

SPORTS

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The Battalion

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The Cowboys are back where they belong, on top

By K. LEE DAVIS
The Battalion

As a lifelong Cowboy fan who considers a trip to the Super Bowl to be a birthright, Sundays epic win over the dreaded 49ers was greeted with the affection that a father has for his newborn child.

But of course football is much more important than children, so it was probably even better than that.

I was 12 years old the last time that the Cowboy's swaggered onto a Super Bowl field, and that loss to the Pittsburgh Steelers left me crestfallen for months.

For most young boys growing up in north Texas, Texas Stadium was the place where God watched His team play, His son coach and His grandson quarterback.

And as long as the 'boys won, my universe was perfect.

As excruciating as the loss to the Steelers was back in 1979, a single moment three years later is crystallized in my memory.

Sports writers called it, "The Catch". They said it was the end of one era and the dawn of a new one.

I thought it was the end of the world. A Paradise lost.

The year 1982 turned out to be a really lousy one in north Texas, and it all started when the 49ers beat the Cowboys in The NFC Championship game.

Pretty soon the oil industry had gone to hell in a hand basket with the real estate and banking industries soon to follow.

The Cowboys had been a rallying point for a city and an area that was still suffering from the hushed and hateful whispers that said we had stood idly by as a President was cut down.

We were seen as loud, brash, boastful hayseeds that just happened to live on top of a whole bunch of valuable natural resources.

A friend of mine went to Harvard one summer and encountered another young man from Boston who refused to believe that the streets we grew up on

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Maxwell, Rockets hammer Lakers at Forum, 110-90

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Vernon Maxwell made 6 of 7 shots from 3-point range in the first half, and Hakeem Olajuwon had a strong second half as the Houston Rockets won their fifth straight game, 110-90 over the Los Angeles Lakers on Monday.

Maxwell scored 22 of his 24 points in the first half, missing his only 3-pointer attempt in the second half. He was 9 of 14 from the floor overall.

Maxwell's six 3-pointers in the first

half left him one short of the NBA record for a half, held by John Roche and Michael Adams.

Houston's 11 3-point goals for the game was the most ever against the Lakers, with the previous high of 10 by San Antonio last year.

Olajuwon scored 15 of his 21 points in the second half as the Rockets fought off a threat by the Lakers.

The Lakers closed a 15-point deficit to 67-64 with the help of Byron Scott's three-point play. But the Rockets scored

the next five points, on Scott Brooks' 3-pointer and Olajuwon's turnaround jumper.

Houston then pulled away by outscoring the Lakers 14-6 in the first six minutes of the final quarter.

The Lakers were led by James Worthy with 18 points, A.C. Green with 14 and Campbell with 13.

The Rockets had six players in double figures. Matt Bullard had 15 points, Brooks 14, Winston Garland 11 and Otis Thorpe 10.

Coaching great Iba leaves a proud legacy behind him

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Hank Iba began playing basketball on dirt courts in rural Missouri, wearing uniforms sewn by his mother. He became one of the great coaches in history, a man whose influence is still felt amid the glitz of today's multi-million dollar game.

Iba died of heart failure early Friday. He was 88. He had been hospitalized since Wednesday.

"Of all the shadows that cast over the game of basketball, his was the biggest," Indiana coach Bob Knight said in a statement.

Knight was one of the many coaches Iba influenced with his preachings of sound defense and a patient, ball-control offense. Iba won 767 games in 41 years, second most in history, and led Oklahoma State — then called Oklahoma A&M — to national championships in 1945 and '46.

Iba coached the U.S. Olympic team three times. His teams won gold medals in 1964 and '68, then lost to the Soviet Union in 1972 in one of the most controversial games ever.

It was ironic that Iba, one of the game's great winners, came to be so closely tied to a loss. The United States appeared to have won the game in regulation. But the clock was reset twice, giving the Soviets three chances to score the game-winning basket.

"We won the game, no question about it," Iba said in an interview with The Associated Press in February 1990. "That thing was over."

No members of the U.S. team ever accepted their silver medals.

Knight was especially close to Iba. In 1984, when he coached the Olympic

team, Knight asked Iba to serve as a special assistant coach and speak to the team each day at practice. After winning the gold medal, the players honored Iba by carrying him on their shoulders around the court.

"There weren't many of us who knew what was going on that didn't have tears in our eyes," said Bill Wall, former executive director of USA Basketball, the sport's national governing body. "Maybe some of those kids didn't know who he was, but each of them had just spent a month with him."

The coaching ranks are filled with Iba disciples, including current Oklahoma State coach Eddie Sutton.

"He began his career with coaches like Phog Allen and Adolph Rupp and finished with Dean Smith and Bobby Knight and all the people recognized what he had given to the game," Sutton said. "They all admired the class that he brought to the game."

Iba was born Aug. 6, 1904, in Easton, Mo. He began his coaching career in 1927 at Classen High School in Oklahoma City. After two seasons there, he went to Maryville Teachers College in Missouri.

He spent four seasons at Maryville and one year at the University of Colorado before taking over at Oklahoma A&M, where he coached 36 years and won 655 games.

"When you compare him to a modern coach today who finds talent that already exists, the difference is Mr. Iba was a true coach, a teacher, a mentor, who taught the fundamentals of the game," said Bob Kurland, who helped lead Oklahoma A&M to its consecutive NCAA titles.

"Mr. Iba was not a great recruiter," Kurland said. "He felt he was a teacher. If people wanted to play the game of basketball, they would come to him. And

they did."

Those sentiments were shared by Jack Hartman, who played for Iba and went on to win 436 games at Kansas State.

"I realize it takes talent to coach skilled kids," he said. "But Mr. Iba could take a lot of Oklahoma country boys and take them as far as they could possibly go, and make them compete with the very best."

Hank Iba's son, Moe, coaches at Texas Christian, and his nephew, Gene, coached at Baylor until last season.

Iba's opinions were cherished by present coaches. Many of his proteges invited him each year to watch a few days of practice and give a critique.

Rob Evans, in his first year as coach at Mississippi, said Iba was at practice nearly every day during the two years Evans was an assistant at Oklahoma State.

"He had a cane and he would tap it on the table and then he'd tell me, 'You're doing it right. You will be a tremendous coach,'" Evans said. "That gives you a lot of confidence."

Iba was revered in Stillwater and around the state, where he was known simply as "Mr. Iba." He could have had any seat in Gallagher-Iba Arena, but preferred a spot several rows up in the corner because it allowed him to see the whole court.

He insisted on relentless man-to-man defense and a controlled offense, and his reasons were simple.

"If I've got the ball enough, I've got a chance to win," he said in 1990. "If they get the ball more than I do, I'm liable to get beat. I've got to have that rock."

"In my own mind, I'm convinced that if I can't stop 'em, I ought to get beat. That's the name of the game. I don't care if you and I are having a bicycle race. If you can't win, you're no good."

Aggies to test mettle against Runnin' Rebels

FROM STAFF AND WIRE REPORTS

The Texas A&M basketball team might be hoping for a bit of relief from its three game losing streak, but it might have wait until after tonight's road contest 10:05 p.m. Central against the Nevada-Las Vegas Runnin' Rebels.

The Rebels have shown no signs of slowing down in their first season without former head coach Jerry Tarkanian. Former Villanova boss Rollie Massimino led UNLV to a 9-1 record without the benefit of a true center, and with only one concrete NBA prospect in the form of forward J.R. Rider.

Rider has been the centerpiece of UNLV's running game, leading the team with 26 points and 8.7 rebounds per game. As a contrast, A&M's leading scorer and rebounder, forward Damon Johnson, averaging 15.5 points and 7.6 points per game.

Tarkanian's legacy lives on at UNLV. Thomas & Mack Center, where the Rebels have extended their homecourt winning streak to 55 games, the longest current streak in the nation. Their latest victory came Jan. 16, when they sweated out a 84-77 Big West Conference win over San Jose State.

The University of Houston extended A&M's losing streak in G. Rollie White Coliseum Saturday, defeating the Aggies 81-69. Head coach Tony Barone's squad previously lost two heartbreakers, falling to Alabama 64-58 and Rice 66-65.

The Aggies played shorthanded against Houston, as reserve forward Lance Broderson sat out with a sprained ankle. They were still able to out rebound the Cougars 35 to 26, but Houston shot 51 percent from the field as opposed to A&M's 45.8 percent.

Johnson once again led the Aggies with 23 points and 13 boards, and emerging guard Chuck Henderson added 15 points. Point guard David Edwards logged a season-high 12 assists in the game, but scored only nine points, 5.2 below his season average.

A&M owns a 3-2 advantage in the all time series between the two schools, but UNLV has won the last two matchups.

The Rebels crushed A&M by 43 points 110-67 in 1989.

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