

The Hereford Brand



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Volleyball squad clips Magnolia to earn 4A state championship

Lady Whitefaces win state

By JAY PEDEN
Sports Editor

Despite spending a good portion of her life preparing for such a moment, Kari Barrett didn't know quite what to do after her Hereford volleyball team won the state championship.

"I don't know if I want to scream or if I want to cry," said the senior setter.

For the record, she did both. So did her teammates, as well as many of the several hundred Herd fans who watched the Lady Whitefaces come back to defeat Magnolia, 13-15, 15-9, 15-5, in the Class 4A finals of the UIL volleyball tournament Saturday in Austin's Burger Center.

It gave Hereford (34-1) the state championship - something the girls had been dreaming of for years.

"This is the most awesome feeling," senior Cassie Abney said. "We've worked for something since we were in the fourth grade in Y ball, and finally we had a chance to get it."

For coach Brenda Reeh, relief was part of the feeling. The 1996 Herd was her first championship team after taking teams to the state tourney twice before - the 1992 team lost in the semifinals and last year's team lost in the finals. Four other teams in the previous six years had lost in the regional finals.

"I haven't yet found words that can describe it," Reeh said Monday, seated at her desk that was dominated by a certain trophy. Her office is crowded with trophies, but the most recent one stands out.

"There's unbelievable joy, a lot of relief and a lot of gratitude to the kids," she said. "It's always been a dream of mine to be a part of a state championship team. I can't be out there playing, so it makes me grateful to them to do what they did."

For a while Saturday, it looked like what they were going to do was blow it.

The Lady Whitefaces sleepwalked through the first 10 or so minutes of the match, allowing Magnolia to take a 10-4 lead and eventually a 15-13 win in the first game.

"I think that just as we were warming up, that's when it started hitting the kids that we had a real good chance to be state champions," Reeh said. "We had the knowledge of that all along, but I don't think that

it sunk in until that point, and we were as nervous as we could be." The Whitefaces made error after error.

"It was so frightening to think that we were beating ourselves, and it was

happening in the state finals," Reeh said.

Danielle Cornelius, the senior all-state middle blocker and tournament Most Valuable Player, said essentially that the players were so

anxious to find out who was going to win the match that they sort of forgot they actually had to play the match.

Barrett, who was named to the all-tourney team along with Julie Rampley, put it into words better.

"I think that we knew we were so close to getting the championship that we got tight butt," Barrett said.

The Lady Whitefaces relaxed enough come back a little at a time, back to within 12-8. Then a Meredith Tabor stuff block, a Rampley ace, two Cornelius kills and an error by Magnolia gave Hereford the lead at 13-12.

"We just loosened up," Reeh said. "We did a few things right, and (Magnolia) made us understand they weren't perfect, which we were starting to feel."

"Even then, when we had our last serve and we were up 13-12, we still didn't have our nerves worked out of our system," Reeh said. "There were two passing errors we just choked on."

Magnolia converted those two bad passes by the Herd into points, and an ace gave Magnolia the 15-13 win.

Strangely, there was no panic - at least on the court. The senior Lady Whitefaces seemed almost calm.

"We knew it was all our own errors. We killed ourselves," Barrett said. "We just went out in the second and third games and dominated."

"When we lost," Cornelius said. "We knew we had two games to win to be able to be state champions."

Neither team scored quickly in the second game, with only Whiteface Cate Betzen's ace interrupting seven sideouts.

Hereford got a boost from 6-foot junior Sarah Ramey, who played only in the second game. She had a kill on an overset for the second point and her stuff block gave Hereford the lead for good at 3-2. A Magnolia hitting error made it 4-2.

"I knew I needed to contribute something to help my teammates out," Ramey said.

Another stuff by Ramey got Hereford a sideout. That launched a run of 10 points in three rotations that put Hereford in control.

"I felt like the players got more determined about loosening up and playing," Reeh said. "I think they realized they were denying themselves of a chance."

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State Champs!

A mass of jubilant Lady Whiteface volleyball players piles up after their 13-15, 15-9, 15-5 victory over Magnolia Saturday in Austin gave them the Class 4A state championship - Hereford's first title in three tries at the state tournament. Kendra Wright

(top) joins the pile which already includes Kari Barrett (bottom left), Danielle Cornelius (right of Barrett), Cassie Abney (facing both) and Meredith Tabor (14). Hereford ended the season with a 34-1 record.

HISD trustees accept Messer's resignation, leave seat vacant

By SHERRI MARTIN
Staff Writer

Hereford Independent School District board of trustees accepted the resignation of District VI Trustee Roy Dale Messer during the regular meeting Monday.

Messer's resignation was effective Nov. 12.

"I feel that my time will be better spent on my family and my own business, since I have a marked difference between the way I feel the direction of the board should travel for the benefit of our children and employees," Messer said in a letter to HISD Superintendent Charles Greenawalt.

Trustees also unanimously agreed to leave the District 6 seat vacant.

Since the seat comes up for

election in May, Board President Dave Charest said, "I would just as soon leave that seat vacant."

Trustees approved the "Baby Think It Over" program to be implemented in the Hereford High School parenting and child development class.

The purpose of the program is to provide an experience to students that simulates the experience of parenting an infant.

The Hereford Health Care Alliance has donated two dolls, and two additional dolls will be donated by Hereford Regional Medical Center.

Students who volunteer for the program will be responsible for caring for the doll for no more than two days.

The infant simulator contains a

microprocessor, which simulates the realistic cry of an infant at random intervals of 15 minutes to six hours for feeding or care 24 hours a day.

"Feeding" the baby requires the "student/parent" to insert a probe into its back and hold it in place for up to 35 minutes. The probe is attached to a tamper-proof, non-transferable hospital bracelet worn on the teen's wrist. This means that only the assigned "student/parent" can quiet the doll.

Also, the "student/parent" and student's parent must sign a contract of responsibility.

Students who volunteer for the program will be responsible for caring for the doll for no more than two days. If caring for the doll during the school day, the "student/parent" must make arrangements for childcare with Linda Cumpton, HHS home economics teacher.

Trustees also accepted a bid of \$400 from Ray Kerschen of Hereford for a 15 feet by 15 feet piece of property on the corner of Sycamore Street and Centre Street.

The electrical supply to the Hereford Junior High football field is located on this property.

The district has an estimate of \$400-\$450 to move the electrical supply, Greenawalt said.

In other business, trustees:

-- Approved a request for a waiver for average daily attendance on SOAR High students who attend less than four hours per day.

-- Postponed action on a resolution for the Lone Star Investment Pool.

-- Postponed action on the 1995-96 audit report.

-- Approved the personnel report.

-- Heard Hereford High School Student Council report and general reports.



Victorious!

Kendra Wright, left, and Julie Rampley revel in the moment during a homecoming celebration staged Sunday night by Herd fans to mark the team's triumph over Magnolia Saturday

Lottery officials to review contract

AUSTIN (AP) - A close friend of Texas Lottery Executive Director Nora Linares says until recently Ms. Linares didn't know about his lucrative deal with the lottery's main contractor.

Questions have been raised about how Mike Moeller, a friend and former co-worker of Ms. Linares', got a \$6,000-a-month job with GTECH Holding Corp. just months after the Rhode Island company won a five-year contract to run the state's lottery.

A meeting of the three-member Texas Lottery Commission was scheduled this morning and the issue was expected to draw much attention.

GTECH recently had its 1992 contract to run the lottery extended for another five years without a rebidding process. Ms. Linares has said her decisions regarding the company were based on its performance, not the job given to her friend.

She says she knew nothing about it until earlier this month. Moeller, currently serving time in a South Texas federal prison, told the Austin American-Statesman through his attorney that he kept his GTECH job a secret under a confidentiality clause in his contract.

"Mr. Moeller states unequivocally that he has never discussed this contract with anyone," his attorney,

Steve Brown, told the newspaper for a story today.

Brown said GTECH released Moeller from the confidentiality clause late Monday.

GTECH officials have said Moeller was paid \$30,000 from October 1992 to March 1993. But the company hasn't been able to confirm what work he did, according to spokesman Robert Rendine.

"He was signed under a business consulting contract in New Mexico. The company is continuing to investigate the nature and substance of the work that he did," Rendine said.

County commissioners approve insurance plan

Deaf Smith County commissioners Monday unanimously adopted a revised hospitalization insurance plan.

Under the plan, ProNet is the Preferred Provider Organization (PPO), participation is not mandatory and preventive care increases to \$200 per year.

"I think ProNet probably has the biggest discounts and probably one of the largest networks," said Jim Reagan of R.H. Administrators in Lubbock.

If an employee goes to a hospital in the PPO network, Reagan said, the coinsurance will be 90-10. Employees who go to a hospital that is not in the network, the co-insurance will remain at 80-20.

Commissioners will not see an increase in insurance costs with the plan. They may even see a decrease, Reagan said.

On a motion by Troy Don Moore and second by Tony Castillo, the vote was unanimous to adopt the revised plan.

In other business, commissioners:

-- Granted permission to create a line item adjustment in Precinct 2.

-- Approved a resolution to authorize signatures for the Texas Community Development Grant Program.

-- Approved a request from the Sheriff's Department to advertise for current openings in the county jail.

-- Approved minutes, bills and reports.

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Local Roundup

County library will be closed

Deaf Smith County Library will be closed Nov. 28 until further notice (approximately two weeks) for the Thanksgiving holiday and the installation of new carpet. The book drop will remain unlocked so that patrons may return books by their due dates and not incur overdue fines.

Cold weather continues

Hereford recorded a high of 53 degrees Monday and a low of 24 degrees Tuesday morning. The forecast for Tuesday night calls for cloudy and cold with a less than 20 percent chance of light snow. The low will be 15-20 degrees with east to northeast winds, 10-20 mph.

News Digest

State

AUSTIN - The state comptroller will recommend to the 1997 Legislature that Texas teachers who stay on the job 10 years be rewarded with free college tuition for their children.

The \$20.3 million proposal is part of John Sharp's "Texas Performance Review" to be released next week. Children of teachers who stay in their jobs a decade would get free tuition at any Texas public college. After 15 years, the cost of required fees also would be included.

The comptroller's office says the proposal would be paid for by at least \$1 billion in savings to be outlined in Sharp's performance review.

Sharp said his research shows that most teachers who leave do so between their 5th and 10th year on the job.

"During the last year I looked for a solution to this critical problem, and I believe this proposal offers the biggest 'bang for the buck' of any we considered," Sharp said.

DALLAS - Forecasters say a harsh winter ice storm that caused several deaths, dozens of flight cancellations and power failures Monday has retreated for now.

Temperatures will remain near or below freezing, but no sleet, ice or snow is expected until after Thanksgiving, according to the National Weather Service in Fort Worth.

But the ice storm's departure came only after causing near chaotic conditions around the state.

Dallas police say Robert Pollard, a 47-year-old homeless man, is the first to die on the streets of Dallas this season due to the weather. The Dallas County Medical examiner's office listed the cause of death as hypothermia, complicated by alcoholism.

The weather was blamed for 10 traffic related deaths statewide, according to the Department of Public Safety.

HOUSTON - Elvis. Cultural icon or protected trademark? Houston bar owner Barry Capece says his tavern, "The Velvet Elvis" - pays homage not to The King, but to the 1970s kitschy art craze of velvet oil painting.

"I'd rather have called it 'The Velvet Dogs Playing Poker,' but there's no ring to it," Capece says.

Elvis Presley Enterprises, Inc. the Memphis, Tenn.-based entity that controls use of the Elvis name, on Monday took Capece to federal court in an attempt to get him to change the name of his nightclub.

"Beginning in 1956 and since then, there have been licensing problems," said Mack Webner, attorney for Elvis Presley Enterprises, or EPE. "That's because Elvis Presley sells."

HOUSTON - Electric utility Duke Power Co. of North Carolina is merging with Houston-based natural gas distributor PanEnergy Corp. in a \$7.7 billion deal that will create one of the nation's largest gas and electric companies.

The agreement, which will form a \$23 billion integrated energy company to be called Duke Energy Corp., is the most recent of several mergers involving electric and gas pipeline firms. The accords are seen as driven partly by the easing of government regulation.

"As we envision expanding our electric business nationally, we need a platform on which to do that," Richard Priory, Duke president and chief operating officer, said Monday.

"Clearly, PanEnergy has a very extensive platform in 30 states where they have gas positions. This clearly leaves us with a platform to geographically expand our business and create a national presence in the delivery of energy."

Charlotte-based Duke Power, which provides electric service in a 20,000-square-mile-area roughly along the Interstate 85 corridor in North and South Carolina, has \$13.4 billion in assets and employs 17,000 people.

Emergency Services

Activities reported by law enforcement agencies and emergency services:

Hereford Police Department

Weekend

- 38-year-old female arrested for driving while intoxicated on 4th and Sampson.
- 18-year-old male was arrested for disorderly conduct on 2nd and Lawton.
- 26-year-old male was arrested for traffic citations on Hwy 60 and Sampson.
- 40-year-old male arrested for domestic assault in the 100 block of Avenue H.
- 2 males arrested for engaging in organized crime after fight occurred in the 300 block of Avenue A.
- Report of harassment was filed from the 100 block of Beach Street.
- Report of burglary of a building in the 1100 block of E. 1st Street where an undisclosed amount of items was taken.
- Runaway report was filed in the 100 block of Avenue H when a 16-year-old male did not return home.
- Report of domestic assault in the 400 block of Avenue C.
- Report of criminal trespass was filed in the 400 block of Avenue E.
- Report of abandoning a child in the 600 block of Irving.
- Report of criminal mischief in the 900 block of S. Lee.
- Report of domestic disturbance in the 300 block of Avenue H.
- Report of criminal mischief in the 500 block of Mable.
- Report of disorderly conduct in the 300 block of Avenue J.
- Report of Theft-C in the 1300 block of E. 1st.
- Citation issued for 1 curfew violation, 5 speeding citations issued and 40 other traffic citations issued.
- Fire department was dispatched to 511 Jackson on a possible structure

fire. No injuries were reported.

Monday

- Report of domestic disturbance in the 200 block of Blevins Street.
 - Citations issued to two female students for fighting at Hereford Junior High. Released to the custody of their respective parents.
 - Report of damage to chain link fence in the 300 block of Avenue A.
 - Report of gang related graffiti spray painted on a wall at Hereford High School. Damage estimated at more than \$100.
 - 23 traffic citations issued.
- ### SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT
- #### Weekend, Monday
- 18-year-old male arrested for forgery.
 - 27-year-old female arrested for tampering with government records.
 - 22-year-old male arrested for assault with a deadly weapon.
 - 25-year-old male arrested for assault with a deadly weapon.
 - 24-year-old male arrested for violation of probation.
 - 35-year-old male arrested for violation of probation.
 - 19-year-old female arrested for burglary of a habitation.
 - 25-year-old male arrested for bond forfeiture.
 - 36-year-old male arrested for violation of probation.
 - 21-year-old male arrested for violation of probation.
 - 20-year-old male arrested for failure to stop and give information.
 - 38-year-old female arrested for theft by check.
 - 24-year-old female arrested for violation of probation.
 - 23-year-old female arrested for theft by service over \$500, under \$1,500.
 - 32-year-old female arrested for failure to appear.
 - 2 reports of dog bites.
 - 1 report of assault.



Victory party

The state champion Lady Whiteface volleyball team received a fitting welcome home Sunday as a crowd of more than 100 parents, students and fans showered the squad with congratulations.

Head coach Brenda Reeh, center, and assistant coach Kristi Lytal, right, are welcomed here by volleyball mom Brenda Barrett.

FDA chief announces his resignation

WASHINGTON (AP) - It was 3 a.m., and Food and Drug Commissioner David Kessler was on the phone determining how many children may have been sickened by a gourmet apple juice - and how to get the drinks out of Americans' refrigerators.

That hands-on passion defined Kessler's tenure at the regulatory agency - a job in which he alternately was admired as a protector of vulnerable consumers or reviled as a "gestapo-like" enforcer who crusaded against the tobacco industry.

Kessler announced Monday that six years as FDA's chief was enough, saying he would resign once President Clinton found a successor, something expected no sooner than late January.

One possible successor is Dr. Michael Friedman, an oncologist who spent 14 years at the National Cancer Institute before becoming one of Kessler's top deputies this year.

"We've done what we said we would do," Kessler said in an interview Monday. He listed as his top achievements regulations designed to prevent teen-agers from taking up smoking, slashing the time FDA spends approving new medicines and giving consumers nutrition information on food labels.

"Those things make a difference," said Kessler, whose agency oversees the safety of products that account for roughly one-fourth of all consumer spending.

Clinton praised Kessler on Monday as having "a tireless commitment to better the lives of our

citizens." His administration asked Kessler on Friday and again Monday to stay, but he refused.

Sen. Edward Kennedy, D-Mass., said Kessler was "one of the very best commissioners in the history of the FDA."

"The champagne corks may be popping in the industry's executive suites over his resignation, but for millions of Americans, he is the epitome of the best in public service," Kennedy said in a statement.

The decision also disappointed consumer advocates.

"When a crisis has come, he's been there and he's rolled up his sleeves," said Dr. Sidney Wolfe of Public Citizen.

But it was welcomed by critics - and by the embattled tobacco industry, whose stocks rose last week on rumors that the companies' chief nemesis was leaving and jumped again Monday.

Although tobacco companies declined comment, Sen. Lauch Faircloth, R-N.C., said: "Hopefully with Kessler gone, the FDA will spend more time in the lab and less time on the farm."

Indeed, Kessler's legacy will be his tobacco crackdown. He declared nicotine an addictive drug used to hook teen-agers on cigarettes and published, in August, the nation's first regulations of tobacco marketing.

"I hope the world is a little bit safer for our kids because of what we've done," Kessler said.

The Justice Department is

investigating tobacco executives for possible perjury and probing an alleged industry conspiracy to hide smoking's harms, and dozens of states and former smokers have filed new lawsuits charging cigarette makers knowingly hooked them.

Tobacco foes say Kessler's departure doesn't signal that the Clinton administration favors industry calls for a legislative settlement.

"Still, Kessler has been understood all along to have served as a bulwark against the White House caving in to tobacco industry demands for a weak compromise," anti-smoking activist Cliff Douglas said. "The loss of David Kessler means a loss to tobacco control efforts in this country."

Kessler is arguably the FDA's most controversial chief. He ignited an outcry as soon he took office by seizing thousands of gallons of orange juice labeled "fresh" when they were made from concentrate, and ended this year antagonizing

anti-abortionists by giving conditional approval to the abortion pill RU-486.

Rep. Joe Barton, R-Texas, has accused FDA of killing patients by not approving new medicines fast enough, and he welcomed Kessler's departure as opening the door for agency reform.

Kessler "inherited a somewhat bureaucratic and arthritic agency and didn't revitalize it," Barton charged.

Kessler disagrees, citing documents that show when he took office in 1990, the agency spent a median of 25 months approving each of 64 drugs, while in 1995, it spent 16.5 months on each of 82 new drugs.

Kessler opposes congressional plans he says could endanger public health.

"I believe the American people expect a degree of vigilance from this agency," he said.

Kessler, 45, a pediatrician and an attorney, has served Presidents Bush and Clinton. He was hired to clean up the agency after a generic-drug scandal.



Lions Club donations

Speedy Nieman of the Hereford Brand, left, accepts a \$400 check for the Christmas Stocking from Hereford Lions Club President L.J. Clark. The Lions Club also donated \$750 to the Boy's Ranch.

Lottery

No tickets correctly matched all six numbers drawn Saturday night for the twice-weekly Lotto Texas game, state lottery officials said.

The numbers drawn Saturday night from a field of 50 were: 6-16-29-30-39-49.

AUSTIN (AP) - The winning Pick 3 numbers drawn Saturday by the Texas Lottery, in order:

0-1-8
(zero, one, eight)

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Obituaries

OLON C. PLUNK

Nov. 22, 1996

Olon C. Plunk, 77, of Sunray died Friday. His sister, Emma Lewell Noland is a Hereford resident.

Services will be held at 10 a.m. Tuesday in Sunray Baptist Church with Rev. Philip Hilton, of the church, officiating. Burial will be in Lane Memorial Cemetery by Morrison Funeral Directors.

Mr. Plunk was born in Collingsworth County. He married Margaret Beach in 1947 in Hereford. He was a former resident of Hedley and had lived in Sunray since 1957. He was a former owner and operator of Plunk Shamrock Service Station. He was a U.S. Army veteran, serving in World War II. He was a Baptist.

Survivors are his wife; two sons, Olon Plunk of Amarillo and Forest Plunk of Pampa; a brother, Rowe Plunk of Midland; two sisters, Emma Lewell Noland of Hereford and Josie Chesser of Dumas; and four grandchildren.

The family will be at 921 Highway Ave., and requests memorials be to a favorite charity.

FLETCHER TAYLOR HORTON

Nov. 24, 1996

Fletcher Taylor Horton, 19, of Austin, former Hereford resident, died Sunday as a result of injuries sustained in an auto accident.

Services will be held at 2 p.m. Tuesday in Harrell Funeral Home in Austin with Reverend George Cladis officiating. Burial will be in Onion Creek Memorial Park, by Harrell Funeral Home.

Mr. Horton was attending Austin Community College and had attended Bowie High School, Porter Junior High and Kocurek Elementary. He worked at the Onion Creek Country Club and was an aspiring golfer.

He was preceded in death by a brother, Carey, of Hereford.

Survivors are his father and stepmother, Mike and Yvonne Horton of Arlington, formerly of Hereford when Mike was a golf pro at Pitman Golf Course; his mother Cindy Horton and stepfather Richard Opseth and brother, Derek Horton, all of Austin; grandparents, James and Anne Welch of Amarillo, Ed and Mary Dziuk of Hereford, Joe and Naomi Merrell of Hereford, and Richard and Jeannie Opseth of Key West, Fla.; great-grandmother, Elizabeth K. Walvoord of Hereford; great-grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Titus Propheer of Wathena, Kan., and Mr. and Mrs. Reuben Opseth of Dardanelle, Ark.; and numerous aunts, uncles and cousins.

The family requests memorial contributions to Caritas in Austin, the American Cancer Society or Ronald McDonald House.

Lifestyles



Honored with baby shower

Kati Lynn Culpepper, infant daughter of Jason and Kristi Culpepper, was the honoree at a baby shower recently in the home of Donna Rives. Pictured with the new baby are, from left, Sue Powell, maternal grandmother; Kristi Culpepper; and Marilyn Culpepper, paternal grandmother.

Culpepper baby is shower honoree

A baby shower honoring Kati Lynn Culpepper, infant daughter of Jason and Kristi Culpepper who was born Nov. 5, was held recently in the home of Donna Rives.

Guests were welcomed by the new mother; Sue Powell and Marilyn Culpepper, grandmothers; and Patty Atchley, Beulah Powell, Coy Tice and Nell Culpepper, great-grand-

mothers.

Refreshments of sweet breads, fruit trays, coffee and spiced tea were served from a table covered with a pink cloth and crocheted overlay. The table was centered with a pink gift bag filled with streamers, tissue paper and baby items, and flanked by pink tapers surrounded by magnolia

blossoms.

A stroller was the gift from hostesses Jayne Euler, Sandi Blevins, Debbie Keyes, Jennifer Eggen, Doris Dobbs, Lois Matchett, Thelma Cherry, Brenda Reeh, Gayle Binder, Carolyn Simpson, Janice Brownlow, Ann Warwick, Carol Berryman and Rives.

Aggie Moms to make survival packages

Plans for assembling "survival packages" were finalized when the Golden Spread Aggie Mom's Club met recently at K-Bob's Restaurant.

Aggie moms will meet at 6 p.m.

L'Allegra Study Club program features decorating accessories

L'Allegra Study Club met at Terry's Floral and Design to hear a program given by Terry Sparks.

Sparks emphasized how accessories can be used in decorating to change one look to another, year to year. He demonstrated how a touch of gold can spruce up a holiday garland or how a strand of fruit can be used to add warmth and color year round.

During the business meeting, members voted to use funds donated to Project Christmas Card for

Monday, Dec. 2 in the Hereford Community Center to assemble the packages to send to area students attending Texas A&M University during final exam week. Each mom is asked to bring "goodies" for 40

refurbishing the obstetrics waiting room at Hereford Regional Medical Center.

Hostesses DeeAnne Trotter and Patsy Hoffman served fruit bread and pumpkin cheesecake to Melissa Clarke, Carmen Flood, Kitty Gault, Diana Griffin, Poppy Head, Diane Hoelscher, Sandy Josseland, Barbara Kerr, Sylvia Khuri, Colleen Meyer, Micah Noland, Hilda Perales, Jody Skiles, Suzanne Smith, Ella Marie Veigel, Judy Wall and Jan Weishaar.

students.

A birthday card was signed for Leslie Nelson, a student at A&M from Dimmitt.

It was announced that the Federation Meeting and the 25th anniversary of the Golden Spread Aggie Mother's Club will be in January. The meeting and anniversary celebration will be held Jan. 25 at the E.B. Black House. Each Aggie mom is asked to bring a salad. Door prizes will be given at this special event.

A letter of appreciation was read from the Connie Nelson family in Dimmitt, thanking the club for honoring Connie's memory by naming the Aggie Moms Scholarship after her.

Members in attendance were Susan Sublett, Eileen Alley, Denise Teel, Joanne Bone, Beverly Davis, Diane Townsend, Rita McDaniel, Jo Lynn Gleghorn, Evelyn Lyles, Suanne Bagley, Jan Metcalf and Terri Johnson.

Ann Landers

Columns help reader understand what happened to stroke victim

Dear Ann Landers: You recently printed some columns explaining how a stroke can cause inappropriate behavior. Those columns helped me understand what had happened to my mother. I wouldn't go so far as to say a stroke can be a good thing, but it certainly changed my mother for the better.

Mom was one of those typically uptight New Englanders. Although she was pleasant socially, the woman had absolutely no sense of humor. After her stroke, she changed completely. Her inhibitions vanished. Out of nowhere emerged a delightful display of wit and a mildly ribald sense of humor. Suddenly, this extremely rigid old lady was loosening up, making friends and enjoying life to the full. Three generations wanted her company.

When Mom became unable to take care of herself, my brother and I decided to move her to a retirement facility. Fortunately, there was a truly wonderful place in her neighborhood. The supervisor in charge of admissions told us, "Normally, we don't take anyone with your mother's advanced physical problems, but she would live up the place for otherwise lonely people. We would be happy to have her here."

When Mom had a second stroke and was virtually at death's door, she had the emergency-room personnel

laughing at her jokes. What a way to go! -- Proud Son in California

Dear California: A stroke definitely can alter behavior. In many instances, the "censoring agent" goes off duty and previously uptight people become less guarded and more congenial. Unfortunately, the reverse can also occur. Folks with sweet dispositions can become quarrelsome and cantankerous.

Thank you for the opportunity to shed some light on a subject too often kept in the dark.

Dear Ann Landers: I am feeling very depressed tonight because of the sweepstakes advertising I received in the mail. When I read the letter, it sounded as if I had won a whole lot of money.

The ad said in big letters, "WE ARE NOW AUTHORIZED TO PAY \$833,337 IN CASH TO ..." and there was my name printed in big letters. Below, in very small print, it said, "If you have the winning number."

I am a handicapped World War II veteran. My vision and hearing are very bad, and I am slowly recovering from colon surgery. I need new glasses and a hearing aid, but I have no money to buy these extras. Veterans Affairs does not pay my medical or dental bills, and I don't qualify for food stamps or welfare.

I am alone and have no family.

Why doesn't the law step in and stop ads like this? They get people's hopes up and then disappoint them. Please, Ann, look into this. -- Depressed in Kent, Wash.

Dear Kent: I looked into those sweepstakes promotions a few years ago, and you are right. They are very slick. Unfortunately, they are worded in such a way as to avoid prosecution. Their lawyers are very sharp.

I've told my readers time and again -- if it looks too good to be true, run in the other direction. Nobody is going to spend thousands of dollars in advertising to give away money. I hope your letter will help open some eyes. And P.S.: I wish those high-profile celebrities whose pictures appear with the promotion would give some thought to people like you who get taken in.

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Sports

Herd volleyball team captures championship

Continued from Page 1

Cornelius had a kill and a stuff for two points, and a Magnolia hitting error made it 7-2.

Magnolia got a sideout with a kill off a dig. Barrett chased the errant dig so far she tumbled over the Hereford bench. She was hardly shaken up, though; after a Cornelius kill got

Hereford a sideout, the 5-foot-6 Barrett recorded a stuff block for the Herd's eighth point.

That started a four-point run for the Herd. Cornelius had a kill, then Magnolia committed a hitting error so bad the ball nearly hit the Herd bench on the fly. Kendra Wright's ace then

put Hereford up 11-2.

After two sideouts, Betzen served an ace, Magnolia hit the net, and Barrett put down a dump set on Magnolia's side. On game point, though, Betzen's serve nicked the net for a Magnolia sideout.

Magnolia got a chance and took it,

scoring seven points to pull within 14-9 and denying Hereford twice in game point situations.

"I think we had a game 1 flashback, game 1 disease," Reeh said. "I got the same feeling from our kids as in the first game, like, 'Omigosh, we might win this.'"

Finally, Rampley got two straight kills - one for a sideout and one for the 15th point. Hereford had tied the match at one game apiece.

Hereford carried confidence into the third game.

"We felt more secure in our effort," Reeh said. "I felt like the kids thought they wouldn't be denied in the last (game). We sensed a little bit of frustration from Magnolia, and that was encouraging for us. The kids did a good job of going out and taking advantage of that frustration."

The Herd grabbed a 7-0 lead in the third game partly by good play and partly by Magnolia errors. In the four-point run that made it 7-0, Magnolia committed three errors wrapped around a Tabor stuff.

The Lady Bulldogs got a point on a Jeanna Adams kill, but Tabor answered with a kill for a sideout. Moments later, Tabor and Cornelius

had back-to-back stuffs for a 9-1 lead.

Magnolia kept the Herd stuck on nine points for five rotations, but the Lady Bulldogs couldn't get any closer than 9-5 in that time.

Reeh called a timeout when Magnolia scored its fifth point, but her best strategy was probably staying with the rotation. That's because after a Magnolia hitting error, Cornelius came back into the game on the front line.

"When I go into a game, I know I need to bring excitement," Cornelius said.

Boy, did she.

She proceeded to nail down the MVP award - if it was even in doubt at that point. She immediately got two kills to start a four-point run, which also included a Magnolia hitting error and a Betzen kill. Hereford led 13-5 two points from a title.

The teams traded sideouts - with Cornelius earning Hereford's with a kill. Betzen had an apparent kill on an overset, but she was ruled to be over the net, so it didn't count.

Magnolia was ruled in the net on the next play, giving Hereford a sideout at 13-5. Cornelius capped off a great four-year varsity career with stuff blocks for the next two points,

sewing up the state championship.

Cornelius was thrilled, of course, but the feelings weren't 100 percent joy for the senior, who is bound for Oklahoma after a verbal commitment.

"Actually, it's harder than what you'd think," she said, "because I know I won't be able to play (for the Herd) anymore. Even though I have four more years to play, it won't be the same without Cassie and Kari and Shonda (Sossaman)."

Hereford defeated Red Oak, 15-6, 17-7, in the semifinals on Friday, avenging Hereford's loss to Red Oak in last year's state finals. Red Oak's season ended at 34-8.

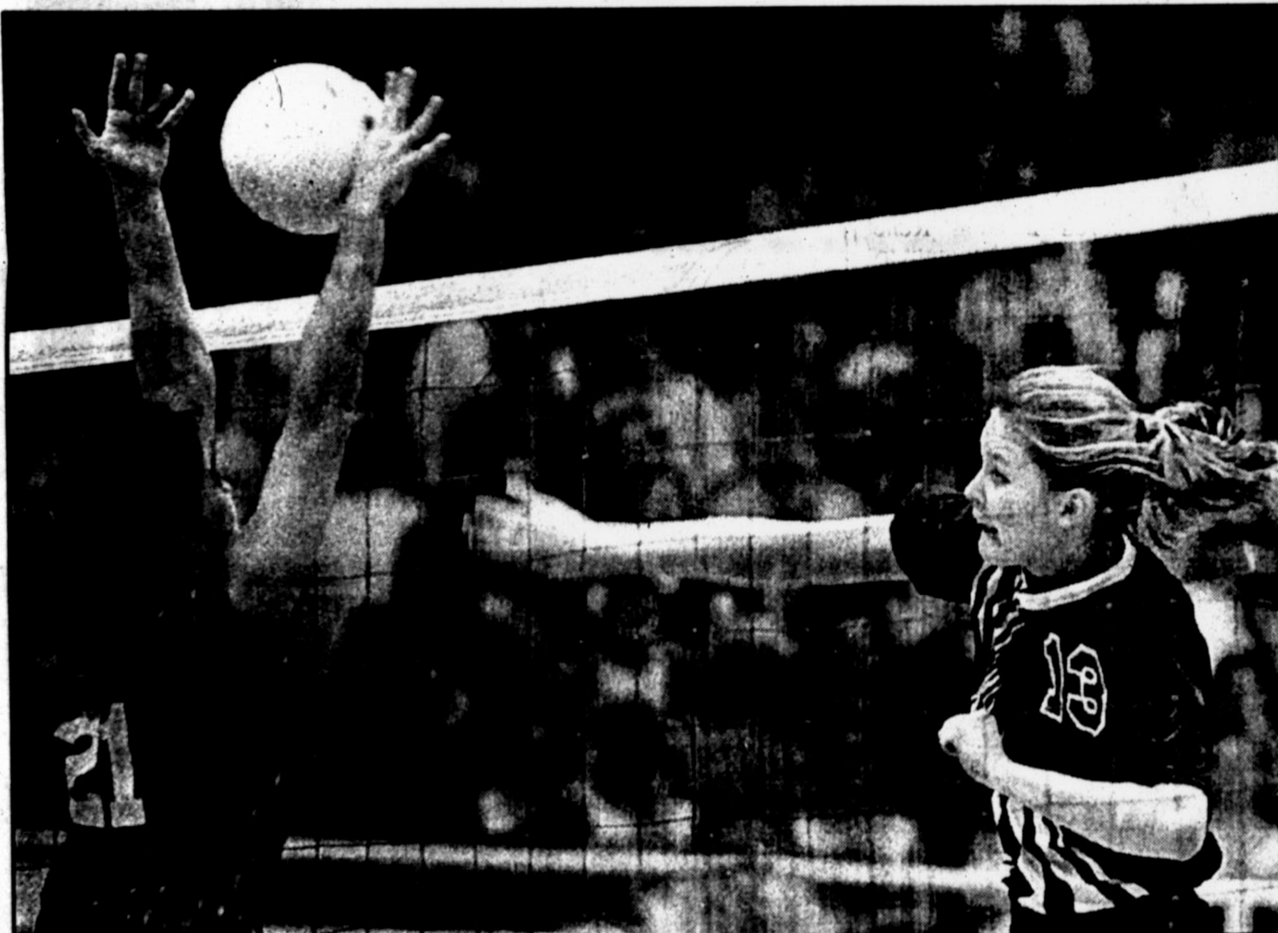
Magnolia was a 15-10, 15-4 winner over New Braunfels Canyon in the other semifinals. NB Canyon ended at 24-12. Magnolia fell to 33-3 after falling to Hereford.

It seemed like half the town of Hereford was in Austin for the tournament. Herd fans took over the Courtyard by Marriott Hotel. The Lady Whitefaces may have had the largest group of fans at the tournament.



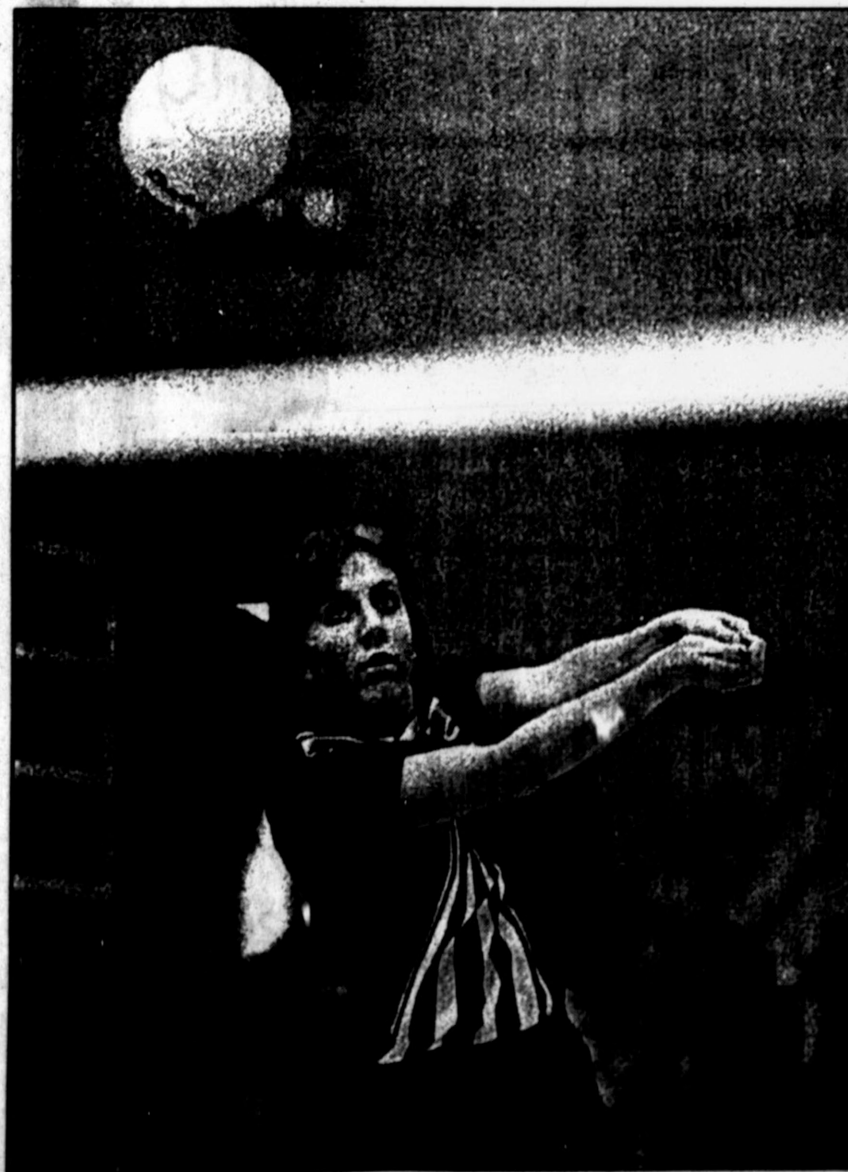
Just rewards

The four seniors on the Hereford volleyball team - (left to right) Cassie Abney, Kari Barrett, Shonda Sossaman and Danielle Cornelius - accept the Class 4A championship trophy from a representative of the University Interscholastic League. The Lady Whitefaces earned the trophy with a 13-15, 15-9, 15-5 victory over Magnolia Saturday in Austin.



Block this

Hereford's Julie Rampley drills the volleyball through the hands of Magnolia's Jeanna Adams during Saturday's finals. The UIL credited Rampley with eight kills against Magnolia.



Digging for gold

Hereford's Catie Betzen passes the ball to the setter during Saturday's championship match.

UIL volleyball tourney results

State UIL Volleyball Tournament Results

Saturday

Class A Championship
Round Top-Carmine (38-4) def. Kennard (30-7), 15-4, 15-5

Class 2A Championship
Poth (34-5) def. Wallis Brazos (28-12), 15-6, 9-15, 15-7

Class 3A Championship
Bellville (35-7) def. Sealy (31-9), 15-3, 15-3

Class 4A Championship
Hereford (34-1) def. Magnolia (33-3), 12-15, 15-8, 16-14

Class 5A Championship
Arlington Martin (42-4) def. Humble Kingwood (39-3), 15-9, 15-12

All-Tournament Teams

Class 1A

Minnie McFarland, Sr., Kennard; Mia Waak, Jr., Round Top-Carmine; Gretchen Goebel, Sr., Round Top-Carmine; Shawna Berend, Sr., Windhorst; Traci Berend, Sr., Windhorst. MVP-Heidi Finke, Sr., Round Top-Carmine.

Class 2A

Amanda Wallace, Sr., Holliday; Meredith Nichols, Sr., Holliday; Roni Minks, Sr., Wallis Brazos; Jackie Jansky, Sr., Poth; Jinnie Jo Coon, Sr., Poth. MVP-Leslie Kopecki, Sr., Poth.

Class 3A

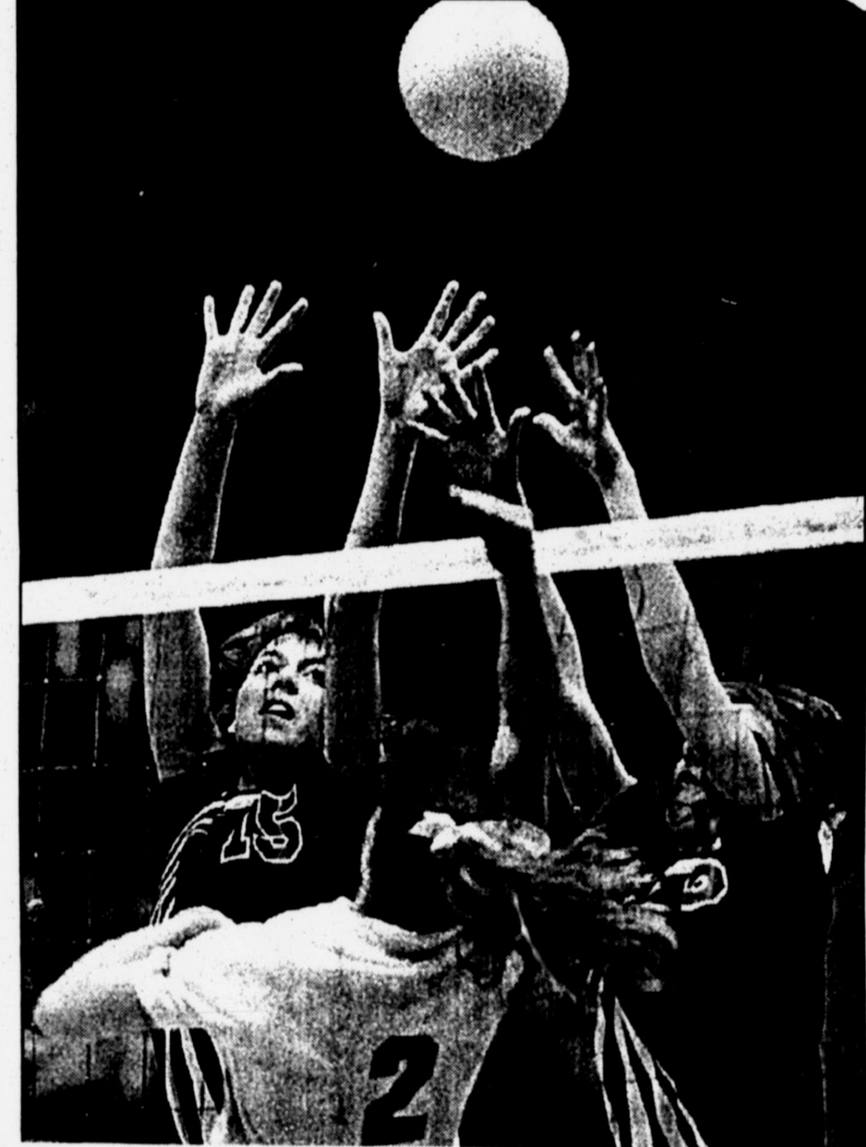
Lenette Joiner, Sr., Sealy; Nathana Janca, Sr., Sealy; Amanda Pilcik, Sr., Bellville; Stacy Schmidt, Jr., Bellville; Abby Zwahr, So., Bellville. MVP-Amanda Smitheal, Sr., Bellville.

Class 4A

Melissa Godwin, Sr., Red Oak; Leigh Leman, Jr., Magnolia; Mandy Black, Sr., Magnolia; Kari Barrett, Sr., Hereford; Julie Rampley, Jr., Hereford. MVP - Danielle Cornelius, Sr., Hereford.

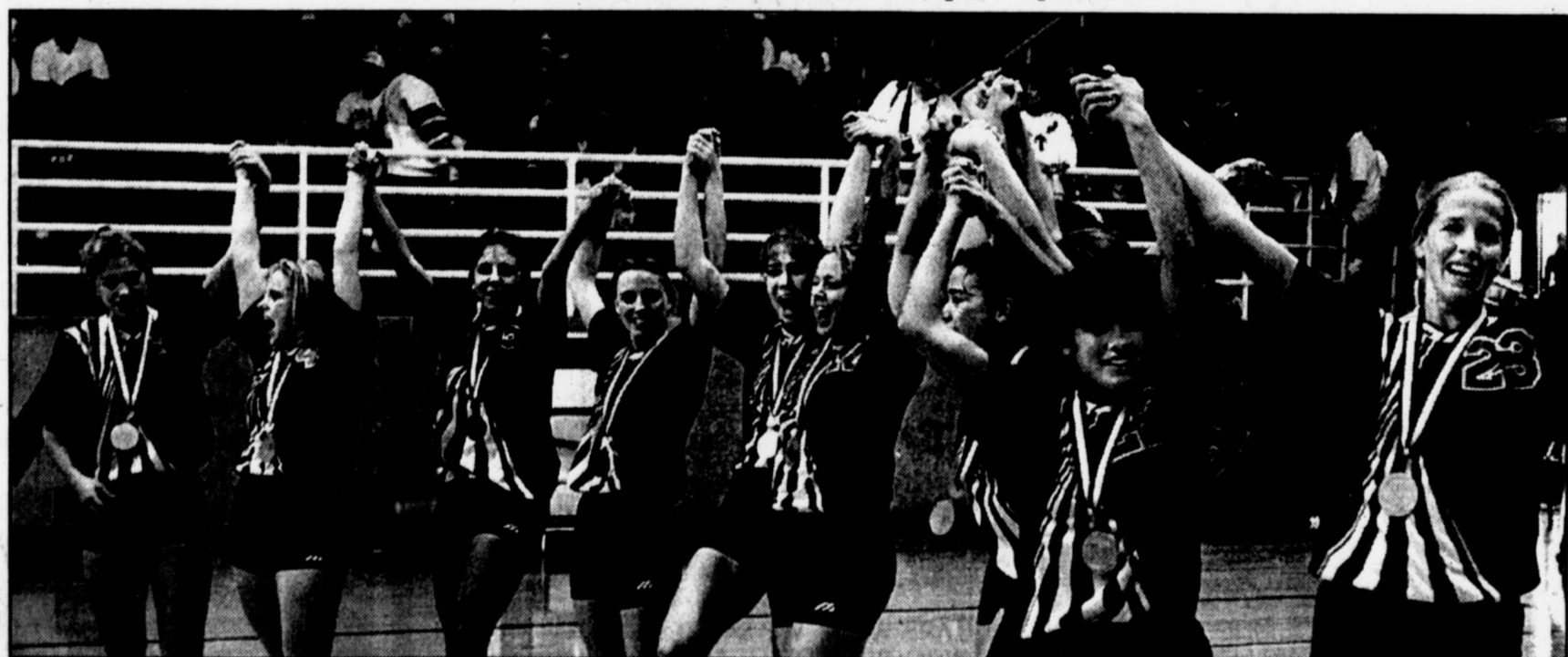
Class 5A

Melissa Staiger, Sr., Humble Kingwood; Jamie Keates, Jr., Humble Kingwood; Jennifer Witte, Jr., Arlington Martin; Liz Gruma, Sr., Arlington Martin; Gretchen Midkiff, Sr., Arlington Martin. MVP-Charissa Bonner, Jr., Arlington Martin.



Reach high

Hereford's Danielle Cornelius (left) and Catie Betzen stretch to try to reach a tipped attack by Red Oak's Cassie Hinton in Friday's Class 4A semifinals, which Hereford won 15-6, 15-7. It was sweet revenge, as Red Oak had beaten the Herd last year in the championship match.



We are the champions

The Lady Whitefaces celebrate after the champions' medal-presentation ceremony. The girls whose faces are visible are: (left to right) Cassie Abney, Kari Barrett, Catie Betzen, Briar

Baker, Lyndi Carlile, Kendra Wright, Meredith Tabor, Jamie Marquez and Sarah Ramey. Not pictured were Danielle Cornelius, Shonda Sossaman, Julie Rampley and Kristin Fangman.

Herd JV claims title in Hereford tournament

The Hereford junior varsity boys' basketball team won its own tournament Saturday, edging Lubbock High JV 65-64 in overtime.

"We made some free throws down the stretch that were pretty big, and we got two big steals at the end of the game that were pretty big," Herd JV coach Rodney Allen said. "Greg

Ewing had one (steal) at the end of the game (that iced it)."

Wagner led the Herd with 20 points, and he hit 3-of-4 free throws in overtime. McNutt scored 14 points, including a pair of free throws and a three-pointer in crunch time.

Lubbock High led 44-40 going into the fourth quarter, but Hereford tied

at 55-55. Ewing hit two free throws with 12 seconds left in regulation to send the game into overtime.

Ewing finished with 14 points, and Bryan Matthews added eight points.

Hereford downed Coronado's JV in the semifinals, 56-47. McNutt led the way in that game with 20, Wagner scored 10 and James Miller added

eight.

In the consolation game, the Herd sophomore team played the Lubbock High sophomores but lost 61-45 despite 14 points each from Brent Huseman and Cory Ortiz. Shane Decker added eight points.

Coronado's JV won the third place game, 63-34 over Dimmitt's JV.



All-Tournament

Hereford senior setter Kari Barrett (left) and junior middle blocker Julie Rampley (center) were named to the Class 4A all-tournament team, and senior middle blocker Danielle Cornelius was named the tourney's Most Valuable Player - she's holding the MVP plaque. The UIL credited Cornelius with 19 kills in the championship match against Magnolia.

Steelers stun Dolphins

By STEVEN WINE
AP Sports Writer

MIAMI (AP) - With time running out, Dan Marino seemed to have the Pittsburgh Steelers right where he wanted them - with their backs against the goal line.

When Marino's fourth-down pass sailed long, his comeback bid fell short and Pittsburgh denied the Miami Dolphins with a dramatic 24-17 victory Monday night.

"It's very difficult," Marino said, "because I felt we should have won."

The Steelers (9-3), who rallied from an 11-point first-half deficit, increased their lead to three games over second-place Houston in the AFC Central. The Dolphins (6-6) fell a game behind San Diego in their bid for a wild-card slot.

Because Miami lost, AFC West leader Denver (11-1) became the first team to clinch a postseason berth.

Miami scored only one touchdown against the Steelers' defense, while Pittsburgh's Jerome Bettis ran for 119 yards and Mike Tomczak passed for 252. With the game on the line, Tomczak hit one more pass than Marino - a 20-yard touchdown toss to Eric Mills that broke a 17-17 tie with 2:10 to go.

"When we scored," Tomczak said, "I told (teammate) Will Wolford, 'Marino's got too much time.' He said, 'Who cares?'"

Pittsburgh's lead hardly seemed daunting to the Dolphins, even with no timeouts remaining, because Marino has rallied them to victory from a fourth-quarter deficit 32 times.

"I've seen it a million times when I wasn't with the Dolphins - Dan

Marino taking the team down the field in the last two minutes," Miami receiver Fred Barnett said.

"Nothing is safe when he has the ball at the end of the game," Steelers coach Bill Cowher said.

Starting from the Miami 23-yard line, Marino threw completions of 6 and 10 yards, then hit Randal Hill for 45 to the Pittsburgh 16 with 1:20 to go.

"I thought we were going to tie it up," Miami coach Jimmy Johnson said.

Marino completed an 8-yard pass to the 8, threw an incompletion and then hit Bernie Parmalee, who was stopped for a 1-yard gain by Deon Figurs.

That made it fourth-and-1 at the 7 with 31 seconds left.

Bulls hold off Clippers

By KEN PETERS
AP Sports Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) - The Chicago Bulls had grown a bit spoiled, perhaps.

They not only romped off to a 12-0 start this season, they usually put their opponents away early.

It took a fourth-quarter rally, led by Michael Jordan and Scottie Pippen, for the Bulls to beat the underdog Los Angeles Clippers 88-84 Monday night.

Chicago, coming off its only loss of the season, Saturday night at Utah, never led the Clippers until early in the final quarter.

"This was a good test for us," Jordan said after he scored 40 points, had seven rebounds and blocked four shots. "In the last 12 games, we really hadn't been playing much in the fourth quarter."

"All of us, myself, Scottie and Dennis (Rodman), we've usually got ice on our knees by that time. So we haven't been able to play and improve in the fourth quarter."

The Bulls also were without their starting center, Luc Longley, who separated his left shoulder body surfing on Sunday and will be out about two months.

In other games Monday, Baltimore downed Minnesota 105-98, Milwaukee beat Orlando 100-88, and Utah defeated New Jersey 108-92.

A sellout crowd of 16,144 - a Clippers record at the Los Angeles Sports Arena - came out to see Jordan and the Bulls, who seemed to have about 10,000 of the fans cheering for them.

Jordan scored eight points and Pippen had seven during a 17-4 run in the first six minutes of the last quarter to put the Bulls on top 81-70.

Chicago, trailing 66-64 to start the period, tied it on a Jordan jumper 20 seconds into the quarter. Rodman then scored his only points of the game, on a fast break, to give the Bulls their first lead.

"Some of the guys, even myself, couldn't make any shots early," Jordan said. "I found my rhythm before anybody else found theirs, and they fed off me for awhile until we got ourselves back into position to win the game."

"It was just one of those games where I had to take over offensively a little bit."

"Michael stole the show," Los Angeles coach Bill Fitch said. "He's everything they say he is and he lives up to it every night. This certainly didn't hurt his movie, and now I'll go see it."

Rodman had 14 rebounds for the Bulls and Pippen had 11 rebounds to go with 15 points. Bill Wennington

started at center and finished with six points and four rebounds.

Stanley Roberts came off the bench to lead the Clippers with 15 points, and Loy Vaught had 14 points and 13 rebounds.

Jordan was impressed by the Clippers, saying: "They just want to make a name for themselves against us, and I respect that. We just had to match their intensity with our intensity."

The Clippers, meanwhile, seemed buoyed by holding the Bulls close. "As Malik (Sealy, Clippers guard) told me as he was walking off the court," Jordan related, "they have total confidence ... and they'll see us in the Finals."

Fitch said after the game: "I wouldn't trade locker rooms with a team headed for more glory (the Bulls), because somewhere down the line the Clippers are going to get something done that's gonna be worth talking about."

Bullets 105, Timberwolves 98

Washington held visiting Minnesota to 12 points in the first quarter and built an 18-point halftime lead en route to its third consecutive win.

Juwan Howard scored 24 points and Chris Webber had 16 points and 15 rebounds as the Bullets moved over .500 for the first time since opening night. The Bullets (7-6) never trailed in beating the Timberwolves for the fourth consecutive time since December 1994.

Bucks 100, Magic 88

Armon Gilliam scored 15 of his 24 points in the fourth quarter and visiting Milwaukee shot 77 percent in the period.

The Bucks only took 13 shots from the field in the last quarter, and made 10 of them. Gilliam scored 11 of his team's first 17 points, then made five free throws in the final 2:34 to help put the game away.

Battie rocks Nicholls St.

THIBODAUX, La. (AP) - Tony Battie scored 24 points, pulled down 15 rebounds and had four blocks Monday to lead Texas Tech to a 80-73 victory over Nicholls State.

Cory Carr helped Texas Tech (2-0) gain an early lead by hitting a jump shot, followed by a 3-pointer to give the Red Raiders a 14-4 lead 5:35 into the game.

Texas Tech went on a 14-6 run over the next 8:00 minutes and led 46-24 at halftime.

Nicholls State (0-1) rallied behind Kendrick Franklin's 15 second half

points as the Colonels outscored Texas Tech 28-14 over the first 10 minutes of the second half.

Taurus Howard scored 10 of the points during that time and hit a three-pointer with 9:59 left to cut the score to 60-52.

Carr scored 17 points for Texas Tech and Gionel Cooper chipped in 14.

Franklin scored 20 points and a team-high 10 rebounds for Nicholls State. Howard chipped in 18 points and Keith Richard scored 12.

Texas Tech converted 8-of-12 free throws in the last 1:07 to help seal the victory.

Lady Raiders roll to victory

LUBBOCK, Texas (AP) - Alicia Thompson scored 25 and Rene Hanebutt added 14 Monday night to lead the 11th-ranked Texas Tech Lady Raiders to an 82-44 victory over Grambling.

Thompson and Hanebutt each pulled down a game-high 12 rebounds as Tech (2-0) posted its second straight home runaway and 32nd straight home victory.

Frederica Wills scored 12 to lead Grambling (0-2), which shot just 25 percent from the field, including 16 percent in the first half on 6-for-37 shooting.

A smothering Texas Tech defense, seemed to befuddle Grambling, which threw up a barrage of off-balance and rushed shots before halftime.

After the Lady Tigers went up 4-3, Tech outscored them 32-7 over the next 18 minutes. Grambling wouldn't have had their seven if not for a banked 3-pointer midway through the half and another trey with two seconds left before halftime.

College coaches leaving fast

By The Associated Press

The changing of the guard among college football coaches has turned into a deluge.

Johnny Majors resigned at Pittsburgh. So did Dan Henning at Boston College and Jerry Pettibone at Oregon State. Maryland's Mark Duffner and SMU's Tom Rossley were fired.

They join Bill Mallory, who was fired from Indiana, on Oct. 31; Lou Holtz, who quit at Notre Dame, and Jim Colletto, who is out at Purdue.

Other coaches leaving are Gene Stallings (Alabama), John Bobo (Arkansas State), Jim Sweeney (Fresno State), Bill Curry (Kentucky), Jim Hess (New Mexico State), John Ralston (San Jose State), Buddy Teevens (Tulane) and Al Molde (Western Michigan).

With two weeks left in the regular season, 20 of 111 Division I-A

coaches have either resigned, retired or been fired.

Some schools have already lined up replacements.

Today, Cam Cameron, an assistant with the Washington Redskins, will be named the new coach at Indiana, while Joe Tiller, who resigned at Purdue last week, will be at Purdue.

In I-AA, Brian McNeely was fired Monday at Idaho State.

Since the NCAA went to I-A and I-AA schools in 1978, the record for most coaching changes in a season is 27 in 1980, when there were 139 schools in I-A.

At Chestnut Hill, Mass., Henning resigned two days after another losing season, this one rocked by a gambling scandal.

"This has been a difficult year," said Henning, 16-19-1 in his three seasons at BC. "There have been a

number of distractions that have hurt the focus and clouded the overall issue."

On Nov. 6, 13 players were suspended for gambling. Two bet against Boston College in the Syracuse game, and Henning said they would never return to the team. The Eagles finished 5-7.

At Pittsburgh, the 61-year-old Majors leaves after Saturday's game against Rutgers. In his second stint with the Panthers, Majors is 11-32 in four seasons.

Majors will take a new job at Pitt as special assistant to the chancellor and athletic director.

"The final whistle Saturday will be my final whistle as the football coach at the University of Pittsburgh," said Majors, 184-137-10 in 28 seasons at Iowa State, Pitt and Tennessee.

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Teams are numbered in ads; check games and mark box number of team selected as winner. GOOD COPIES AND FACSIMILES OF THE OFFICIAL ENTRY BLANK WILL BE ACCEPTED. Entries must be deposited at BRAND office before 5 p.m. Friday. All mail entries must be post-marked no later than Thursday to be eligible. Those post-marked later than Thursday, or received late will be disqualified. Only one entry is allowed per person. Violations of this rule will result in disqualification. All entrants must be at least 18 years of age to be eligible. Prize winner residing in Deaf Smith County MUST appear IN PERSON prior to the next week's contest to claim an award. Prizes not claimed within 5 working days become null and void. Entrants outside the county can appear in person or enclose a self-addressed envelope with entry. Be sure to guess total score in the tie-breaker game. Staff members of the Hereford Brand and their families are not eligible. Decision of the judges is final.

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3. <input type="checkbox"/>	4. <input type="checkbox"/>	15. <input type="checkbox"/>	16. <input type="checkbox"/>	27. <input type="checkbox"/>	28. <input type="checkbox"/>	39. <input type="checkbox"/>	40. <input type="checkbox"/>	TIE-BREAKER <small>Guess the score of this game. This will be determined by winner, total score and point margin.</small> <input type="checkbox"/> Friona <input type="checkbox"/> vs. Vernon <small>MAIL TO BOX 673 OR BRING BY OFFICE AT 313 N. LEE</small>	
5. <input type="checkbox"/>	6. <input type="checkbox"/>	17. <input type="checkbox"/>	18. <input type="checkbox"/>	29. <input type="checkbox"/>	30. <input type="checkbox"/>	41. <input type="checkbox"/>	42. <input type="checkbox"/>		
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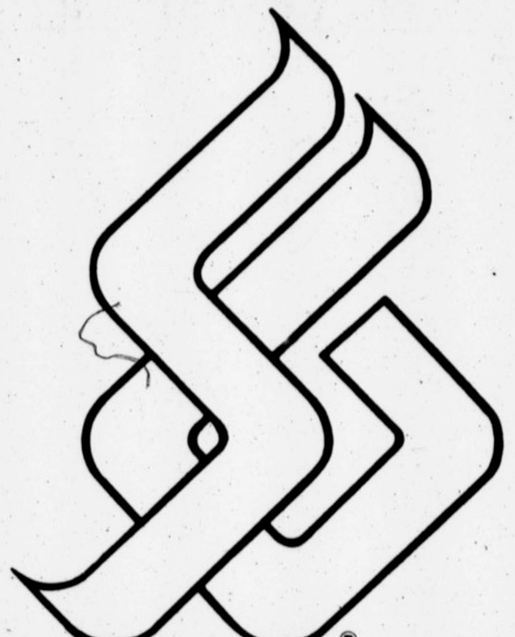
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Thanksgiving was grandma's special time

By JIM BISHOP
The Victoria Advocate
VICTORIA, Texas - Thanksgiving was always grandma's special time. Clara Armstrong Wolf was her name. She was a slight woman with silver hair. She stood a little over five feet, wore round, wire-rimmed glasses and spoke with the softness of an angel.

Yet she was the strongest, smartest, most inspiring person I've known, and she was a family matriarch without peer.

Thanksgiving was the only time each year that her huge clan got together - children, sons- and daughters-in-law, grandkids, and so on. And they all came together because they honored and respected that little old lady.

Grandma's cooking alone was an enticement to make it to the annual reunion. Thank goodness she passed her secrets down to her daughters, who helped her with the massive food preparations.

I remember smoke billowing out of the back room, where the men played poker, and the intra-family arguments going on while others watched the Texas vs. A&M football game.

At the weary end of that long day each year, grandma said goodbye to more than 100 of us individually. Each and every one of us left feeling that we were somehow special to her. I'll never know how she was able to do that.

I was lucky. I could see her all

year. Grandma's house was on my path home from school each day, so I almost always stopped to visit. Sometimes, the visits ran pretty long because I'd get caught up in one of her stories.

What stories Grandma Wolf could tell. Like when she was a small girl, and traveled in a covered wagon with her family all the way from Canada to Austin. Or the time around the turn of the century when she watched two twisters form into one huge killer over Austin. Or the soldiers coming home from "over there" at the end of World War I.

I sat at her feet, transfixed. Grandma told stories in such detail, and with such enthusiasm, that those long-ago people and far-away places she spoke of came to life.

It never occurred to me that she was teaching me, because I was having too much fun listening.

She'd brush my hair back out of my eyes with her hand as I munched on one of her homemade doughnuts. And she could deliver the softest kiss on my cheek.

Grandma would tell me I was smart. She'd say I could do whatever I set my mind to. She helped me to believe in myself.

In the late '70s, when she was more than 90 years old and grandpa had already passed away, she took a terrible fall at home that broke her hip. Her children made the painful

decision to put her in a nursing home.

then her time had come.

And a few days later, she was gone.

But she left a lot behind for me. Her example of how to live somehow made me a better person than I would have been.

Now, 16 Thanksgivings after losing her, it seems that at this time of year I can almost see her hand reaching to brush back my hair.

And if the moment is still and quiet, I can believe that once again I feel a soft, soft kiss on my cheek.

Despite troubles, couple gives thanks for harvest

By MARSHA MOULDER
The Victoria Advocate
VICTORIA, Texas - Donald and Mildred Farek already feel blessed and are giving thanks even before the pecan harvest starts in their native orchard around Thanksgiving.

The native pecan crop in Victoria and surrounding counties is about 25 percent or less of normal, according to county agents.

But not in the Fareks' orchard on Lower Mission Valley Road. And Mildred, who inherited the orchard from her parents, believes their crop prevailed because "the dear Lord has looked over us. He's blessed us with it. Our trees are just loaded with pecans."

Mildred said she believes God knew how much she and her husband needed the money a good pecan crop would yield.

Donald was diagnosed with prostate cancer about two years ago. During surgery, doctors discovered the cancer had moved into the lymph nodes.

But Donald responded well to radiation for a year and a half.

Then in April, Mildred was bitten by a copperhead snake. In June, her mother died. Shortly after, Donald began to suffer with a backache. He went to the doctor and learned the cancer had spread into his spine, ribs, head and pelvis.

Again, he had radiation.

"And even with all of that, he would still be on the tractor, shredding and keeping everything away from the trees so the trees could get everything they needed," Mildred said. "It was so dry out here, our collie dog could walk across the river."

So Donald wanted the trees to get what little moisture was available in the soil.

Although the man who harvests the pecans gets 70 percent of the crop from the 275 to 300 trees, the Fareks usually make \$1,000 from their 30 percent.

"That pays for the taxes on the land," Mildred said. "And with our big expenses, you just don't know how good that makes you feel."

But most other producers in the

area with native pecan orchards won't have many, or in some cases any, pecans to sell.

But it wasn't just the drought that caused the low production, according to Joe Janak, Victoria County extension agent.

"Pecans have an alternate bearing cycle due to nutrition. Last year we had a heavy year. So this year, production would be down even without the drought," he said. But probably not 25 percent of normal.

And not only is production down,

but so is quality.

"When you have a lack of rainfall, you can't make up on quality," Janak said.

Pecan trees require 55 inches of water each year. And since it doesn't rain that much, the trees adjust by having the alternate bearing cycles.

Janak said he expects native pecan harvest in Victoria County will kick into high gear around Dec. 1.

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