



TAKING IT EASY ON A SATURDAY AFTERNOON AT THE CORNER GAS STATION  
(From left to right,) Adolph Rubach, Henry Foyt and John See



USUALLY SNOOK FANS OUTNUMBER THE OPPONENTS AT AWAY GAMES  
Snook cheerleaders and fans at boys' district game with Somerville Yeguas

Team is nine-time finalist

# Small town makes big basketball

By JIM PETERS  
Battalion City Editor

SNOOK—It just don't seem right. A town right here in the Heart o' Texas and it doesn't even have a high school football team. What's worse, the residents don't seem to care. Instead, they rabidly support a school basketball program whose success is unparalleled in the state.

In nine of the last 12 years its high school boys' team has advanced to the state finals. Their average season record for that period has been 40-6 and they still hold the state record for consecutive victories—90.

The varsity girls' team, which won its state title this year, hasn't had a losing season since 1953—about the same time the

school teams moved from outdoor courts into a new gymnasium.

In addition, the junior high boys' and girls' teams this year combined for a 53-3 season record. The combined record for the junior varsity squads was 34-8.

As a banner in the gym suggests: "To avoid being a poor loser—win."

Located off State Highway 60, about 10 miles west of College Station, Snook (pop. 384) sits in the fertile Brazos River bottom-land.

Its Czechoslovakian roots can still be seen on buildings and basketball programs with names such as Slovacek, Sebesta, Orsak and Junek. Its few streets are dominated by a grocery store, service stations,

sausage company, bakery (famous for its kolaches), and the school district's three gymnasiums.

Most schools in Snook's district 27-A have ancient gyms where the out-of-bound lines are often a couple feet from stone walls, and the players dress under the stands. Snook's three gyms leads many residents to believe there is more gym space than classroom area.

As longtime Snook resident John See commented, "Anybody who wants to play ball has got plenty of places to go."

Old wooden basketball goals are found throughout the area, in the middle of a field or by the side of a barn. In fact, townspeople say they can't remember a time when there hasn't been a local basketball team. One suspects that the first settler, Josef Slovacek, brought a peach basket and ball with him when he came to the area in 1884.

And what of the name Snook itself—that symbol of Texas yokelism and name fame? Well, it seems that around the turn of the century Slovacek's small settlement decided they needed a post office. Unfortunately, the nearby town of Dabney Hill already had a post office and federal law prohibited more than one in a particular area.

According to longtime residents, the town fathers explained their dilemma to the local mail-carrier, whose name was Snook, and offered to name the town after him if he could help them. A few weeks later Snook got a post office, the mail-carrier got his name on the map, and the Dabney Hill post office was closed down because of "mismanagement."

The Texas obsession, football, crept into Snook culture very briefly in the mid-1930s, but parents quickly nixed that sport when gridiron injuries prevented their sons from helping out with the farm chores.

Athletic director and head coach Don

Horn said the absence of a football program allows a longer basketball season. Besides, he says, the high cost of outfitting a football team is just too prohibitive.

Horn also attributes the Bluejays' success to the farming nature of the community.

"Most of the players are country boys who are used to working hard. And we base our program on hard work," Horn said.

The discipline clearly shows on the court in the scrappiness and hustle of Snook players. Few individuals on Bluejay teams stand out and only a couple have ever gone on to play for major colleges. Yet, when Snook—which was a Class B school until four years ago—plays teams from larger cities they often end up besting their taller, quicker opponents.

This year the Snook boys' team posted its worst record (22-12) since 1969, which happened to be the last year it won the state championship. Nonetheless, the Bluejay squad has won its district convincingly and tonight travels to Taylor for a bi-district game with Pflugerville.

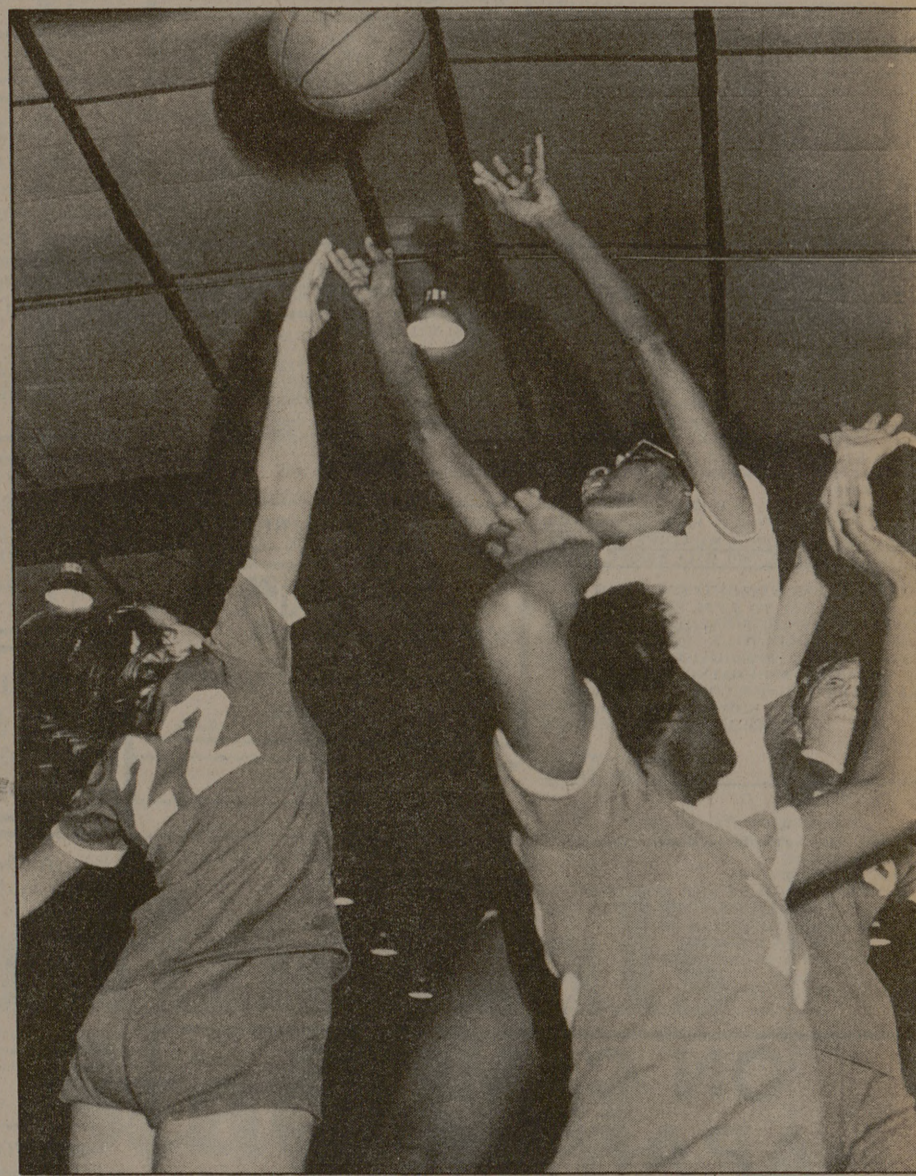
In addition to being in charge of the athletic program, Horn is high school principal, teacher, referee at junior high games, and when required, repairs the time clock and recruits youngsters to sweep the court at halftime. He also recently was named superintendent of the 550-pupil Snook Independent School District.

Snook youths get involved in the basketball program at an early age. They begin playing intramural games in the 4th grade and move on to interschool games in junior high. Almost half of the 120 students in high school are on a school basketball team.

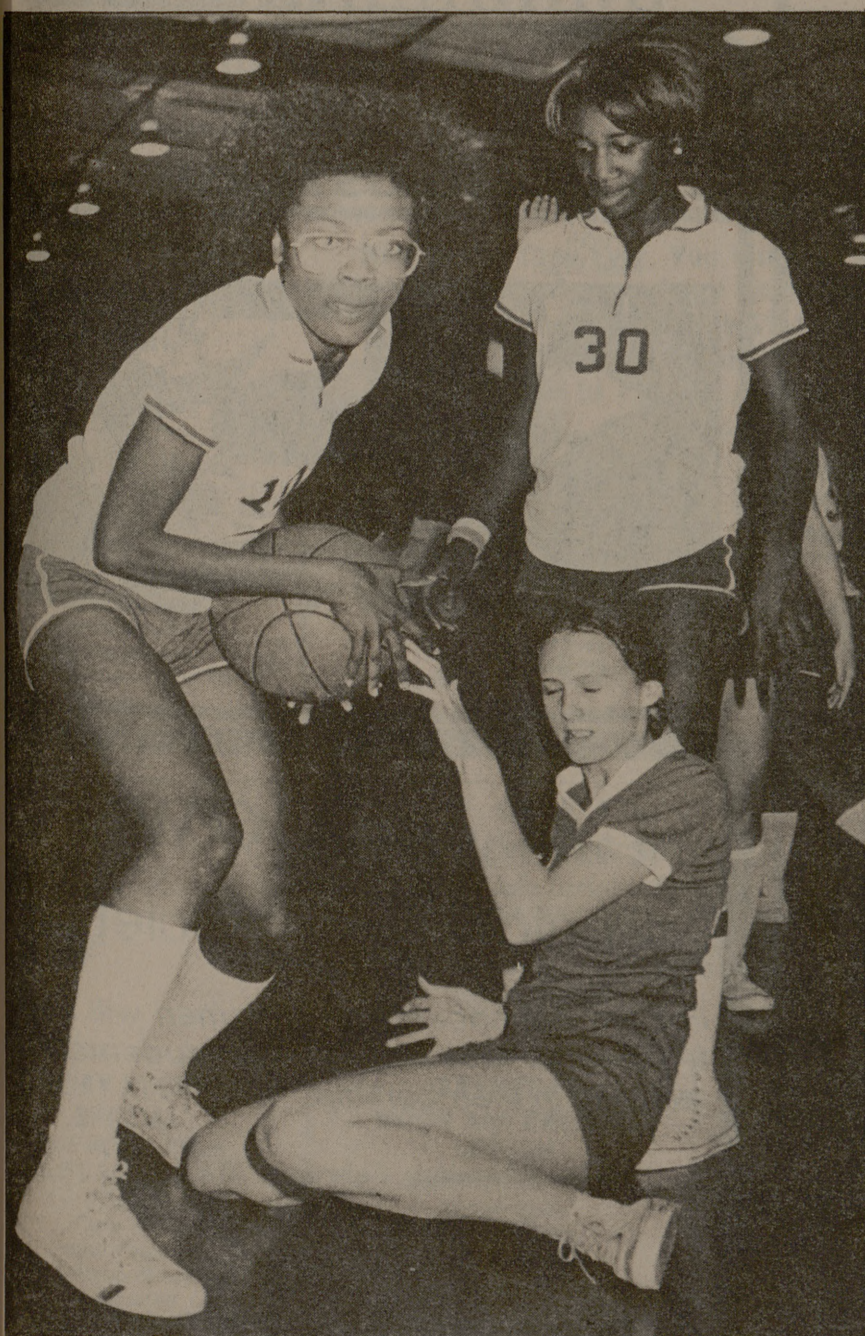
Community support of the Bluejays has always been strong. Snook fans usually outnumber their opponent's at away games. "When the Bluejays go to state, the whole town closes down and goes," one lifelong resident said.



SNOOK COACH DON HORN DISCUSSES STRATEGY  
Bluejay squad faces inter-district clash with Pflugerville tonight at Taylor



SNOOK'S SHAREN MARTIN ARCHES ONE OVER DEFENSE  
Bluejay junior high squad finished season with 23-2 record and



BLUEJAYS' SHAREN MARTIN LOOKS FOR OUTLET PASS  
Unidentified Lexington defender and Snook's Ora Flowers (30) gaze on



THE HANDS HAVE THE MAJORITY; SNOOK'S VALERIA WOODS HAS THE BALL  
Lexington Eagle defense reaches for the rebound in close contest won by the Bluejays, 26-24