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THE NEWS

The Big Thumb

By GORDON MACKER

My gawsh!

The other day I suggested that because basketball is such a hot and cold proposition that finals in a tournament like the NCAA should be played on a two out of three game basis.

I said that the fact that Kansas beat USC in the final seconds of the game certainly didn't conclusively prove that Kansas had the better team.

Well, sir, everybody that reads this column must be from Kansas. The beefs are still coming in.

Here's a typical one, although the language is a little less violent than the average.

Dear Sir: Anent your paragraph titled "Kansas Better Than USC?"

The first thing which comes to my mind is the following question: "If USC had won the ball game by one (1) point, would you have felt called upon to write the paragraph? I believe you will be honest enough to admit that the answer would be "no."

If Colorado had won from USC the first night would you have been in favor of having the first round also played two out of three games? The answer is obviously "no."

Kansas, during the season, won 17 and lost five games. Their point average was 40 per game; that of their opponents 33 points per game. USC won 19 and lost two games; their point average was 48½, to their opponents' 36. A much more impressive record for USC than for KU. However, in the Big Six three teams were tied for the championship: Oklahoma, Missouri and Kansas; Kansas winning the right to enter the playoffs at Kansas City. USC won the Pacific Coast conference handily. They were distinctly superior to all other teams in the league. They went into the playoffs at Kansas City as the favorite; but they came out on the short end; so you think that it wasn't fair.

From 1922 to 1940 Kansas has won the championship of the Missouri Valley conference, later changed to the Big Six, 14 times—an impressive record in anybody's league. Dr. Forrest Allen, coach of KU, is one of the best, if not the best basketball coach in the country today. When he doesn't have better material than the other clubs he wins by outfoxing them. However, year in and year out, he doesn't lack for material.

The test of a true champion is being able to come through in the clutch. Kansas, trailing four points—3 minutes to go in the ball game—had what it took.

I realize that the layman who gets himself involved in a discussion with a newspaper usually comes out second best, unless, of course, he starts a newspaper of his own. Your paragraph would have been considerably more forceful had it been published prior to the playing of the games of Kansas City—I think it is in very poor taste.

RICHARD F. STRAWN.

Well, Richard, I'll bet you a case of suds or a gallon of milk or whatever your pleasure be that Indiana wouldn't have whipped USC 60 to 42 as they did your Kansans Saturday night.

There's one thing I'd like to clear up, though, with all you customers who accused me of being on the USC payroll.

I didn't shed a single tear when the Trojans lost the game. Those guys in the cardinal and gold have tied up too many titles in the last few months. It's sort of a relief to see USC losing something for a change.

But I'm far from being convinced that Doc Allen's boys are better than Sam Barry's.

Just as I'm not convinced that USC has a better team than Colorado. After all the Buffaloes won that New York invitational tournament impressively.

Probably every last one of you Kansas supporters are positive your team had an off night Saturday night or they wouldn't have lost to Indiana. At least not by 18 points.

All these things add up the same way—the sectional and national finals should be contested on a two out of three game basis.

If you still think I'm trying to woo USC then to thunder with you.

Anybody that's read Thumb for any period of time knows that he treats USC like he treats anybody else.

When USC has a kiss coming, Thumb is the all-American lover.

And when USC has a poke in the nose coming, Thumb is Joe Louis; USC, Johnny Paychek.