Soggy WRC trio sets world mark in sixty-one-hour shower marathon

By WILLIAM HANEY
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The Harvard of the South soaked up another impressive achievement during the semester break when three Will Rice freshmen brought the world shower-taking crown to the Rice campus.

Terry Gibson, Rich Ryan, and Charley King, who originated the idea, stayed under the nozzle 61 hours, to surpass the old endurance record of 60 hours, held by a student at the University of Illinois.

Freshman class President Jeff Hanes, also of Will Rice, was an original member of the group, but had to drop out after a few hours when accommodating his 6 1/4 frame to the five-foot-square shower stall proved to be more of a chore than had been anticipated.

Vaseline Alley

The champions prepared for their watery ordeal by coating themselves with vaseline and doning T-shirts, cut-offs, and rain hats. They existed on a diet of soup and crackers, and got about three hours sleep during the 61 hour deluge, which lasted from 2 pm Wednesday until 9 am Saturday. At first they tried to pass the time by playing bridge, but that idea had to be abandoned when the vaseline made the cards stick together.

A more successful attempt at diversion came Thursday night when radio station KILT carried a news report about the three and announced the number of the extension telephone that had been set up in the shower.

The operator of the University switchboard was understandably perturbed when the switchboard was immediately swamped with calls from girls listening to the radio broadcast, so three outside lines had to be set up in the shower.

Cuthbertson Perplexed

While these arrangements were being made, some of the calls were referred to Will Rice Resident Associate, Prof. Gilbert M. Cuthbertson. He soon turned the job over to Will Rice freshman Steve Echerd, whom Dr. Cuthbertson somewhat ambiguously characterized as being "much better at handling teenage girls than I am." The calls kept the showerers busy on the three phones the rest of Thursday evening and all day Friday.

After passing the 55 hour mark the boys noticed that the shower was starting to be painful, but believing cleanliness to be next to godliness, they persevered until they had broken the record. Gibson was treated afterwards for collapsed capillaries in his hands.

Having established Rice's preeminence in one more field of endeavor, the champions have no plans to try to top their own record. As Rich Ryan expressed it, "It was a lot of fun, but I'll never do it again."