Bob Watkins

Sports In Kentucky

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losing signee Earl Duncan for a season: "Here's a kid who proved he can do the work, and he's being punished because he can't take a test. I'd like someone to explain to me how sitting out is going to make these kids any more successful."

Comment: That's easy, coach. Duncan can prove he's interested in something besides basketball by going to class every day and demonstrate first hand that he can handle college work.

■ Michigan's Bill Freider on losing prep All-Americans Terry Mills and Rumeal Robinson: "They can get adjusted academically and socially without have the pressure of basketball their first year."

Comment: That says it all.

Kentucky-Tennessee III

Despite its sluggish moments and every all-star game has them, Kentucky-Tennessee III was an entertaining football game. Quarterback (and MVP) Chris Swartz did a sparkling job as leader in a nice team effort that saw Kentucky zap the Volunteers, 24-0.

Kentucky's air game was nice, but the blue team's defense was more enjoyable to watch and UK Coach Jerry Claiborne looks to have landed himself a couple of dandies in Paul McDowell, a 6-1, 206 linebacker from Ballard High, and tackle Donnie Gardner, 6-6, 216 from Trinity.

Off this all star show, other names to remember as they head for college are:

■ Henry Cooper, 6-0, 195 linebacker/defensive back from Ballard, going to Louisville.

■ Chris Swartz, 6-3, 185 quarterback from Bath County going to Morehead.

■ Harold Reedy, 5-11, 190 linebacker/defensive back from Corbin going to Eastern Kentucky University.

Al Baker

First, his all-star personal numbers — 6-0, 217 pounds — seem more accurate for Baker than 6-1, 225 reported during his senior season. Tennessee obviously keyed on Baker so he was not the dominating performer many expected. However, it must be noted that on a few occasions he demonstrated very well what a fine college running back he may become.

In the first half Baker got the football on a sweep left, took six steps across the field, turned, and (permit me a comparison to Herschel Walker) made on good show of power and speed as he accelerated and bulled over two tacklers, then outran the defense for a touchdown. It looked easy.

Later, Baker got loose for a 12-yard run, during which he showed good savvy, by waiting an instant or two for his blockers to get in front, do their jobs, then he burst through the hole. An intelligent run.

Baker is going to grow, become stronger, more mature and more disciplined. And barring injuries and with the blessings of a good offensive line, he will have quite an impact on football at UK and the Southeastern Conference.

Readers (write) right

Scott Sivills, Mayor of Cadiz, Ky. in Trigg County writes to offer some rather persuasive points in his objection of Kentucky sports writers choice of Male Athlete of the Year for 1986. Rex Chapman

during testimony, replied: "If you ask a question I don't understand, you will have the biggest story of the century."

And so it goes.

If you have a point of view you would like to share, write to: Bob Watkins *Sports In Kentucky* R1 1, Glendale, Ky. 42740 ■

STUDENT-ATHLETES MISSING THE GRADE

Player	Hgt.	Hometown	College
Terry Mills	6-11	Romulus, Mich.	Michigan
Rumeal Robinson	6-2	Cambridge, Mass.	Michigan
Keith Robinson	6-9	Buffalo, N.Y.	Notre Dame
Chris Brooks	6-6	Oak Hill, Va.	W.Va.
Chris Jeter	6-10	San Diego	Missouri
Earl Duncan	6-3	Los Angeles	Syracuse
Herb Barthol	7-0	Parma, Ohio	Pittsburgh
Ray Richardson	6-6	Oak Hill, Va.	Auburn
Devone Davis	6-7	St. Pete., Fla.	Florida
*Louis Banks	6-6	Camden, N.J.	Cincinnati
Lewis Robinson	6-6	Chicago	Cincinnati
Chris Munk	6-8	San Francisco	Stanford
Greg Bell	6-2	Belle, W.Va.	Tennessee
Barney Lottie	6-7	San Diego	Missouri
Adrian Simmons	6-2	Pensacola, Fla.	Missouri
Robert Coyne	6-8	Denver, Colo.	Kansas
Nelson Anderson	6-5	Chicago	Illinois
Shaun VanDiver	6-10	Rome, Ill.	Western Ky.
Melvin Newbern	6-4	Toledo, Ohio	Minnesota
Anthony Jones	6-2	Ft. Wayne, Ind.	St. Louis
Moses Scurry	6-6	Brooklyn, N.Y.	St. John's

* Will take SAT test once more

"I would like to express my opinion in regard to the states' sports writers selection of Rex Chapman as High School Male Athlete of the Year. I would begin by offering my congratulations to Mr. Chapman on his selection. I agree that he is probably the best basketball player in our state. However, that is my point; he is a basketball player. It is my understanding that the award was to be for the best athlete of the year. If that had been the case, then Al Baker would have been the recipient of this award.

Rex Chapman was great in his one sport. Al Baker was a great athlete in three sports, football, powerlifting, and track. Al was selected to the football All-State team three years. He was a track state champion three times in two events. Finally, he was state champion three times in his weight class at the state powerlifting tournament.

Al started at the varsity level as a 9th grader. He also won his first state championship as a 9th grader. Was Mr. Chapman a starter or all-district player at this level in his development?

Al was selected to the football All-State team three consecutive years. If I am not mistaken, Mr. Chapman was selected in his one sport only two years.

As a result of his accomplishments on the track, Al could have also accepted a scholarship in this sport. Could Mr. Chapman have received a scholarship in any other sport besides basketball?

How does Herschel Walker compare to high school basketball players throughout history? Al had thirty-three -100 yard games in his football career. This puts him 4th on the all-time rushing list of 100 yard games. He ranks just ahead of Hershall Walker -32- 100 yard games- and Eric Dickerson -31- 100 yard games. These are names that should be familiar even to basketball sportswriters.

You sportswriters describe Mr. Chapman's performance on the basketball court as "awesome." How many of you were there at the state track meet and saw a 225 pound athlete blow through a field of 150-160 pound sprinters? This was truly an awesome performance. This is a feat that has been accomplished by very few athletes of comparable stature. (Hershall Walker is one of these few.)

Rex Chapman was selected All-American his senior year in basketball. Al was selected All-American in football his senior year, but was also selected 1st team All-American in both his junior and senior years in powerlifting.

Sportswriters, when they cast their ballots may have been unaware of these things. But not the sportswriters from The Nashville Banner, The Chicago Tribune, CBS news affiliates, The National High School Athlete Magazine, and Bigger, Faster, Stronger Magazine (Salt Lake City, Utah). All of these people did their homework and published features on Al Baker. They knew these facts, and all agreed he was one of the best high school athletes in the nation.

I realize that to many readers this letter will be regarded as biased. However, the worst it can do is create a controversy which will be good for high school sports across the state. I would invite all readers throughout the state to compare the facts presented and express their opinion by writing to you, Mr. Watkins, and casting their unofficial ballots for a true athlete of the year.

"In closing, I am very happy that both of these Kentucky raised young men chose to stay in Kentucky and continue their education. Hopefully both will go on to greatness in college athletics."

Comment: Thank you for writing.

Comment II: Members of the Kentucky Sports Writers Association discussed at length the criteria before voting on athletes of the year.

The writer above makes a strong case for Al Baker and any multi-sports star who comes after him.

Meanwhile, it brings me to pose a challenge for the state's prep Football Coaches Association. To upgrade exposure for their sport, why not select a Kentucky Mr. Football?

Parting shots

■ Howard Cosell, when asked by an NFL attorney during the ongoing NFL-USFL antitrust suit trial, if he understood a question he was asked

Ethiopia famine upclose, personal

"Faces In A Famine," an hour-long special airing Thursday, July 31, at 9 p.m. on KET, looks at the relief effort in personal terms, focusing not only on the victims of the famine, but on the motivations of the assemblage of people drawn to the disaster site, including nurses, television producers and "disaster groupies."

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