

Alan Lehmann
Sports Writer

Lehmann: OU deserves NCAA 'death penalty'

A football player is paid illegally, even though his school is on probation and under threat of the death penalty. A questionable source comes forward with the accusation, and then denies part of his statement.

Sounds familiar, doesn't it? Well, don't worry. It's not George Smith on the loose again. It's not even a Southwest Conference school under investigation this time. No, the lucky school is Oklahoma. That's right, the boys from Norman are at it again. Just when Sooner fans thought their worst nightmares were behind them (and behind bars), a non-player alleges that he was the middle man for payments to two Sooner players.

Not that Otha Armstrong III did anything wrong himself. He told the *Dallas Morning News* that he just picked up the cash from a Tulsa booster at a Western Union outlet and then delivered it to former Sooner quarterbacks Charles Thompson and Jamelle Holieway.

Armstrong first said that the payments occurred after the Sooners had been placed on probation, but later changed his original story and said the payments occurred in 1988, while the Sooners were under investigation.

But don't start weeping for the Sooners yet, because NCAA doesn't seem keenly interested at the moment.

Why would they doubt Armstrong? Well, he's currently serving time in a Texas prison for stealing 25 championship rings from former Oklahoma Coach Barry Switzer's home. Sounds like a biased point of view to me.

The NCAA dropped the A&M investigation after Smith called a press conference to officially deny his statements, and I think Armstrong will do the same.

Hey, let's face it. Armstrong is in jail, and so are a lot of the former Sooners. With so many former Sooners doing time for real crimes like selling cocaine, assault and rape, how long before they start leaning on a guy who stole from their coach?

Can't you just hear the conversation around the cellblock: "Yo, man. You know that Armstrong guy down in Block D?"

"What's he in for?"

"Uh... burglary, I think?"

"No, man. I only hang out with real criminals. Why, you want him iced?"

"No, no, not yet. See, the deal is that he ratted on the Sooners."

"What?!"

"That's right — he said that Holieway and Thompson were on the take."

"Weren't they?"

Even if Armstrong retracts his statement, the Sooners should get the death penalty (the football program, not the inmates).

Not only has Oklahoma flagrantly violated NCAA rules, but the slimy off-the-field actions of its players prove that Oklahoma isn't safe for spectators.

So, end this nonsense and give the Sooner football program the death penalty, before a Sooner player ends up on death row.

SWC officiating needs a swift kick in butt

Season filled with controversy

Analysis By Denne H. Freeman

Of The Associated Press

DALLAS (AP) — The Southwest Conference needs to make a big change before next football season in the way it assigns officials to football games.

The way it is now, the SWC is putting the men in stripes in some uncomfortable situations.

For example, check the pressure-cooker Ron Underwood found himself inside at the championship game between his alma mater, the University of Arkansas, and Texas A&M University.

Arkansas is trailing but driving. It's fourth down. If the Aggies hold they'll be Cotton Bowl-bound. If the Hogs convert, they are so deep in A&M territory they'll score for sure, and be headed to Dallas on New Year's Day.

Quinn Grovey passes and there is a tangle downfield. Underwood hesitates then throws his flag, ruling interference on the defensive back going over the top of the receiver.

Automatic first down. Arkansas goes on to win 23-22.

Instant replay shows Underwood, a former Razorback wingback in the 1950s, made the proper call.

But the question remains: Why should he

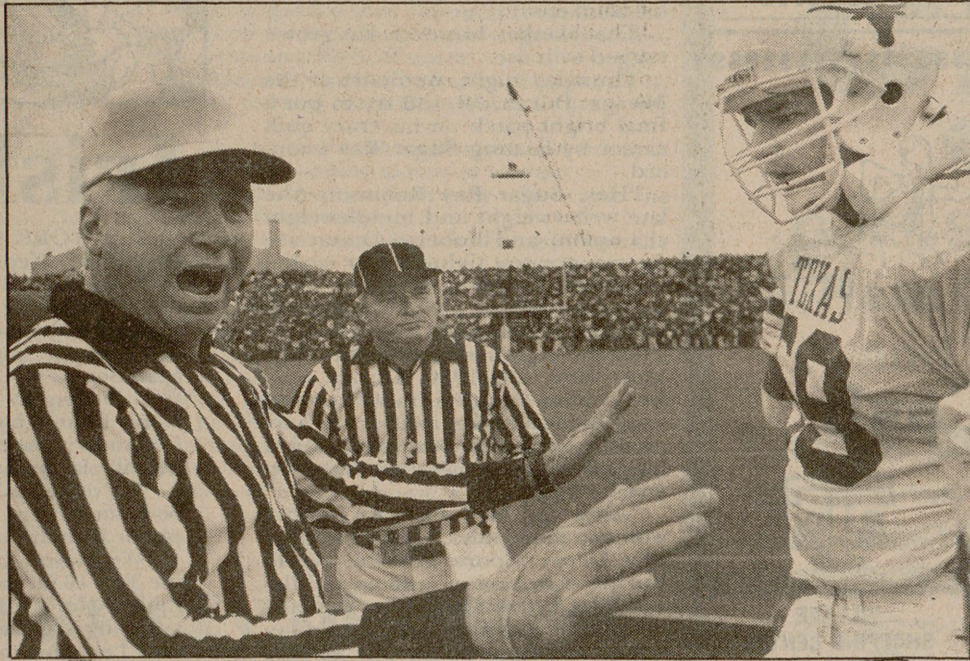


Photo by Jay Janner

Loyd Dale calms UT's Ken Hackmack after a brawl in Saturday's game. Dale was involved in a controversy in the A&M-Texas Tech game Oct. 7.

have been put into such a position?

How do you think his Little Rock insurance business would have prospered if he hadn't called a foul?

It's obvious some Arkansas grads wouldn't be banging his doors down for policy renewals.

For ages, the SWC has had a rule that if

you've been away from a conference school 10 years then you can referee, umpire, field judge, back judge, or be the head linesman in a game involving your alma mater.

How much sense does this make? Is somebody supposed to be automatically detached from their school after 10 years?

It would seem quite the contrary. In 10 years, a lot of graduates are financially more able to become closer to their university.

Of course, Texas A&M is hot to get the rule changed.

There was an incident in their loss to Texas Tech involving a fumble the Aggies said they should have been allowed to keep. The Aggies claimed a Texas Tech graduate (Loyd Dale) was involved in the decision.

Ironically, there was another incident in the A&M-Texas game when the Aggies threw a touchdown pass on the last play of the third quarter.

Texas claimed time ran out before the ball was snapped. Field judge Jon Bible said "no." Bible went to the University of Texas.

Think about all the heat Bible has had from fellow Longhorns.

The SWC needs to join the Southeastern Conference in making a rule that no graduate can referee a game involving his school. Period.

It would take some extra time figuring out officials' schedules. But it would be time well spent, which could keep the SWC away from any hint of scandal.

The SWC is definitely a conference that doesn't need another scandal.

Ags try to tame the Thundering Herd

By Jay Peden

Of The Battalion Staff

The Marshall University men's basketball team visits G. Rollie White Coliseum tonight at 7:30 to take on Texas A&M.

Both teams are coming off losses. Marshall's Thundering Herd lost its last game 74-56 at West Virginia, leaving it with a 4-2 record.

Marshall is led by 6-2 junior guard John Taft, who is scoring 24.4 points per game.

The Aggies, 2-4, lost Tuesday night to Centenary 89-82 despite career bests by senior point guard Tony Milton and senior forward Darren Rhea.

Milton dished out 10 assists against Centenary, tying his career high set last year against Stephen F. Austin, and matched against Southern Methodist.

Darren Rhea scored 18 points and gathered 13 rebounds in the Centenary game, both career bests.

His previous highs were 14 points last year against Simon Fraser and 11 rebounds against UT-Pan American earlier this season.

A&M junior forward David Harris is leading the Southwest Conference in blocked shots (3.6 per game) and rebounds (11.0 per game). The 22 blocks he has recorded in 6 games this year is barely short of the 25 that Ray Little led the team with for all of last season.

Aggie Coach Shelby Metcalf said there will be some different faces in the starting lineup tonight.

"I thought Darren Rhea, Brooks Thompson, Lynn Suber and Tony Milton played harder than anyone else in the Centenary game, so they will start against Marshall," Metcalf said.

Harris will round out the starting five.

The game will be broadcast locally on radio station KTAM (1240 AM).



Photo by Scott D. Weaver

Tony Milton argues his point after being called for a foul in Tuesday's loss to Centenary. Milton will lead the Aggies tonight against Marshall.

BYU lineman Elewonibi wins Outland Trophy

NEW YORK (AP) — Mohammed "Moe" Elewonibi was minding his business, having a little fun booting a soccer ball around on the campus of Snow Junior College in Ephraim, Utah, when the football coach wandered by, caught a glimpse of him and led him away.

Two years later, the 6-foot-5, 290-pounder found himself at Brigham Young University and Wednesday he was named winner of the Outland Trophy as the best college lineman in America.

Elewonibi beat out Morris "Moe" Gardner, junior nose tackle from Illinois and Michael Tanks, senior center from Florida State for the award presented by the Football Writers Association of America. He is BYU's second Outland winner in four years, following Jason Buck of the Cincinnati Bengals, who took the award in 1986.

Elewonibi, a native of Nigeria who grew up in Kamloops, British Columbia, never played high school football. "I was small when I came to Canada," he said. "I wasn't even tall enough to play basketball."

Soccer was his game but when he got to Snow JC, he found the sport limited to club status. "There were guys from the Middle East and Africa and we played a little pickup soccer," he said. "But there were no other teams for us to play. We even played BYU once and lost 13-0."

By then, though, he had grown large enough to try other things. So he had no hesitation about playing football. His first game was less than a rousing success, however, with Snow losing, 41-7.

"I was emotional thinking about it, thinking if I did this or that," he said. "I'm competitive by nature. I don't like to lose. I worked on my technique and my footwork and by the end of the season, I was as good as you can get in junior college."

"Where do Aggies go before they leave for break?"

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3	4	5	6	9 Shop at Penny's	8	9
10	11	12 Shop at Penny's	13	14	15	16 Graduation
17	18	19	20 Shop at Penny's	21	22	23
24	25 Christmas	26	27	30	29 Shop at Penny's	30
	31					

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