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Wilson

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at home and away. But for the Hogs, it will be worth it. A schedule including Alabama, LSU, Tennessee, and Auburn is a lot more inviting to Arkansas than dates with Baylor, Texas Tech, SMU and TCU, annual stomping grounds for the SWC elite.

The biggest advantage to leaving for the Razorbacks will be for basketball.

Arkansas has been, for a long time, a dominant basketball force in the SWC.

Ever since Sidney Moncrief and Alvin Robertson suited up for former coach Eddie Sutton years ago, the program has been solid.

The key to a consistently solid basketball program is to have a revolving door of athletes ready and able to compete with anybody in the country year-in and year-out.

That way, the loss of a Chris Jackson (LSU) or a Dennis Scott (Georgia Tech) hurts only minimally.

The 20-win seasons pile up and the recruits come in without any arm twisting.

Arkansas coach Nolan Richardson, thus, should get a recruiting medal-of-honor alongside Arizona State's Bill Frieder, for having an uncanny knack of landing great talent and having a team that's 12-men deep.

He recruits not only good players, but excellent athletes, those that can run with anybody in the country year-in and year-out.

Okay, let's not mention UNLV, a team that not only beat Arkansas this year, but also plays so well together that CBS' Lesley Visser was prompted to say the Rebels could compete with an NBA team.

Uh, I don't think so, Lesley. But anyway, after this season, UNLV will be on probation, and losing key players as well.

The Hogs, however, will have talent returning once again.

And that talent will be tested quickly against the likes of LSU, Alabama, Auburn and resurgent Kentucky, a much better option than what the SWC offers.

Coach Richardson's comments after the Hogs' 111-72 destruction of last-place Texas A&M on Saturday showed the distance (physically and mentally) between Arkansas and the rest of the field.

"We knew Texas A&M does not have the type of team that should be able to stay on the floor with us if we're playing good," he said. "It was just a question of how many points we were going to score."

That comment might as well go for any team in the SWC.

When the Hogs are hot they can blow anybody away in the conference.

And by staying in the league, that fact would not change anytime soon. Tom Penders and the Texas Longhorns are trying, but they're not there yet by any means.

And so the Razorbacks are leaving the conference, paying no attention to those that say they are traitors or bad guys as a result.

College sports are businesses. And the Hogs have not only improved their schedule competitively in both football and basketball, but they have improved their position tenfold monetarily.

But in our capitalist society, who can blame 'em?

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by Jeff Millar & Bill Hinds



Tar Heels positioned for top seed

By The Associated Press

The Tar Heels might already be aiming at No. 2,000, but they'll have to settle for No. 4 for now.

North Carolina (21-4) became the first team to reach 1,500 basketball victories last week with wins over The Citadel and Clemson and, at the same time, moved from No. 6 to No. 4 in The Associated Press poll.

The jump also makes the Tar Heels a top candidate to be a top seed in one of the four regions in the NCAA tournament.

"The way it keeps going on and on even amazes the players," red-shirt senior Pete Chilcutt said.

UNLV remained the unanimous No. 1, with Ohio State and Arkansas continuing to hold down Nos. 2-3.

UNLV breezed to three victories last week, extending its winning streak to 36 games, including 25 this season. The Rebels got all 63 first-place votes.

Ohio State (24-1) had 1,503 points to 1,455 for Arkansas (27-2).

Carolina's 1,500 victories and

21st consecutive 20-win season both are NCAA records. The Tar Heels got to 1,500 one game ahead of Kentucky. The Wildcats (20-6) stumbled at Vanderbilt last Wednesday, then beat Florida on Saturday for victory No. 1,499 and 20-win season No. 36, one more than North Carolina. The Wildcats dropped a spot to 13th this week.

Indiana (23-4), which closed its week with a 112-79 romp over Michigan, dropped one notch to fifth after an 80-79 overtime loss to Iowa earlier. The defeat all but ended Indiana's chances of catching Ohio State in the Big Ten.

Syracuse (24-4), beaten at Madison Square Garden by St. John's, maintained its lead in the Big East standings while falling one spot in the rankings, to sixth. The Orangemen were followed by Arizona, Duke, Utah and Kansas.

The only addition to the top 25 this week was Alabama (17-8), in at No. 24 in place of Georgetown, a perennial power which lost its ninth game of the season, a 78-65 decision to No. 22 Pittsburgh.

Top 25

The Top Twenty Five teams in The Associated Press 1990-91 college basketball poll. First-place votes are in parentheses. Last week's position and records through Feb. 17 are listed:

1. UNLV (63) 1	25-0
2. Ohio State 2	24-1
3. Arkansas 3	27-2
4. North Carolina 6	21-4
5. Indiana 4	23-4
6. Syracuse 5	24-4
7. Arizona 9	22-6
8. Duke 7	23-6
9. Utah 10	25-2
10. Kansas 8	20-5
11. New Mexico State 15	21-3
12. Oklahoma State 16	20-5
13. Kentucky 12	20-8
14. Southern Mississippi 11	20-8
15. Nebraska 14	23-5
16. UCLA 17	20-7
17. St. John's 18	19-8
18. LSU 19	19-7
19. East Tennessee State 13	24-4
20. Seton Hall 24	18-7
21. Princeton 23	20-2
22. Pittsburgh 22	19-3
23. Mississippi State 21	18-7
24. Alabama	17-8
25. Virginia 20	19-9

Rangers, Astros open spring training

PORT CHARLOTTE, Fla. (AP) — The Texas Rangers and the Houston Astros opened spring training camp on Monday.

In Port Charlotte, 24 Ranger pitchers reported to manager Bobby Valentine but one of them was absent — ace Nolan Ryan.

In keeping with his strict workouts regimen, Ryan, 44, who led the American League in strikeouts, won his 300th game and pitched his sixth no-hitter last year, won't arrive from Alvin, Texas, until March 1.

In Kissimmee, the Astros will start spring training seeking a closer to replace departed Dave Smith, but there's no clear-cut favorite for the role.

Valentine has eight catchers on hand to tune the pitching staff.

"We've got a strong competitive situation with our pitching staff," Valentine said. "We need to improve our middle relief."

Jose Guzman, who has labored under a two-year recovery from rotator cuff surgery, will especially be under Valentine's eye.

Also, Kevin Brown and Scott Chiamparino, who experienced elbow problems last year, will be watched closely.

Rich "Goose" Gossage and Charley Kerfield, two former major leaguers who fell on hard times, will be attempting comebacks.

Brian Bohanon, who hurt his arm last year, won't throw for at least the first three weeks of spring training.

Texas finished 83-79 for the second consecutive season and in third place behind the Oakland Athletics.

The Rangers, who have never won a pennant, plus their first spring game on March 8 when the Baltimore Orioles came calling at Port Charlotte.

The Rangers open the regular season on April 6 against Milwaukee.

"We're optimistic we can turn things around this year," Valentine said. "We would have been there last year except for one bad month. You can't afford an off month in our division."

The Rangers made no major trades in the off-season. They obtained catcher Mark Parent from San Diego for infielder Scott Coolbaugh. Parent hit .222 last year but had a .992 field average, third-best among National League catchers.

"We have a nucleus which I believe can seriously contend in the division race," Valentine said. Astros' Manager Art Howe won't distinguish between long and short relief early in spring drills.

"We're going to rotate them, and whoever gets hot is going to have a chance to close," Howe said. "Maybe bullpen-by-committee will be better for us because we're going to have two or three guys, or even more, who will get a chance to close some games."

The first four positions in the starting rotation will be filled by Mike Scott, assuming he's recovered from off-season surgery, Jim Deshaies, Mark Portugal and off-season acquisition Pete Harnisch.

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