11-1	952
4. Nev.-Las Vegas (1)	18-0	816
5. North Carolina	12-2	592
6. UCLA	13-2	576
7. Rutgers	13-0	541
8. Washington	14-1	516
9. St. John's	13-1	505
10. Tennessee	12-2	302
11. N. Carolina	12-2	292
12. Alabama	11-2	252
13. Oregon State	11-4	207
14. Wake Forest	11-3	164
15. Notre Dame	9-3	163
16. Cincinnati	13-2	160
17. Michigan	11-3	106
18. Missouri	13-2	74
19. West Texas St.	12-1	45
20. Virginia Tech	12-2	18

Stram was fired following the Chiefs' losing season in 1974 with seven years remaining on his reported \$100,000 contract. However, the Chiefs payments to Stram were suspended last fall when he refused to divulge to the club the amount of money he was making on his contract with CBS as a sports commentator.

Stram contends that his contract with Kansas City calls for him to receive full payment regardless of other employment, and he has filed suit in federal court at Kansas City seeking those payments. The Chiefs claim the contract calls for payment only of the difference between his current salary and the contract salary.

The Saints fired Coach John North after his team registered a 1-6 record for the first half of last season. North was replaced on an interim basis by Ernie Hefferle, who also registered a 1-6 mark.

Speculation that the Saints would hire Stram began almost as soon as Hefferle was appointed.

Stram inks 5 year pact with Saints

Associated Press
NEW ORLEANS — The New Orleans Saints Tuesday announced the signing of Hank Stram to a five-year contract worth "in excess of \$1 million" as head coach of the National Football League team.

The selection of Stram to be the Saints' next coach has been professional football's worst kept secret for more than a month.

"Hank and I have been talking for four months," said Saints owner John Mecom Jr. "We've talked to a number of other coaches, both in the college and professional ranks and the best man has emerged. His record speaks for itself."

Stram called the Saints post "the premier job in the NFL." He said his first order of business would be getting a staff of assistant coaches together.

Stram's hiring was reported by The Associated Press a month ago, and the official announcement has been anticipated since late December.

Stram served as an assistant coach at Purdue, Notre Dame and the University of Miami before entering professional ranks as head coach of the Dallas Texans of the old American Football League.

During his college coaching career, he was credited with developing four All American quarterbacks — Dale Samuels and Lennie Dawson of Purdue, George Izo of Notre Dame and Fran Curci of Miami. Dawson was Stram's quarterback in the AFL.

Stram won an AFL championship at Dallas in 1962 and added two more in 1966 and 1969 after the Texans moved to Kansas City.

His Kansas City Chiefs lost to Green Bay 35-10 in Super Bowl I following the 1966 championship but victimized Minnesota 23-7 in Super Bowl IV, the second conquest for the younger league and the last played before the two loops merged.

At Kansas City, Stram was known for his snappy dress, as well as for his offensive and defensive innovations.

His "floating pocket" is now routinely used by offensive units throughout football and his "stacked defense" has also been widely copied.

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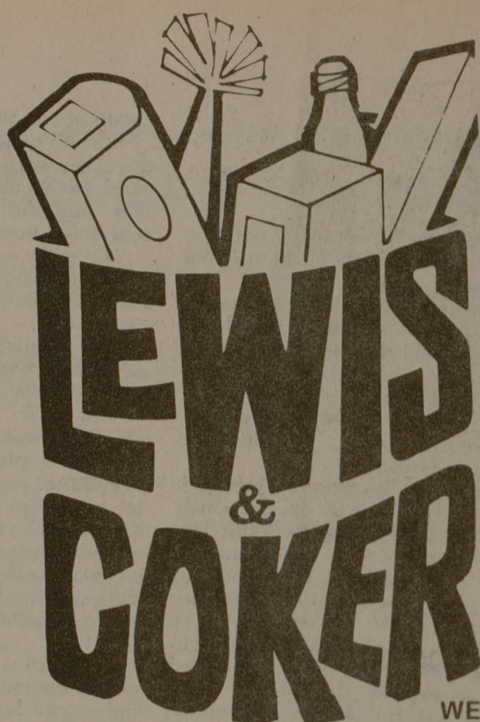
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