Sports

Basketball Weekly reports that pro basketball (NBA on CBS) is slightly ahead of college basketball (NCAA on NBC) in the television ratings race.

The pros-only camp will point to the acknowledged superiority of the pros as a reason but this may be missing the point.

Sports TV viewers, like all TV viewers, want action and excitement and will twist the dial until they get it. If UCLA, almost always an outstanding team and a pleasure to watch, is on NBC, a majority will watch unless the Bruins are playing incredibly on a team that should be looking for a place to hide.

The UCLA-Tennessee game didn't beat the pro competition on CBS.

It will be interesting to see how many viewers watched the basketball games and compared the interest in their hard-to-watch college basketball tuned in by beleaguered Indiana, not half what UL was last season before its first string gradated and went forth to stock the ranks of the team.

The coaching skills of outspoken Bobby Knight didn't hurt the situation any and the shrieking crowds of the many thousands at the Bloomington Basketball Palace back home on the banks of the Wabash established the mood.

The TV viewer need not take signs and this is the praxest part of the clash between the networks. Until somebody dies away in the rating war, the fan is the biggest winner.

Competition should be envied by everyone, to improve the quality of the product. There is an undeniable smoothness and awesome blend of talent and force in the pros who conduct their business on the court.

The college game has, and always will, have that spontaneity that can only be faked in the pros, the spectacle of the game.” That is good, but that somehow puts things together to wring out the kind of victories that bring huge crowds to the games to watch on TV.

To put it another way, some people are dog fanciers and others are devotees of swift, graceful horses. But if you turn all your efforts to pouring a pasture, you might feel silly trying to saddle your St. Bernard.

EAGLES PROBLEM

The Auburn Eagles, having a short but interesting season in five years, could finish as high as second in the Mountain Empire District if they can fashion a win over arch rival Shawsville at Shawsville tomorrow afternoon.

The Shawnees, alternately hot and cold all season, always give their efforts a fairly good try.

Eagle coach Nelson Simpson, commenting on his team's loss at Independence last weekend, said it was doubtful the worst that could be done to his team. "Of course we didn't do it. You get up for an important game after playing Mount Rogers. We'll have to improve our offensive game to play Auburn, which may have dulled its basketball senses by playing winless Mount Rogers twice the previous day (one a makeup game) as it is now.

Mason On Sports 

REFLECTION ON 100

Virginia Tech had not reached the 100 point mark all season. Nobody could tell, but Tech fans thought it might (for enjoying the experience).

Tech had scored 98 in game 99 in another but reached the century mark for the first time in the campaign with a tap-in by "masked man" Wayne Robinson. The freshmen who came to the campus to try his hand at football found his nose was broken in the Western Virginia game.

The Hokies mounted a charge on Tech's full-time scoring record with a set in their game at the Allen-Bristow, senior year and the year of Tech's cliff-hanging grand slam in the National Football Championship.

The charge fell five points short of tying the record but it couldn't have mattered less. Tech got 123, 23 points more than their previous record. It is not the shot of confidence it needs to wrap up a successful season.

The possibility of a post season bid continues to hang in the air, not yet within the team's grasp. But Monday's scoring outburst showed that the Hokies reach is getting longer all the time. 

Following last night's scheduled meeting with the Ohio Bobcats at Athens, Ohio, the Hokies will go to Davidson, Winston-Salem, for a try at whopping a team that rates as Wake's greatest in many years. Rod Gripp is among the nation's leaders in shooting accuracy.

If Hoke chief Charlie Moore thought of "money in the bank" as Tech's outside shots fell throughout the game it was because the sharpshooter knows that a steady, unerring attack to break the kind of a zone that may be offered by Wake and possibly Virginia and Marquette.

Lacy GRIFFIN

Les Henson momentarily waved aside a threat of heart-shaped Valentine cookies, including one with his name on it, as they tried to put a few connections around him.

Henson changed his mind and took one as a manager told him he would "get his own back" if he didn't take it.

Valentine's Day, a day to break up, was just that as Tech's heated shooting barked the home nets.

The Hokies, playing with speed and determination all night although they could have won with less than that much effort, presented their sweetheart, the fans, a delicacy: a preheated pink Paris Brest.

And that was the way the cookie crumbled.

NETS TO FIND

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