

**Southwest Collection/Special Collections Library:  
A Sports Archive of National Significance**  
By Monte L. Monroe, Ph.D.

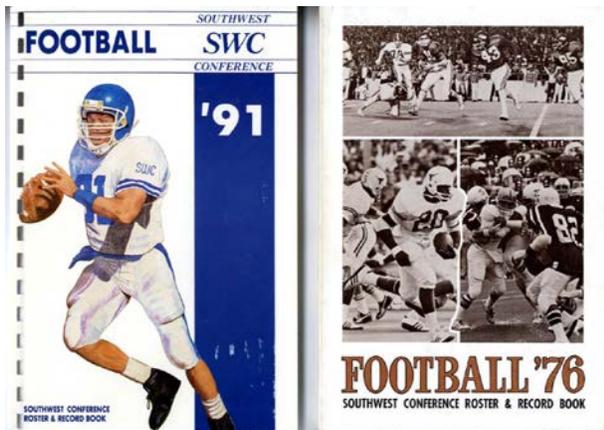
The Southwest Collection/Special Collections Library at Texas Tech University (SWC/SCL) is one of the premier academic sports archives in the country, encompassing numerous collections and other materials of local, regional, and national significance. Holdings include conference, organizational, and personal records collections. Significant oral histories pertaining to both administrative operations and individual sports achievements exist within the archive. In addition, the Southwest Collection (SWC) and University Archives (UA) units include numerous film and video resources of great interest to researchers. Most importantly, the reference department at the institution, as well as all SWC/SCL faculty and staff, make such materials available for study on a daily basis to patrons across the nation and, in some cases, around the world.

The acquisition of the extensive 82-year-old, 334 box Southwest Athletic Conference (SWAC) collection vaulted the SWC to national prominence as a sports archive. The important archives contains historical sports-related materials including correspondence,



memos, organizational minutes, financial records, media guides, programs, committee information, and other athletic administrative records relating to the conference member schools, including at varying times Baylor, Rice, University of Texas, Texas A&M, University of

Arkansas, University of Oklahoma, Oklahoma State, Southwestern University, Texas Tech, University of Houston, Texas Christian, and Southern Methodist. SWAC oral history interviews

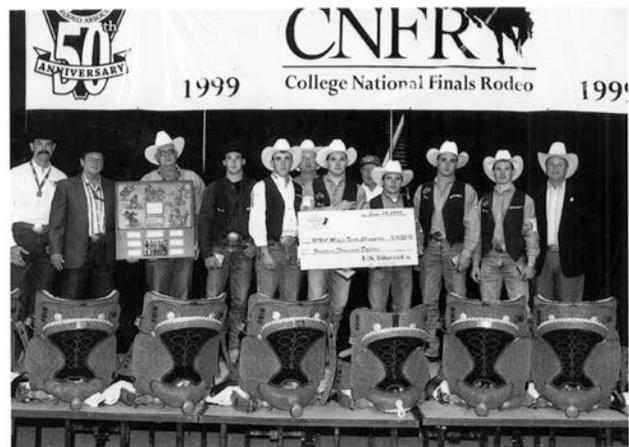


include: Fred Jacoby (former Commissioner), Hal Lahar (former Assistant Commissioner), Felix McKnight (former Editor of the Dallas Morning News), and J. Neils Thompson (former Faculty Representative for the University of Texas), to mention a few. The SWC also has the

Dirk West collection which includes sports related cartoons and figurines of the SWAC mascots including TTU's Raider Red.

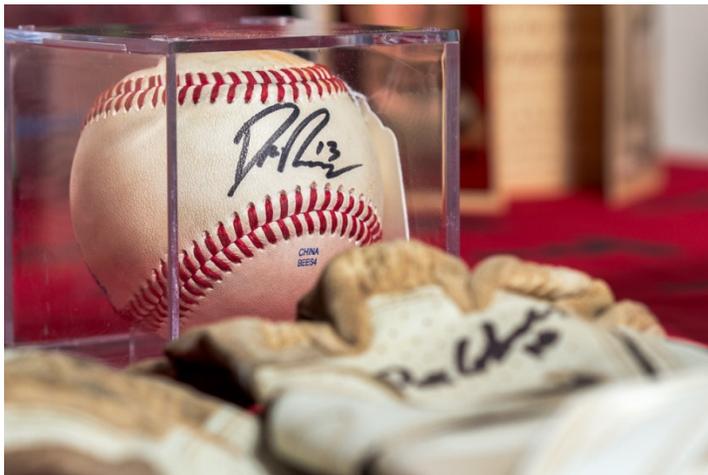
The SWC holds other sports-related organizational records. Such collections relate to the Big 8 Conference (most of which were otherwise lost), as well as records of the Big XII Conference. Very recently, the SWC has partnered with the National Intercollegiate Rodeo Association Alumni (NIRAA) to become the archive of record for that long-standing

organization. The SWC also holds the important Sylvia Gann Mahoney collection, which closely relates to the NIRAA records, including manuscripts relating to her book, *College Rodeo: From Show to Sport*. Most importantly, the collection encompasses a historic oral



history collection concerning key individuals and rodeo athletes who were founding members of the National Intercollegiate Rodeo Association.

The SWC has also served as the archive of record for the National College Baseball Hall of Fame (HOF) since the inception of that organization. On an annual basis, faculty and staff of the SWC host the top collegiate baseball players (from all divisions), coaches, umpires, and family members, providing tours, conducting oral interviews, and creating collectible baseball cards and posters, in order to complement the work of HOF board members and support staff. Members of the SWC are presently collaborating with HOF officials, architects, and designers to create a permanent museum showcasing HOF artifacts and college baseball history. Remarkably, from the beginning of the HOF, especially during spring season, teams from the various collegiate institutional affiliates have dispatched to SWC staff approximately 700 to 1,000 electronic document-downloads per day of media guides, programs, news releases, coaching reports, and other historical materials for preservation in the HOF archive.



The SWC and UA hold other organizational and personal collections relating to sports. For example, the SWC holds the records of John Mecom, the original franchisee and owner of the New Orleans Saints, as well as collections from such prominent Major

League Baseball players as Michael Torrez (New York Yankees) and Bob Horner (Atlanta Braves). The SWC also holds archival records and recordings of Connie Alexander, the radio “voice” of many Southwest Conference and Cotton Bowl events. The SWC is negotiating with Gaylon White, author of *The Bilko Athletic Club* and *Handsome Ransom Jackson*, and sportswriter for the *Denver Post* and other newspapers to acquire his important baseball

collection, as well. The UA has extensive holdings relating to Texas Tech University athletic programs, as well as materials from individual athletes dating from the beginning of the university.

In addition, the SWC holds the records of pioneer women's sports administrators and leaders, such as Dr. Margaret "Peg" Wilson and Jeannine McHaney, as well as records from the Double T Booster Club leader Jim Bob Jones. Over the years SWC staff has collected the human and institutional memory of one of the most prestigious women's collegiate basketball programs in the country, the TTU Lady Raiders. Concomitant with that project, interviews have been conducted with athletes and coaches of women's intercollegiate teams at TTU and other SWAC schools before the implementation of Title IX.

Lastly, the oral history holdings of the SWC and UA are extensive. One of the finest archives of its kind in the country, the interviews highlight the Southwest Conference, the Border Conference, Big 8, national



college baseball, Texas Tech University, high school, and professional sports, cutting across all racial and ethnic lines. There are interviews with sports notables including Lamar Hunt, Rear Admiral Marty Evans (LPGA), Grant Teaff, Frank Broyles, Darrell Royal, Emory Ballard, D. X. Bible, "Slingin" Sammy Baugh, Jim Pittman, J. T. King, Clyde Littlefield, "Jarrin" John Kimbrough, and William Morely Jennings. The SWC also holds oral histories conducted by

Professor Jorge Iber, a prominent sports and Latino scholar, which include interviews with Mike Torrez, E. C. Lerma, Luz Pedraza (Donna Redskins), Bobby Cavazos (TTU), Paul Manieri (LSU baseball), Demie Manieri (Miami Dade North JC), Nomar Garciaparra (Boston Red Sox and ESPN), Frank Martin (University of South Carolina), Juan Castillo (Baltimore Ravens), Anthony Calvillo (Montreal Alouettes), Manny Fernandez (Miami Dolphins), and Rick Casares (Chicago Bears), among many others.

In addition, other manuscript collections contain diverse materials from broadcasters, athletic directors, coaches, players, and officials. These include the personal papers of Gordon McLendon, the pioneer radio broadcaster from Dallas, Texas, who collected sound recordings featuring a myriad of sporting events, especially the rebroadcasts of historic baseball games. In addition, the Southwest Collection houses the papers of William Morely Jennings who, during his career, served as Athletic Director for both Baylor and Texas Tech University, and Gordon Wood, the long-time Texas schoolboy football coach at Brownwood, Texas.



*William Clarence Matthews.*

Some of the most fascinating sports history materials relating are found in the photograph and video collections. Southwest Conference football games from 1954 to 1958 are preserved on Humble Oil and Refining's weekly television program, "Texas in Review," that is on file at the archives. Narrated by renowned broadcaster Kern Tipps these segments provide an exciting glimpse of historic sports games. Also, the SWC and UA possess major photographic collections relating to sports.

Undeniably, the SWC/SCL is a prominent sports archive. Following a vigorous sports archive collection development plan, staff at the archive routinely acquire and make accessible for research purposes materials relating to athletic endeavors, a phenomenon that in recent decades has surged as a critical aspect of American social and cultural life.