

# Tech nails SMU again; gains share of SWC title

Associated Press

Texas Tech 59, SMU 54

DALLAS — Tony Benford's three clutch free throws in the final 40 seconds netted Texas Tech a 59-54 victory over No. 13 Southern Methodist Wednesday night.

With the win, Tech gained at least a share of the Southwest Conference title and the No. 1 seed in the post-season tournament.

Tech could clinch the SWC title outright by defeating Texas Christian in Fort Worth on Saturday. The Red Raiders, who defeated SMU earlier in the season by one point, are 9-7 overall and 11-4 in the SWC race.

SMU, with a game remaining on Sunday against Houston, is 21-7 and 10-5. The Mustangs will be the No. 2 seed in the tournament which begins in Dallas March 8.

Benford, who beat SMU with a 15-foot jump shot in the final three seconds in Lubbock, hit both ends of a one-and-one with 22 seconds to play to put the game out of reach.

A seething crowd of 9,007 fans in Moody Coliseum pelted the basket with ice and even shook the basket while Benford was trying to shoot.

Benford made one free throw while the basket was swaying, but referee Moose Stubben had blown his whistle so the Red Raider had to shoot over. He made the next one.

Bubba Jennings led the Red Raiders with 23 points while Butch Moore was high for the Mustangs with 13.

Seven-foot center Jon Koncak fouled out with 1:27 to play for SMU, which went the last 4:54 without a field goal. Tech shot 52 percent from the floor to a poor 42 percent for the Mustangs.



Baylor 97, Rice 78

TCU 54, Texas 52

WACO — Baylor junior guard Carlos Briggs poured in a career-high 41 points to lead the Bears to a 97-78 victory over Rice Wednesday night that clinched his team a spot in the post-season Southwest Conference basketball tournament.

Briggs' total was the third-best single game in Baylor's history, and he became only the eighth player in school history to score over 500 points in a season. He now has 536 this year.

Briggs scored 22 of his points in the first half, which ended with Baylor ahead 44-37 on Eric Johnson's breakaway layup at the buzzer.

Baylor freshman Michael Williams scored 20 points and dished out seven assists to help keep the Bears ahead throughout the contest, although they never led by more than 12 points.

Baylor Coach Jim Haller, coaching his last game in Heart o' Texas Coliseum, cleared his bench in the second half to let everyone play. Rice closed to within three points early in the second half, but Williams kept pulling the Bears away.

The loss put Rice at 11-15 for the season and 3-12 in SWC play, while Baylor improved to 11-15 and 4-11. Terrence Cashaw scored 24 points and Greg Hines 20 for Baylor.

Both teams have only one league game remaining, and Baylor swept Rice this season, meaning even if Baylor loses Saturday at Arkansas and Rice wins at Texas A&M, the Bears would still earn the trip to the post-season tournament, where only the top eight teams advance.

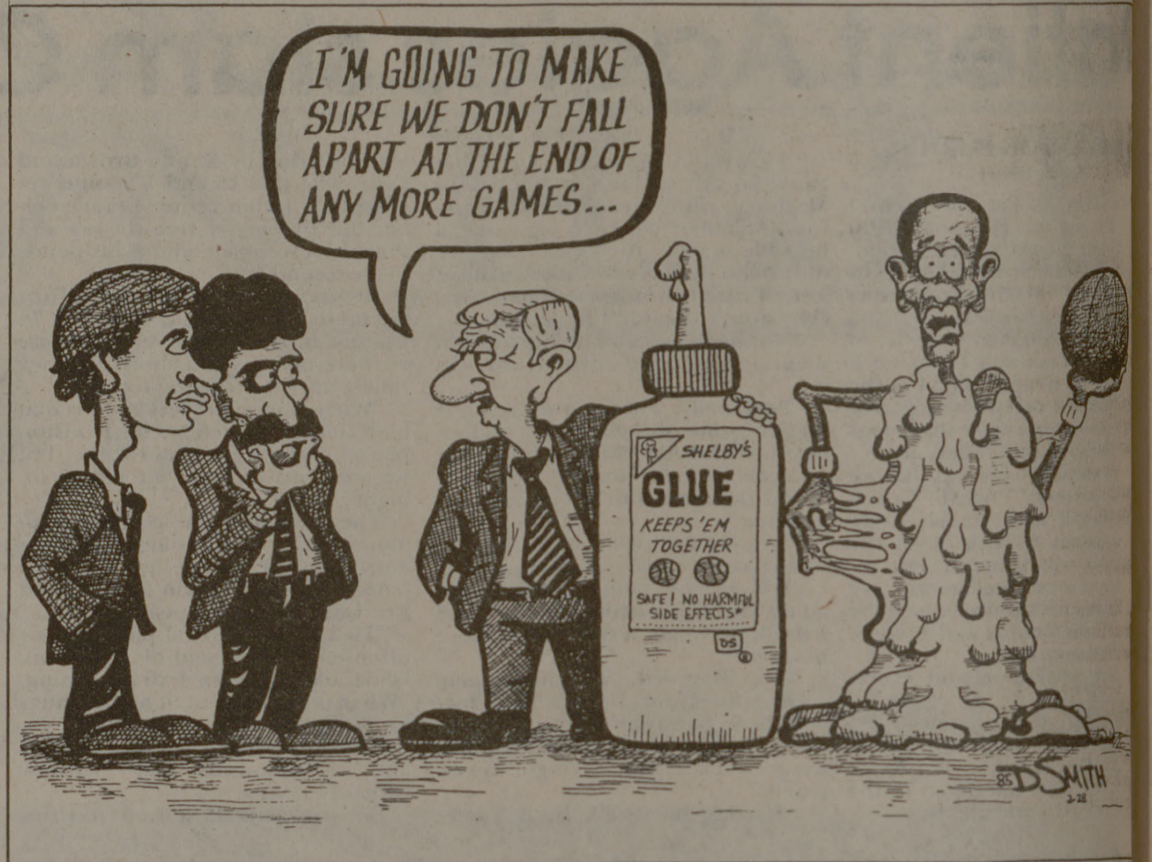
AUSTIN — Jamie Dixon and Dennis Nutt hit six of six free throws in the final 37 seconds to seal Texas Christian's 54-52 victory over Texas Wednesday night.

TCU center Greg Grissom, who failed to score or grab a rebound in the first half, kept the Frogs in the driver's seat throughout the second half with 10 points and eight rebounds.

Nutt added four second-half baskets to his two late free throws and finished the game as high scorer with 18 points.

The victory moved the Frogs to 16-10 overall and 8-7 in conference play. Texas, which ended conference play at 7-9, fell to 14-12 overall.

Carlton Cooper, who along with Mike Wacker scored 17 points for the Longhorns, almost pulled the game out with two straight 20-foot jump shots in the final 49 seconds, which kept Texas to within two points.



## Lone Bear Haller-s for his ex-coach

Associated Press

WACO — The only player who failed to sign a letter expressing discontent with former Baylor basketball coach Jim Haller says he didn't want to cause the coach more pain.

Although Carlos Briggs was in Haller's doghouse about six weeks ago because of erratic defense and poor shot selection, he is now the only Baylor player officially still standing in the coach's corner.

Haller resigned Friday, effective at season's end, after former center John Wheeler secretly taped a conversation where the coach gave him

\$172 for car payments and discussed the use of steroids.

Only Briggs spoke in favor of the coach.

"You've got to have a conscience," Briggs said. "You have to feel sorry for a guy who loses his job, whether it's coach Haller or some guy who works in a steel mill."

On Monday, 13 of the 14 Baylor players — minus Briggs — signed a letter saying they were upset that Wheeler was being made the scapegoat for Haller's resignation. And although several players later said they felt pressured by teammates

into signing the letter and what they hadn't, Briggs remained the only one who hadn't written his name.

"It's hard at practice being the only one of 14 who didn't sign the letter," he said. "I sit there in the locker room and I can feel the guys thinking, 'Carlos didn't sign, he's not with us.' I am with the team. I just didn't think the letter was necessary."

"The man had already resigned. What else do they want him to do? Why keep kicking a man while he's down?"

*J. Wayne Stark*  
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