

the sports

SWC regular season wraps up

Sommerville quits at TCU

United Press International
FORT WORTH — Tim Sommersville, whose teams have managed two Southwest Conference basketball titles in two years, resigned as head coach at Texas Christian University Monday as the 1979 Southwest Conference regular season winds down.

Sommerville said he would coach the Horned Frogs in the final two games of the regular season and in the SWC tournament.

"I don't feel I ever had the time to do the type of kids I wanted for my program in the short time I've been here," said Sommersville. "I was the athletic director was asking the situation and was going to make some decision at the end of the year."

There was discussion of a one-

year contract and I did not want to work under a one-year contract."

Sommerville, 33, was the youngest coach in the Southwest Conference and he was thrown into the TCU head coaching position less than a week before the start of the 1977-78 season.

He had been hired by former TCU coach Johnny Swaim to head the Horned Frogs recruiting program.

But when Swaim quit in November, 1977 — saying he just did not find pleasure in coaching anymore — Sommersville was left with an inexperienced squad and little chance to go on the recruiting trail himself.

TCU went 3-23 last season and the Horned Frogs are 6-18 this year with two regular season games to

play — Tuesday night against Baylor and Wednesday night against SMU.

The lone conference victories for TCU over that stretch were over Rice last season and over Houston this year. Only two of this year's victories have been against colleges that award scholarships.

Despite the problems associated with this year's team, Sommersville's resignation came as a surprise. Earlier in the day at a media luncheon Sommersville had given no hint he was thinking about quitting.

Midway through the conference season a group of TCU players expressed displeasure with the type of coaching job Sommersville was doing. Some said they felt one set of discipline guidelines had been laid down for white players and another for black players.

Several of the players Sommersville recruited last year said they would not return to play for TCU next season.

Sommerville said his program was unfairly singled out by newspaper reporters, saying grumblings could be heard from any losing team. The day after the players were quoted in area newspapers, TCU played one of its best games of the season in losing a close one to league leading Texas.

"If that's how kids play when they are mad at their coach," said Texas coach Abe Lemons, "I wish my kids would get mad at me."

TCU athletic director Frank Windegger said a search for a new coach would begin immediately.

Conference play continues immediately as tonight is the last big night of regular season league action. SMU and TCU will play a makeup game Wednesday night in Fort Worth to officially close out the campaign.

Coach Shelby Metcalf's Texas Aggies host the Rice Owls tonight in the final regular season game for the two teams.

The Aggies, 10-5 in SWC play, need only a victory over Rice to secure a bye in the quarterfinals of the post-season tournament.

In their earlier meeting this year, the Aggies soundly defeated the Owls 81-62. In that contest, Texas A&M's starting five, Vernon Smith, Rynn Wright, Rudy Woods, Dave Goff and Tyrone Ladson, each scored in double figures. Woods and Ladson led the Aggies with 18 points a piece.

The Aggies and the Owls will tip off at 7:30 p.m. in G. Rollie White Coliseum.

The Texas Longhorns go after that half of the Southwest Conference championship they do not already own tonight.

Texas needs only to knock off the SMU Mustangs, which almost every other team in the league has been doing lately, to win the SWC title outright.

A Texas loss, however, combined with a win by Arkansas over Texas Tech in Lubbock, would leave the regular season championship of the SWC divided just the way it was last year — between the Longhorns and Razorbacks.

But win or lose, Texas and Arkan-

sas will go into hibernation after tonight's games until the semifinals of the league's post-season tournament March 2.

Tonight's and Wednesday night's games will determine which teams will be playing where on Saturday.

Last-place TCU (1-13), eighth-place Rice (4-11) and probably seventh-place SMU (4-10) will be the road teams in the opening round Saturday with the host teams, in all likelihood, being Texas Tech, Baylor and Houston.



Battalion photo by Lee Roy Leschper Jr.

'Just between you and me...'

There's nothing like a friendly chat to establish good relationships between players and officials. Texas A&M's Vernon Smith pauses to speak with one of the referees in the Texas

A&M-Houston game. Tonight the Aggies host the Rice Owls in the final regular season game for both teams. The game will tip off at 7:30 p.m. in G. Rollie White Coliseum.

WBL to expand next season

United Press International
DES MOINES — The Women's Professional Basketball League will be expanding from eight to at least 12 teams next year, an official said Monday.

White McEnroe, a spokesman for the league's office, said the WBL already has 28 applications from individuals and groups interested in owning franchises for the women's league, which began play this year. "We are screening them very carefully," she said.

Presently franchises are in operation in Houston, Des Moines, New York, Chicago, Milwaukee, Minneapolis and Dayton, Ohio.

She said on Feb. 27 or March 1 new franchises are expected to be granted by the league's board of directors to San Francisco and St. Louis for teams to begin play next year.

Also looking "very strong" right now are potential franchises in Boston, Philadelphia, Los Angeles and Phoenix, McEnroe said.

"There also are applications from San Diego and New Orleans and possibly Seattle and Portland," she said. "A good sign of a solid league is expansion and we have a good program under way."

In connection with the expansion plans, she said, is a requirement

that each team be prepared to operate for at least three years.

"This is something that many people don't realize," she said. "The teams have to show good faith and be in a position to run for three years before they can get in the league."

"We are probably going to limit our expansion to six because we want to make certain we don't grow too far too fast."

McEnroe said the league's management was not concerned by the small initial crowds in some locations.

She said the owners were prepared to lose money initially.

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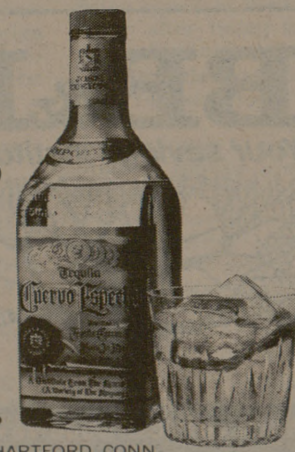


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