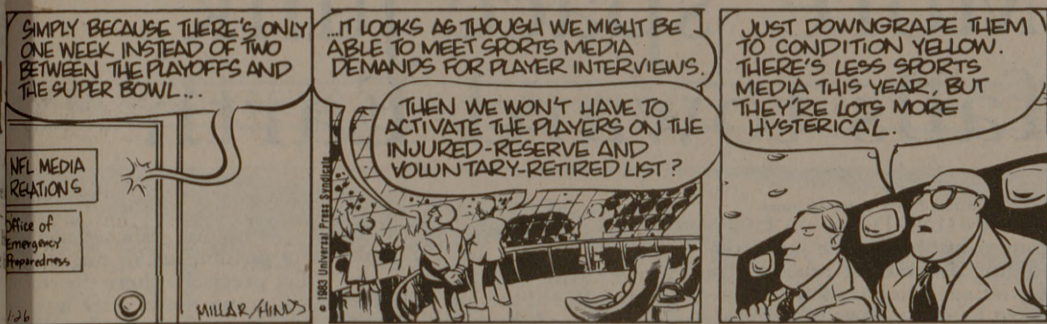


TANK McNAMARA

by Jeff Millar & Bill Hinds



Sutton says Hogs need to stay close to Coogs

FAYETTEVILLE, Ark. — Arkansas basketball coach Eddie Sutton said his 11th-ranked Razorbacks would be doing well to make it through this week without a loss. Getting past Texas Tech tonight in Lubbock would be important to stay in contention with Houston for the Southwest Conference crown and leave the Razorbacks with only one conference loss halfway through the league play, Sutton said Tuesday.

"This game is very important from the standpoint that we need to win to keep pressure on Houston," said the Arkansas coach, whose Razorbacks' only loss of the season came against the Cougars Saturday in Houston.

"Texas Tech is always tough at home. We've played a lot of games the last few days and we need to get back to the practice court. After Tech, we'll have a one-day period to have some gut practices. We've got to improve before we play Baylor."

Coming off their 75-60 loss to Houston Saturday, the Razorbacks posted an 83-64 SWC win over Texas Monday night in



Eddie Sutton says Hogs face tough road ahead

his report indicated the Red Raiders had a good starting lineup and played "with a lot of intensity."

The Arkansas coach said Tech's Bubba Jennings probably was one of the best guards in the conference. He said the Red Raiders probably would come out in a 3-2 zone which could force Arkansas to turn to its outside shooting.

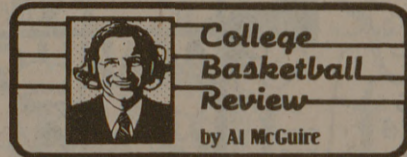
"Jennings is a very good point guard," Sutton said of the 5-10, 160-pound sophomore. "He's tremendous at getting the ball into the hands of someone who can do something with it."

Sutton said he did not think his team played very well against Texas, despite the 19-point final margin. He said the Razorbacks had been making too many mental mistakes lately.

"If we can survive this week, we'll be okay," he said. The Razorbacks defeated Texas A&M 66-64 earlier this season, one of the Aggies' three conference losses. Texas A&M has yet to play Texas Tech, but the two teams meet Monday in College Station. The Aggies play Texas in Austin Saturday.

If God could ref, would He like the home court?

Editor's note: This is the first of 12 columns The Battalion will run by former Marquette University basketball coach Al McGuire. Throughout the course of the basketball season, McGuire will offer his insight and humor weekly to Texas A&M sports fans.



College Basketball Review
by Al McGuire

Being a college basketball official is an impossible job. No matter what he does, he can't please anybody. I've always said that only God could ref... and he'd prefer the home court.

There is no way these guys do it for the money. The Big Ten, for example, pays \$300 per game, plus mileage, with a \$75 per diem, and a percentage if they stay over. But most referees have to have another job, because the NCAA says they can only work three games a week. It's done for their love of sports — so they can remain a part of the bucket game and stay close to the well.

I truly believe there's no such thing as a dishonest official. He's like the weather man. He doesn't decide where the snow falls, he just points out where it does. But I do think sometimes the crowd can work on the subconscious of the official. He might make some calls trying to appease the howling mob. But it's done subconsciously.

If a coach is going to be successful, there are certain things he must recognize about officials, like fast and slow whistles. The first thing a coach must find out in a game is if the coaches are blowing the whistle fast or slow.

A fast whistle is a high school whistle that normally doesn't allow any contact. Normally you can get this early in the game. We call these types of fouls "tickle fouls," and right away, as a coach, you must immediately call off all pressure,

both full and half-court.

On the other hand, if it's a slow whistle — a pro whistle — you play man-to-man and apply the pressure. But if it's a fast whistle you go to the zone defenses.

Normally, the ref that works in front of the bench, which we call "static row," is the more mature official, the leader of the group. He's the one you don't yell at. You usually jump on the guy who's farthest away. When you jump an official, remember, it's not for the call he just made, but for the next one. You're planting seeds you hope will germinate in his subconscious.

An example: If you play against the big man, a Keith Lee (Memphis State forward) you say to the ref: "Hey, that guy is camping in the lane! Four, five, six seconds!" Or if you're against a great quarterback, you say, "Watch that Foster! He charges on his drives!"

These are all just tricks of the trade. But now, all of a sudden, you've planted the seed. The ref is overconscious of a certain thing, and every so often from the bench you remind him. It's something you learn over the years, and it adds up to experience.

All officials have idiosyncracies and the smart coach plays to them. Some know the rule book frontwards and backwards, so maybe before the game you ask him about a crazy rule, stroking the offi-

cial, like, "What if you take a shot with two seconds to go, and the lights go out?" or that sort of thing, to try to butter the official up.

Some coaches keep a book on officials. Some refs favor charging, some favor blocking, some have quick or slow whistles. Some allow you to play like it's football and some think the game is crumpets and tea. Some are wilters. That is, if you yell at 'em, they fade out of the game. Others are rednecks, because if you yell at them they come back at you. Some are politicians, thinking of next year's assignments, because in some conferences where officials are rated, they drop off the back 25 percent and add new officials the following year.

A mortal sin in basketball is a split crew, which means one ref is from one team's conference and the other is from the other team's conference. This, in my opinion, is wrong for two reasons: It's difficult for the officials and it's not morally right for the game. The officials have never worked together before, so you're going to get inconsistencies. And the visiting coach feels the one guy is there to protect him, the other guy is hurt him, that sort of thing.

In my opinion, in an intersectional game the refs should come from the conference or area of the visiting team. All contracts are two-year contracts, so the next year it would be done in reverse.

For the NCAA tournament, each conference assigns official crews. During the early games, the NCAA has people observing the crews, grading them, and allowing the best ones to keep going along as the tournament progresses. So there's pressure on them, too. If the crews produce, they go on. It's that simple.

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