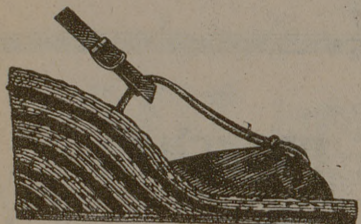


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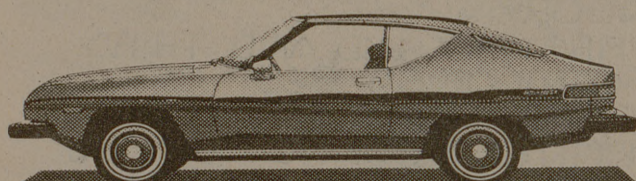


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Cries for change go unheard

SWC referees: a coach's dilemma

By TONY GALLUCCI

"Coach, we were all over his back. We hate to take this one away from you." That's for all you sports fans who always wanted to know what coaches say to each other after a game.

For those of you who attended the Aggie-Tech game, you know it was said by Tech coach Gerald Myers. Myers was speaking in confidence to Metcalf and an effort was made to eavesdrop and print something that was not meant for print.

For five years I have watched Southwest Conference basketball. I have followed the Aggies through thick and thin, wins and losses, winner's gripes and sour grapes. I have seen two title runs, a second place finish and a fourth place finish.

I have never seen a more pitiful job of officiating than I witnessed Tuesday night, courtesy of Billy Cowans and James Kyle.

Sportswriters, coaches and players may gripe in private, but

Commentary

coaches say little if anything in public, players aren't allowed to and sportswriters have no impact.

Metcalf has followed a self-imposed gag rule for several years. It seems that Cliff Speegle, our man at the SWC front office, has a tendency to make threats.

What can he do, you might ask? It's what the man hasn't done.

The Ags, the Red Raiders, the Razorbacks and now the Cougars,

have been fighting for national basketball recognition since the first black set foot on a Southwest Conference Court.

In this three-year span, the teams have played consistently better, with the Ags and the Hogs breaking the coveted top 20; the nation's top players and coaches are choosing the SWC and people are expecting better ball.

But how long has it been since an SWC team went anywhere in a post-season tournament—and why?

I would say that most teams in the conference don't know how to react to decent officiating. SWC teams are eaten alive by their opponents when the refs do allow them to play basketball.

The front office refuses to recognize that a problem exists, and therefore no action is taken.

New coaches (i.e. Sonny Allen last year, and Abe Lemmons this year) are given one season to air their gripes, before a front office ultimatum of one sort or another hangs the complaints out to dry.

Still the problem persists.

In stealing private words between coaches, maybe someone can be made aware of what really goes on.

My heart threatens to stop when I think of the obvious reply Lord Speegle would make if confronted with the situation. He'd mumble something about the ref blowing one call and it just happened to cost A&M the game.

Well then, let's review the situation.

FACT: Statistically, both teams in Tuesday's game were well within their averages for personal fouls and turnovers.

OPINION: Had the right fouls been called when they occurred, if traveling had been called when it occurred and if three-second violations had been called when they occurred, then the teams would also have been close to their averages.

"Instead, we end up with two 'professionals,' which can only be a reflect on the conference they represent.

FACT: Gerald Myers went onto the playing surface to officiate. He was called by the officiating crew. Willie Foreman flipped the bird. Mike Russell. Russell returned the gesture. All were violations of the rules of basketball, with the penalties amounting to eight free throws. None was awarded.

OPINION: The coaches, players and spectators all have one thing in common when it comes to basketball—wanting a good game. There will never be a perfect game. For that matter there never will be a perfect coach or player. But hell, we all want to go to work and remember the good players, the bad ones, and the good coaches and the bad ones, and the good judgment for better or worse. It is what sports is.

I can't remember going to a conference football game and leaving with the same bad taste in my mouth that I get at two out of three basketball games.

It isn't right to look back on a game, or a season, and remember the refs and little else.

For at least the fifth time in years I plead with you, Speegle, do something.

When was the last time you rimanded a referee?

When was the last time you rimanded a coach for rimmanding a referee?

When was the last time you well-refereed basketball game?

When was the last time you Southwest Conference game?

When was the last time you basketball game?

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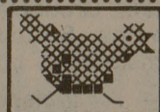
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A Division: Rangers vs. Vet School

Flatulence vs. Wounded, 4:33; Sigsbee vs. ABA's, 4:47; Bruins vs. Dutch Men, 5:03

B Division: Flying Flouriders vs. Skinheads, 3:49; Great Hope vs. E.A. 82-34; Sociology vs. Sigma Chi, 5:45; vs. GEHAW, 4:33; BSU #4 vs. J. Reds, 4:33.

CO REC

A Division: Newts vs. Neighbors, 4:33; Vet III vs. Wild Bunch, 0:20; Infinity vs. Candy A's, 6:25; Beauties & Bees vs. Has Beens, 3:45; BSU vs. Hot Tots, 5:03; Flyers vs. Saints, 6:39; Snails Talk vs. Co., 6:07; JBAH vs. Shorties, 3:58.

B Division: Younglife I vs. ASAE II, 6:00; B&B vs. Briarwood I, 20:31; Roundball vs. Flying Flouriders, 3:41; Giants vs. AS, 6:20.

C Division: Tanglewood vs. Wesley, 6:00; Rec. & Parks vs. Bum, 0:20; Gang vs. 20:0; Crow-eds vs. Soft Touch, 5:36.

CORPS

B Division: M-2 Fish vs. C-1 Upper, 6:00

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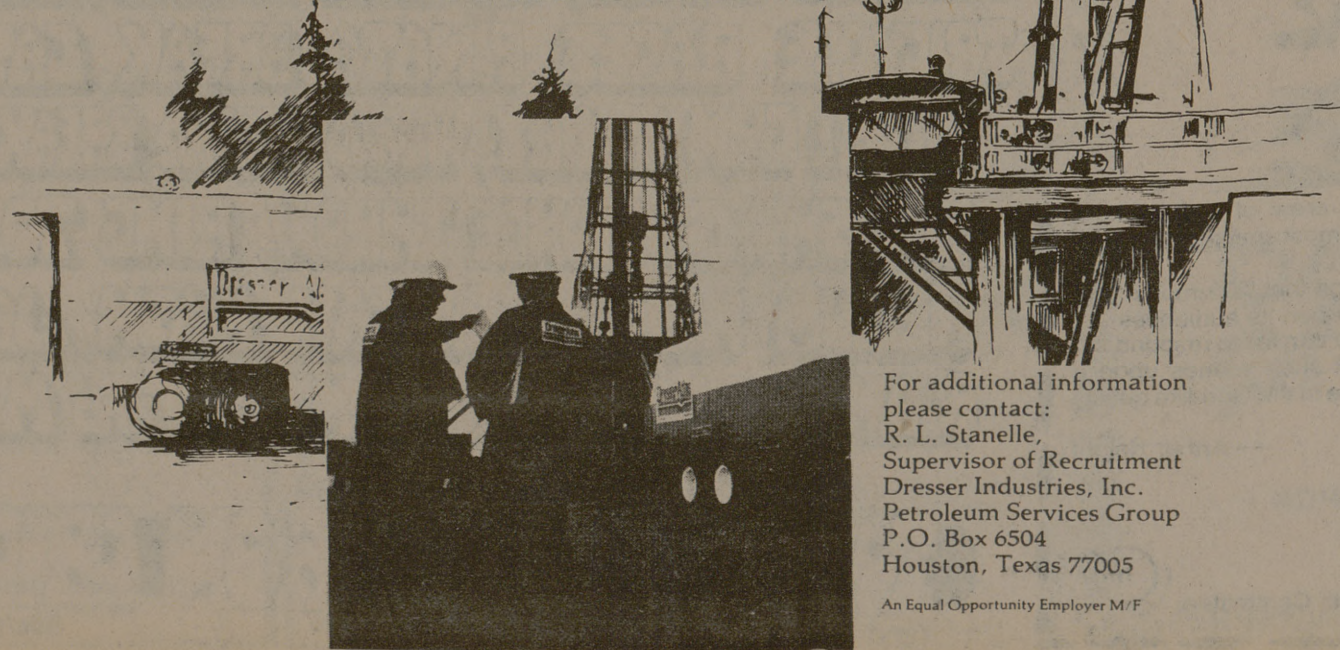
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