

Lady 'Horns undoubtedly class of SWC basketball

Can we talk?
Now that the college basketball season is officially over, we've got to get some things straight.
The best team in the country this season was Duke. The Blue Devils 37-3 record was the most victories ever recorded in a season by a men's college basketball team.
Case closed.
The best team over one tourna-



Photo by John Makely
All-Americans Kamie Ethridge, left, and Annette Smith helped lead Texas to a 34-0 record and their first national championship.

Charean Williams
Sports Viewpoint

ment and in one game was, obviously, the national champion Louisville Cardinals.

Closer to home, chalk one up for the Texas Longhorns. In the Southwest Conference, the best team was undoubtedly the one from Austin.

Calm down. Not the Weltich, Brownlee and Willock bunch. The Longhorns I'm referring to are the ones with the "Lady" tag in front.

The ones that were ranked No. 1 for the entire season. The ones that went undefeated, 34-0, over the entire season. The ones that brought a national championship to the SWC.

The SWC best enjoy this national championship. It might be its last until next basketball season when the Lady 'Horns get a chance to defend their title.

The conference has taken its share of lumps over the past year.

Scandals have rocked seven of the nine SWC schools, the latest victims being the football programs at Texas and Houston. The Baylor basketball program and SMU football program are already on probation and surely there will be others to join the list.

The SWC smiled a little when Texas A&M upset Auburn and Heisman Trophy winner Bo Jackson in the Cotton Bowl and finished the season ranked No. 6. But the '85-'86 basketball season brought yet more heartburn to victory-starved SWC fans.

Over the past few years, SWC fans grew accustomed to hearing "N-C-double-A."

After years of getting used to watching Houston's Akeem Olajuwon, Clyde Drexler and Michael Young phi, slam and jam their way to the top, Arkansas' Joe Kleine go head-to-head against SMU's Jon Koncak on the way into the NCAAs, and Eddie Sutton and Guy V. Lewis match coaching wits in some big games, this past season left a lot of fans waiting to be relieved of the misery.

It was a plop, plop, fizz, fizz kind of year.

Sutton took his show to Kentucky where he came within one game of

the Final Four while his former team, the Razorbacks, came within two games of the SWC cellar.

Lewis wasn't slow in following Sutton's lead, announcing his retirement in the middle of the season.

There were no All-Americans out of the SWC. Not one league team was ranked in the Top 20. Not one conference team was given an at-large bid to the NCAA Tournament.

Heck, there wasn't even a team good enough to win the outright conference title. Three teams shared the honor, A&M, Texas and TCU, and the fifth-place team, Texas Tech, won the postseason tournament and earned the automatic NCAA bid.

Despite SWC coaches' cries, their conference was one of the weakest in the country.

Even SWC fans must have felt that way. Only the Arkansas fans dared to show up at the SWC Post-Season Classic in Dallas, ironically the site of the '86 Final Four.

The National Invitation Tournament, college hoop's "other" tournament, picked up four SWC leftovers. A&M and SMU lost in the first round. TCU and Texas bailed out in the second.

Tech failed in its biggest test, losing a close game to Georgetown in

the first round of the NCAAs. There wasn't much there for the SWC to cheer, yell or even whimper about.

But the Lady Longhorns took care of that.

There were no scandals. No pay-offs. No cars. No cash. And no losses.

It was collegiate basketball in its finest hour — pure, unadulterated amateur athletics.

UT won with style and finesse. With seniors and freshmen. With All-Americans and no-names. With starters and bench players. With talent and intelligence.

With the team "we" and not the individual "I."

Former U.S. congresswoman Barbara Jordan of Texas said to the Lady 'Horns, "You are the best there is. You have taught us what a team is."

Texas students felt that way. Over the season, the Lady Longhorns out-drew the men's team — at home.

The press felt that way. *Houston Chronicle* columnist Al Carter said the Lady Longhorns should have been invited to the men's SWC tournament, but the league might have been embarrassed at the outcome.

This season, the SWC has spelled relief L-A-D-Y H-O-R-N-S.

NCAA to initiate 3-point shot for '86-'87 basketball season

DALLAS (AP) — The three-point goal and use of televised instant replays to correct timing and scoring errors will become part of college basketball starting next season, the NCAA men's rules committee announced Wednesday.

Under another rule change, coaches no longer will be charged with a technical foul if they leave the coaching box to protest errors involving timing, scoring or alternating possession.

Dr. Edward S. Steitz, secretary editor of the rules committee, said the three-point goal, which has become a popular feature in the NBA, was adopted by the 12-member committee following a five-year experimentation among 20 conferences.

Three points will be credited for a shot made 19-feet, 9 inches from the basket.

Steitz said it was hoped the three-pointer would ease the rough play underneath the basket and give more attention to outside play.

"It's going to force teams to play more defense away from the basket," Steitz said. "People will say 'You are putting the little man back in the game' and that's good."

Notre Dame Coach Digger Phelps, saying he was "very surprised" to see the three-point goal pass, was less than enthusiastic about the new rule.

"It would be nice, one of these years, to let the game

settle down and see what we really have," Phelps said. "If anything needed to be addressed it's still the foul situation at the end of games."

Bobby Dotson, an assistant coach at Louisville, also questioned the need for the three-point goal.

"The game was going awfully good," Dotson said. "I don't see why they need mess with it. I can't understand why they would put something like this in. I think it's silly."

Steitz emphasized that instant replays would be used only to correct mistakes made by scorers and timers, and not for any officiating calls.

He said an incident that occurred in Kansas City during the NCAA Midwest Regional two weeks ago was a factor decision to use instant replay.

A clock malfunctioned causing 15 seconds to be lost during a Kansas-Michigan State game and the incident was blamed for blemishing the Jayhawks' victory.

"When there is a problem area that we haven't addressed, we'll try to address it," Steitz said.

Steitz said conferences experimented with different distances for the three-point goal before adopting the 19-9 distance.

"Some conferences used the pro distance (23-9) and didn't find that desirable," he said. "As a result of a questionnaire, most of the coaches preferred 19-9."

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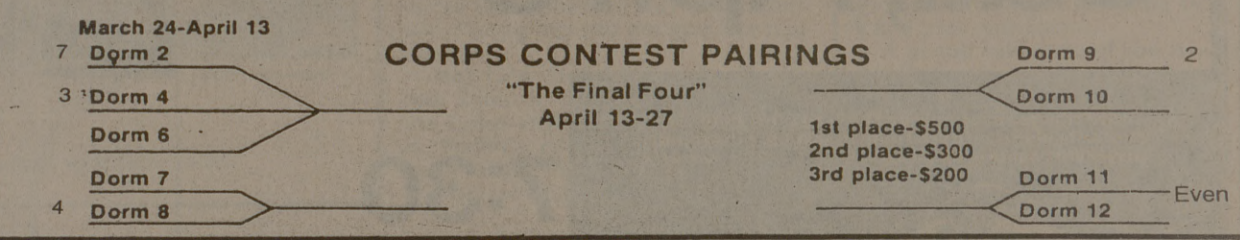
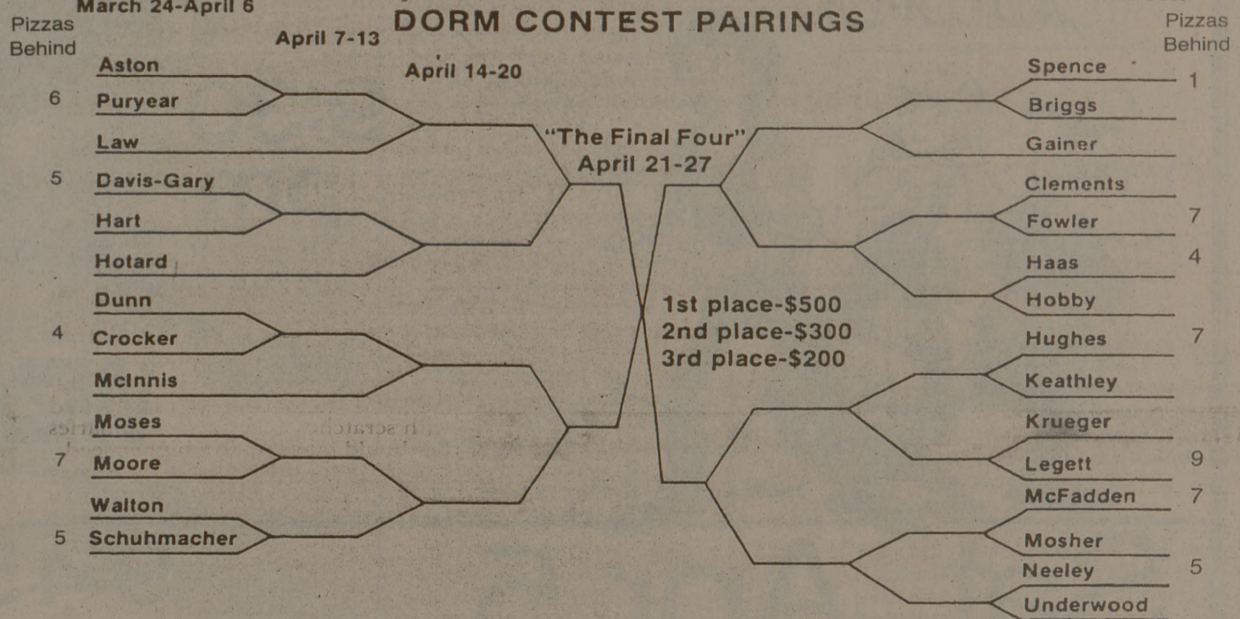
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