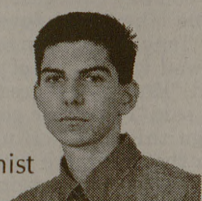


Sumo silicone ban turns heads in Japan

CHRIS S. COBB

Guest Columnist



I thought Americans went too far concerning sports. Flipping through the newspaper, I could not believe one of the articles that I read. Let me give you some background so you know what I am talking about.

In Japan, sumo wrestling is the number one sport. The best athletes in the sport are equivalent to famous movie stars here in America.

These fat men who hit one another with their huge bellies earn big money and marry the most beautiful women in Japan — not a bad job.

Let the spectator beware

Not to be over-critical of the sport, it is wrestling and the people who seem to get hurt the most in the sport are the spectators in the front row watching these matches. Their rings do not have ropes to keep the wrestlers on the stage-like ring and they sometimes fall and crush the sumo-goers watching the match.

The athletes who want to get into the sport of sumo wrestling must take a physical examination to see if they meet the physical requirements. One of the requirements is that the wrestlers weigh 165 pounds. Another is that they must be 5 feet 6 inches.

This is where it gets good. When some of the wrestlers don't make the height requirement, they have done certain things to make the required height. One method that was recently banned and has received attention lately is getting silicone implants in the head.

Yes, this is the same material that is used in breast implants. After passing the physical, the wrestlers then undergo another procedure to have the implants removed.

The sumo-wrestling officials turned their heads, so to speak, when dealing with this issue until just recently. One wrestler had six inches of silicone implanted in his head so he would meet the height requirement.

The Coneheads return

The officials are now banning the implants after hearing about this sumo-conehead. They fear the implants will leak, like some breast implants.

This is the strangest performance-altering procedure that I have ever heard of. Athletes in America have taken drugs to make them stronger, but how many of them have had a plastic-like substance surgically placed underneath their skin? None that I can remember.

Americans fear that there will be an economic war in which the United States will lose. We have fallen behind in the technology race with Japan, but I don't think American athletes will try to match this concept.

Can you imagine how American athletes would use silicone implants? Every player in the NBA would be six inches taller by having implants in the soles of their feet.

Football players would have more room to block if they use silicone injections in their arms and shoulders.

Let's hope this doesn't catch on in our country. Can you imagine the places where bodybuilders would get the injections?

Waiting on the Big 12

There's work left for new conference

By Brian Coats

THE BATTALION

Last February, the Big 8 Conference invited Texas A&M, Baylor, Texas Tech and Texas to join the league, ending the 80-year-old Southwest Conference. Now it is July, and the initial excitement of change has died down. Now the work begins.

The athletic directors of all the

Part one of three

schools in the recently named Big 12 have had three meetings (in Kansas City, Mo. and Dallas) to start hammering out the details of the new conference. Wally Groff, A&M's athletic director, said it is a good thing there are two years left before league-play begins.

"There are still hundreds of unanswered questions," he said.

Groff said in addition to the number of issues facing the athletic directors, there is another problem. The plans the athletic directors are laying out at the meetings are unofficial recommendations.

"There is no official governing body like a council of the presidents or faculty group for the Big 12 yet," he said. "At this point, we are making these recommendations, but we don't know who we

are making them to. I guess to the world. Right now, we (the athletic directors) are the governing body."

Plans for the league are being ham-

sharing, scheduling and sport by sport issues. Lynn Hickey, the senior associate athletic director, is A&M's representative on the team.



pered out almost daily, even though the next athletic director's meeting is not until August, Groff said. He said a six-person transition team has been named to work on issues like revenue

Hickey said she was amazed at how much work is needed to start the new league.

"There is a tremendous amount of work to get done," she said. "When I

first went into the meetings, I thought we could get softball started next year. Now I see there are too many things to work out for that to happen."

However, one part of the new conference that has been worked out is a television contract, possibly the most exciting and most lucrative part of the new conference.

For \$100 million, ABC and Liberty Sports, which owns HSE, will televise Big 12 football games, starting with the 1996 season.

Groff said he could not be happier with the arrangement.

"The TV deal is finalized and a very pleasant surprise," he said. "We started the new conference off with a bang to land this package. It is a great situation for our conference."

Groff said the TV package is going to bring national exposure to A&M's football team, which has frequently been on national TV in recent years, as well as other programs which do not receive as much publicity, like women's sports.

"Liberty is going to be starting an all-women's sports channel," he said. "They are planning to use the Big 12 as the base for that. That is unbelievable exposure for our women's programs."

Groff said the negotiations to secure the deal were long and intriguing.

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Students view World Cup Final in MSC

Aggies call U.S.'s first Cup as host a success

By Mark Smith

THE BATTALION

There should have been a sign in the MSC on Sunday reading World Cup Final 2:35 — Space is Limited.

The flag room had already drawn a crowd of students when the 160 members of the second session of the Texas A&M Soccer Camp filed in.

Couches were moved and chairs arranged around the two small-screen televisions so that everyone could catch a glimpse of Brazil battle Italy to a shoot-out victory.

The International Student's Association organized the World Cup viewing and has shown all of the Cup's matches, except for games shown on tape delay.

A number of students watched the games in the flag room. Among them was Sandy Edwards, a midfielder for the Texas A&M soccer team. Edwards said the first World Cup to be played in the United States was successful.

"It's been great," Edwards said. "I think it's been the most exciting World Cup yet."

Head soccer coach Gerald Guerrieri said the World Cup affirms what U.S. soccer enthusiasts have said about the excitement of soccer.

"People sitting and watching these games by the best players in the world brings credibility to what has been said before," Guerrieri said. "It shows people that it is a very athletic game. That it can bring passion."

Another midfielder for the Aggies, Jamie Csizmadia, agreed with Guerrieri and said that Americans are learning more about the soccer.

"A lot of people are watching the games," she said. "They're learning more about the sport."

Guerrieri said it is wrong to think that soccer will replace baseball or football in the U.S. sports world.

"Soccer is here. It shouldn't be thought of as a replacement," he said. "People were saying in the late 70s that soccer was growing, that it would be the sport of the 80s. Those were foolish statements. It's just another form of entertainment."

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Stew Milne/The Battalion

The MSC flag room displays the semi-final game between Italy and Bulgaria as Steve Maranz, a graduate soil and crop student, watches. Maranz wanted Brazil to win. Sunday they beat the Italians in the World Cup final, on penalty kicks.

Dorsett did not always want to carry the football

DALLAS (AP) — For many of his 11 seasons with the Dallas Cowboys, star running back Tony Dorsett complained because he thought he didn't get the ball enough.

That's certainly not how his career began, when he was a jittery sixth grader playing for the Aliquippa (Pa.) Termites of the Pop Warner League.

"I was afraid to play," Dorsett said. "Then, when I played, the first kickoff I caught, because of the fear I had — I didn't want to be hurt — I took it 75 yards for a touchdown."

"From that point on, it got better and better."

It'll get even better on July 30 when Dorsett is inducted into the Pro Football Hall of Fame in Canton, Ohio. Former Cowboys coach Tom Landry will present Dorsett.

But there was a time when Landry and Dorsett feuded, mostly over the number of times Landry would call Dorsett's number.

Dorsett, the NFL's third-leading rusher, thinks he'd be No. 1 if Landry had given him the ball more than 17.5 times per game. Landry insisted he was only trying to prolong Dorsett's career.

"With 25 carries per game, I would have retired as the all-time leading rusher. There's no question in my mind," said Dorsett, who still racked up 12,739 yards.

He trails only Walter Payton (16,726) and Eric Dickerson (13,259).

Dorsett would have had 16,617 — 109 yards fewer than Payton — if he had maintained his career 4.3-yard average and carried as often as Payton, who played one more season than Dorsett.

"I was screaming for it when I first came to the Cowboys: 'More carries. More carries.' But coach Landry thought that because of my physical size, my career would have been short-lived if that had happened."

THE BATTALION

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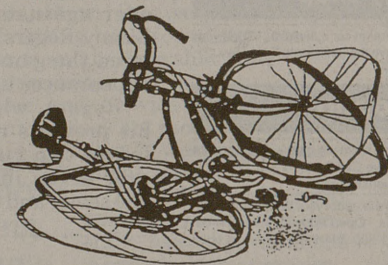
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