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Royals' offense suffers without Series DH rule

By HAL BOCK
AP Sports Writer

ST. LOUIS — Whatever else one may think of the designated hitter, baseball compounds the crime by depriving American League teams of this offensive weapon every other year in the World Series.

That is patently unfair. For baseball purists, the DH is an aberration, a slur on the strategic beauty of this marvelously cerebral sport. But to have your league champion constructed to fit a particular profile and then order it drastically altered in the World Series is indefensible.

Hal McRae, a professional hitter, is Kansas City's DH and regular cleanup batter. He hit .259 with 14 home runs and 70 runs batted in this season, a significant contribution to a team whose offense is distinctly lightweight. He is, however, missing in action in this World Series, legis-

lated out of business by the no-DH rule used in alternating years.

Frank White did an admirable imitation of a cleanup hitter in Game 3, driving in three runs with a home run and a double. But he was not the replacement for McRae and his DH partners, who drove in 113 runs among them for the Royals this season. White, remember, would be in the batting order anyway.

In place of McRae and Co., we have the KC pitchers, batting a collective .000. The last time an American League pitcher had a hit in the World Series was 1979, when Tim Stoddard managed a single for Baltimore. Appropriately, perhaps, Stoddard now pitches, and bats, in the National League.

Including Stoddard's single, AL pitchers since 1975 are a collective 1-for-62. They are automatic outs and it hardly seems fair for one Series team to play with eight bats while the

other uses nine.

The Royals' attack limps along in the best of times. Tuesday night's six-run production was rather uncharacteristic for a club that finished next to last in the AL with a .252 batting average. It can ill afford to surrender any part of its offense, much less its No. 4 hitter.

National League stubbornness, a traditional if not quaint trait, has forced the AL into this corner. On the surface, it seems fair. We'll play the World Series by your rules this year and we'll play by my rules next year.

In order to maintain peace in our time — something British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain discovered was not always possible — the AL swallowed hard and accepted that decree. What it really did, however, was shoot itself in the foot.

NL teams are accustomed to having pitchers bat and design their offenses with that in mind. It is no burden for them to go that way. In years when the Series is played with the DH, it merely supplies the NL champs with a useful extra bat. That is a lot nicer than being deprived of a hitter you depend upon all season long, which is what happens when AL teams must play without the DH.

Last spring, Commissioner Peter Ueberroth promised a poll of the fans to decide whether baseball should adopt the DH rule for both leagues or discard it entirely. The poll, Ueberroth's office says, has been completed and the results are still being digested.

However, any change in the playing rules, including the DH, must be negotiated with the players association. The union may not be anxious to eliminate the rule because it keeps older players in the game. It also may not be in the most congenial mood after the owners voted Tuesday to unilaterally terminate the drug agreement they negotiated last year.

So, it is hard to imagine this issue being resolved soon. And that means in 1987, AL pitchers probably will have a chance to extend the longest collective batting slump in World Series history.

SWC cast as a gang of outlaws

Baylor's Teaff rejects 'Sure Will Cheat' idea

By DENNE H. FREEMAN
AP Sports Writer

Could the SWC stand for "Some Wacky Conference"?

The Southwest Conference is fast becoming known outside its Texas-Arkansas borders as much for being "out-of-control" as for "ball-control" offense.

Only Rice and Arkansas can claim they haven't had dealings with the NCAA in the last year about possible rules violations. Basketball at Baylor and Houston has been under scrutiny, and the remainder of the schools have talked about their football programs with the NCAA.

Commissioner Fred Jacoby says the SWC may be the cleanest conference around because, like a small town, everybody gossips about everybody.

Nobody can get away with anything long without a neighbor squawking to the authorities.

But the SWC has given new meaning to the "Neighborhood Watch" signs you see around town. The conference has an outlaw image, like it or not.

No, SWC doesn't really stand for "Sure Will Cheat," but the cynics say it's so.

Which brings us to the refreshingly clean program of Baylor Coach Grant Teaff, who has proved you can win without casting greenbacks on the recruiting waters.

Teaff is in his 14th year as the head papa Bear. During his tenure, Baylor has been in two Cotton Bowls and is threatening to pay yet another visit to the Dallas landmark.

The football Bears have accomplished their goals without a hint of slush funds and payoffs.

This is not to suggest Baylor has been perfect in its recruitment of prospective high school athletes. It's hard not to break some of the hundreds of minor NCAA rules which include, for example, no pictures of a coach and an athlete together on signing day.

But being "perfect" in the scandal-ridden SWC takes on a whole new definition after Kenneth Davis' stories of payoffs at TCU.

Baylor hasn't been accused of doing anything wrong of a major or minor nature by the NCAA since Teaff has been in Waco.

How do we know? You haven't forgotten about the SWC "Neighborhood Watch," have you?

Teaff, who has undergone some sniping recently for hiring former TCU Coach F. A. Dry as an assistant, has kept his program free of scandal.

He's had a few pebbles tossed at his program. There have been a few off-the-record minor grumbles by other SWC members about Teaff's uncanny ability to land talented Texas black athletes. Baylor is represented by more players in the NFL than any other SWC school.

Teaff has kept the green and gold remarkably clean with all the cheating dirt flying around in the SWC over the big bucks business of big-time college football.

He once walked out the front door of the house of a high school recruit who suggested some under-the-table business, and never called him again.

With his team ranked in the Top 20 and free of scandal, let's give Teaff some credit.

The SWC could use another hero.

Aggie Sportscope

A&M rifle team takes first at Sam Houston Invitational

The Texas A&M rifle team, ranked No. 8 in the NCAA, captured first-place this past weekend at the Sam Houston State Invitational in Huntsville.

The Aggies' 2,253 points, out of a possible 2,400, put them ahead of second-place Texas and the rest of the 12-team field.

Individually, A&M took first and second place. A&M's Eric Uptagraff, who is in the running for All-America honors, was first and Chris Fedun was second overall.

The Aggies' next tourney is this Saturday at the Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colo., home of the 10th-ranked Falcons.

A&M racquetball club weekend fall touney results

The Texas A&M Racquetball Club held its Fall Tournament this past weekend.

The final results were as follows:

Men's A Division — Guillermo Paiz defeated Fernando Fonseca to take first-place. John Wyatt won the consolation final.

Men's B Division — Charlie Smith def. Ken Alexander to take first-place. Ken Rowlands won the consolation final.

Men's C Division — John Sivinski def. Sam Gunderson to take first-place. Jean Pavelka won the consolation final.

Women's Round-Robin Winner — Kathy Koprivnikar.

Mixed Doubles Winners — Kathy Langlotz/David Ragsdale

Women's Doubles Winners — Mary Bean/Kathy Langlotz

Men's Doubles Winners — Steve Sullivan/Bobby Warrington

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