

sports

Goodbye to Arkansas University?

Word has filtered down from the hills of Arkansas that there is a group of people, size unknown, that would like to see the University of Arkansas withdraw from the Southwest Athletic Conference.

Spearheaded by Orville Henry, sports editor of the Arkansas Gazette, who wrote a column last month suggesting the withdrawal, the movement is apparently popular with members of the Razorback athletic staff as well as an untold number of Arkansas fans.

The idea also appeals to at least

one person outside the SWC. Barry Switzer, head football coach at Oklahoma University, reportedly



David Boggan
Sports Editor

would like to see Arkansas leave the conference. He figures this would pave the way for his Sooners, members of the Big Eight Conference, to

enter the SWC. Switzer said that OU's admission to the SWC would improve his recruiting program in the state of Texas. Last year, only about one-third of OU's football team came from Texas. Hmmm?

Frank Broyles, athletic director at Arkansas, has a long list of complaints against the SWC. Officiating problems, radio network problems and low gate receipt problems head the list. And what it all adds up to is that Arkansas feels like the black sheep of the SWC family.

Recent occurrences indicate that

Arkansas' secession from the SWC is more than just a suggestion by a Little Rock sports editor. Arkansas has added an amendment to its contracts with two SWC schools stating that the Hogs are not liable for any breach-of-contract damages should they leave the conference.

There has also been speculation that the Razorbacks would like to join the Big Eight Conference if penalty-stricken Kansas State drops out of that conference.

And Broyles has said that nine out of 10 people who offer him an opin-

ion on the issue are in favor of Arkansas leaving the SWC.

What would Arkansas' departure from the SWC mean to the conference, if such a move comes to pass? I believe there would be both positive and negative side effects.

After sliding through the icy Ozarks during basketball season, I can quickly point out one advantage of an Arkansas-less SWC. Less traveling.

However, this works both ways. Arkansas is closer to five of the Big Eight schools than it is to SMU, the Hogs' closest conference competitor.

But can the SWC afford to lose Arkansas? In a conference where three of the nine member schools have a terminal case of weak teams, the loss of the highly competitive Razorback teams would be a big blow to the balance of the SWC, not to mention its reputation.

I think the disadvantages of losing Arkansas from the SWC far outweigh any advantages, as far as the conference is concerned. Of course, I can appreciate Arkansas' situation and I fully sympathize with its complaints. The conference fathers should do everything in their power to reach an agreement with the Razorbacks before the black sheep of the conference moves on to greener pastures.

Baugh remembers the old days as a pro football quarterback

United Press International
ABILENE — Sammy Baugh hasn't touched a football in 12 years. It doesn't bother him a bit because he figures he has thrown enough of them to last him a lifetime.

"Slingin' Sammy Baugh, they called him, and every time his name was mentioned it was instantly associated with only one thing — the bullet pass. Nobody in the world could whip that football like Slingin' Sam."

Baugh's first coach in the professional ranks was Ray Flaherty. He was handling the Washington Redskins and on the very first day Flaherty saw his prize prospect fresh from Texas Christian at practice in 1937, he decided to find out about him.

"They tell me you're quite a passer," Flaherty said to openers. "I reckon I can throw a little," Baugh answered in that soft Texas drawl of his.

"Show me," Flaherty commanded. "See that receiver over there. Let's see you hit him in the chest."

Baugh looked at the receiver 30 yards downfield. "Which eye?" he inquired casually.

Most such stories are apocryphal. They're manufactured somewhere along the line to make the personality involved appear bigger than he actually is. This particular story about Sammy Baugh happens to be completely true, though. Nobody other ever had to bother building up his reputation. For the greater part of his 16 years with the Redskins from 1937 through 1952, few players net anywhere could do the kind of things with a football Baugh did.

Recalling that exchange with Flaherty, Baugh says, "I thought if he was silly enough to say that, I'd be silly enough to give him the answer I did."

Toothpick-thin as a player, Baugh, a six-footer, hasn't put on a pound since he quit. He played at 175 and is 172 now. Those crow's-foot around his eyes are a little

deeper and his face is somewhat more leathery than it was during the days he wore No. 33 on the back of his uniform, but otherwise of Sam hasn't changed that much.

He still does a lot more listening than talking and when he does have something to say, he usually punctuates his remarks with a well-aimed stream of tobacco juice every three or four minutes. At 64, Baugh spends most of his time running his ranch at Rotan, 70 miles up the line, and any time he finds a chance, he drives to Abilene or nearby Sweetwater, where he was raised, to play a round of golf.

Twice named an All-America at TCU, Baugh is enshrined in both the College and Professional Football Halls of Fame. He led the NFL in passing six different times, throwing the ball for 21,886 yards and 186 touchdowns during his career. He not only could pass, but could also kick and his 45.1 yard punting average still is an NFL record. In 1943, he led the league in passing, punting and pass interceptions and if you ask him which one achievement he's proudest of, he singles out those intercepted passes.

"When I first started in the pros, you had to play both ways," says Baugh, who was used as a tailback and later quarterback on offense for the Redskins and a safety on defense.

"If you couldn't play both ways, you didn't play. A fellow could be good on offense and poor on defense, or vice versa, and he'd be cut from the team."

"They didn't pay a helluva lot when I came in the league, either. I got \$8,000 my first year with the Redskins and that was considered good money. Best I ever made was \$19,000. The year I came up three of our players, Cliff Battles, Turk Edwards and Wayne Milner, were making \$2,700. That was for the whole season. Battles was one of the best runners I ever saw. He led the league in ground gaining and wanted \$3,000 but they wouldn't give it to him. So he quit to go into coaching."

Of all the men he met in football, Baugh says he respected George Preston Marshall, the late owner of the Redskins, most.

"He got a lot of good things done for the game. Passers had no protection at all when I first came into the league. Sometimes you had to fight for your life. Marshall called me into his office my second year and told me we had to get some rule passed to protect the passers or all of us would be killed. He worked on it and finally, he and George Halas (of the Bears) got a rule passed that helped."

The best two football players he ever saw, says Baugh, were Ace Parker and Bob Waterfield, the best passer around today, in his opinion, is Baltimore's Bert Jones, and the one who reminds him most of himself is Houston's Dan Pastorini.

After he was through playing, Baugh served as head coach, first at Hardin-Simmons University and later with the old New York Titans in the original AFL. He also was backfield coach for a while at Oklahoma State and Tulsa and with the Houston Oilers and Detroit Lions.

Baseball actually was his first love and he went to spring training with the St. Louis Cardinals in 1935 as a third baseman. They converted him to a shortstop and sent him to Rochester of the International League.

"Marty Marion was ahead of me there, and as long as he was, I knew I'd never make it with the Cardinals," says Baugh, who also played for Columbus of the American Association.

"With Columbus, the fellow I remember best was Ted Williams. He was a rookie with Minneapolis and our players always would get on him because he'd go out there to the outfield, stick his glove in his pocket, turn his back to the plate and do exercises while the game was going

Fore, Ford's coming

United Press International
IOWA CITY, Iowa — Playing in the Amara VIP pro-am tournament Monday, former President Gerald Ford did it again, slicing his third shot on the second hole into the crowd.

The ball struck Neal Lundell, 43, Cambridge, Ill., nicking Lundell's nose and hitting his chest. Lundell said he was not hurt and shook hands with Ford, who apologized.

"He told me I was a big target," the 6-foot-4, 230-pound Lundell said.

Prior to teeing off, Ford had joked with the crowd at the first hole about his sometimes off-target shots.

"I'll try to keep the ball in the fairway," Ford quipped. "And I'll try not to do what Bob Hope accuses me of doing and that's play four golf courses at once."

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