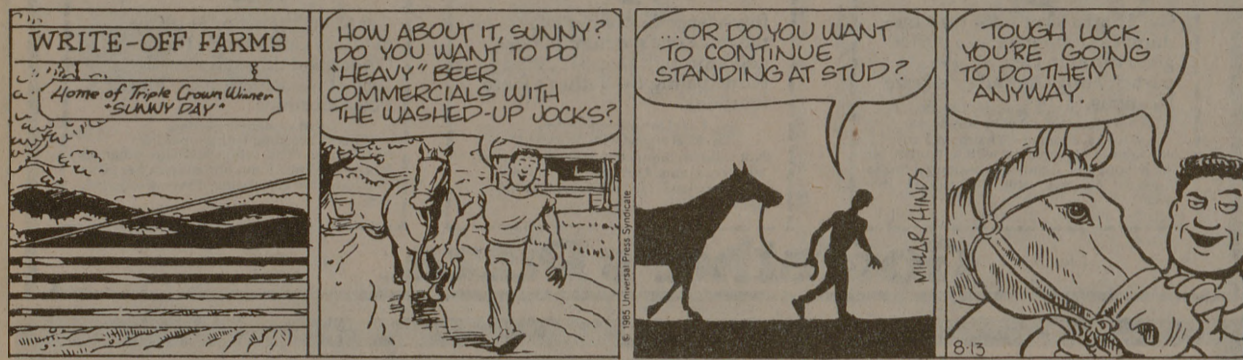


**SPORTS**

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by Jeff Millar & Bill Hinds



**Offensive 'chaos' gone from Owls' '85 agenda**

Associated Press

HOUSTON — Rice Head Football Coach Watson Brown kept telling the media and super zealous alumni last season that he was not a miracle worker. He said it would take time to end Rice's string of 20 straight losing seasons.

Now they believe him. After talk about Brown's lucrative and highly publicized six-year contract subsided, Brown's Owls went out and got themselves a 1-10 record and now it's 21 straight losing seasons.

The Owls had moments of sparkle with an offense Brown called "Controlled Chaos."

"We got the chaos part down fine, now we need to learn the control," Brown said.

"We moved the ball last year but it was on big plays too much. We'd punt, punt and then we'd score. But we didn't have enough control to keep our defense off the field the way I'd like."

The Owl offense was most potent with freshman quarterback Mark Comalander. After missing much of the season with an injury, he closed out the season with a freshman-record 357 yards passing against Southwest Conference champion Houston.

Now a sophomore with more savvy following spring drills, Comalander hopes for an injury-free season.

"In the spring, I started to understand the offense better," Comalander said. "We showed we could put a lot of points on the board (66 in their final two games),



but the key will be consistency. "Any team in the conference can ring up a lot of points on a given day."

The Owls return seven offensive and eight defensive starters, but Brown says that won't necessarily be an advantage.

"It seems everybody had seven offensive and eight defensive starters back," he said. "It's a senior league this year."

The defense will be headed by defensive tackle Dwain Turner and strong safety Ernest Evans.

Turner says the Owls will be better this season because they are much stronger.

"With the new equipment and the new program, I think all of us have benefited," Turner said. "Overall, we were a weak team. Now, I think we are if not the strongest, one of the strongest teams in the conference and I'll put my money where my mouth is on that."

Brown says a priority will be stiffening the defense that yielded 432

yards and 34.7 points per game last season.

"We weren't last, we were dead last," Brown said. "There was no one close to us. We were the worst. I said when I came here that you can't win consistently without a good defense. We proved that last year."

Brown said the most crucial coaching decision came in the Texas A&M game when the coaching staff decided to go with young players.

"We started playing a lot of younger people in the A&M game and there was a lot of confusion," Brown said. "But now that it's done, that was the critical decision we made as coaches because we're a lot more experienced team right now for doing that than we would have been."

Brown said the Owls played better in losses to Arkansas and Southern Methodist and closed out the season with a 46-40 loss to Baylor and a 38-26 loss to Houston.

"It kept getting a little better near the end and I guess that's the high point," he said. "Our kids left the season losing yet with their heads up because they got better and learned that they can compete in this league."

The Owls, who face five 1984 bowl teams this season, have lost a record 25 consecutive Southwest Conference games.

Before trying to snap that string, the Owls start the season with non-conference games against Miami, Air Force and Lamar, who represented Rice's only victory last season.

**Mustangs appealing to NCAA**

SMU gets 30 minutes to present its case

Associated Press

DALLAS — An attorney for Southern Methodist University has denied news reports that school officials intend to "bargain" for leniency with the NCAA Council this week over imposed football sanctions.

John McElhanev also said SMU would try to avoid a lawsuit.

"Those stories were inaccurate — they were just flat wrong," SMU attorney John McElhanev said. "What we will do up there is bring forward a presentation of our case. It's an appeal, bargaining has nothing to do with it."

SMU officials confirmed last week that they would journey to Boston Wednesday to meet with the NCAA over penalties related to alleged recruitment violations.

In news reports last week, unidentified sources were quoted as saying the sanctions included a two-year moratorium on bowl appearances and a ban on football scholarships next year, among other penalties.

Wednesday's hour-long meeting will determine the fate of SMU's appeal — which seeks to overturn or mitigate a judgment handed down by the NCAA Infractions Committee last spring after a 26-month investigation into recruiting violations.

If that judgment stands, it is expected to be one of the most severe in NCAA history.

Reports last week said the school would not be allowed to offer football scholarships for recruitment in 1986 and would be allowed only 15 the next year.

SMU coach Bobby Collins said such a ban on scholarships would be "devastating."

"This is an appeal, and the term 'bargain' suggests something entirely different," McElhanev said. "This is not a labor dispute or a situation where someone charged with murder is attempting to bargain with the court. It is the same type of appeal that exists in our legal system where the accused has recourse to having the facts judged by a higher authority. We will have 30 minutes in which to present our case, and the NCAA will then take 30 minutes for its reply."

McElhanev also said school officials hoped to avoid filing a lawsuit, the Fort Worth Star-Telegram reported today.

"Hopefully, the results (of Wednesday's meeting) will be such that school officials will not find it necessary to pursue that course," he said. "SMU does not want to file a lawsuit."

McElhanev also said he did not expect the results to be made public until the end of the week.

The SMU football team, considered one of the strongest in the country, will begin its fall workouts while the Boston meetings are in progress. If the school loses its appeal, the team stands to be stripped of a possible conference title and bowl appearance.

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**NBA star Hayes returns to UH**

Associated Press

HOUSTON — Elvin Hayes, 12-time National Basketball Association All-Star who led the University of Houston to the Final Four, has returned to his alma mater as special assistant to the athletic director, school officials announced Monday.

Hayes will consult with coaches of both men's and women's sports and will provide counseling assistance to student athletes, officials said. In addition, he will have administrative and public relations duties.

"This job is tailor-made for someone with the attributes Elvin Hayes possesses," said UH Athletic Director Tom Ford. "He will play a very significant role in the future development of recruiting students, academic achievements and fund-raising."

Hayes starred for 16 seasons in the NBA with the San Diego-Houston Rockets and Washington Bullets. He holds the NBA record for minutes played — 50,000.

The NBA All-Star averaged 21

points and 13 rebounds in 1,303 regular-season games.

He led UH to the Final Four in 1967 and 1968, earning consensus All-America honors both seasons.

"My main goal is to see student-athletes graduate," Hayes said. "I want to see all the freshmen athletes that enter UH this year graduate."

"Very seldom can one return and make a contribution that is now more significant than when I was a player," he said. "I look forward to the challenge."

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