Time Of Transition

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Last week’s Owlook was written but not printed. This is getting late to discuss football, but here are some comments on the game.

Football is over and basketball has already begun. Rice needs a change. For the first time many Rice students look with relief to the basketball season. The football team was disappointing. Every Saturday one could look back to crucial mistakes that ruined an otherwise good game. Someone suggested that Rice and Kansas State (0-10) play a game Christmas day—just to see which one would play Santa and give the game away.

It wasn’t long before the students tired of excuses, were down on football, and many suggested de-emphasis. It wasn’t very easy to watch Rice build up a lead knowing that somehow the Owls would lose, or else see the other team score at will.

Three teams scored 125 points on Rice this year; last year only 111 points were scored against the defense all season.

I guess something ought to be said about next year. The team is losing many fine performers—All-SWC tackle Jim Vining, Bert Barron, David Ferguson . . . and it will not be easy to find replacements for them. But, there were seven sophomores on the defense that played against Baylor—and the team had to give the Bears the ball inside the thirty before they could score. Only two offensive linemen will be lost—center Bill Walker and Vining, and except for quarterback the backfield will be intact.

One should be optimistic about next year, but after a 2-8 season, it’s hard to be optimistic about anything. A Houston newspaper suggested that the only difference between this year and next is that the team will be experienced losers next year. Someone said during the ’64 spring training that Rice always finds a way to ruin a good team. Next year’s schedule is harder too—no La Tech. The team starts with LSU, UCLA, Tennessee, and then the SWC. But then again we ought to wait until next year to start making excuses.

Now for a few comments about the basketball team. For a team that isn’t supposed to win any games, they look good. Last year, the team seemed to collapse under pressure, but Monday night they handled themselves well against the Ga. Tech press. Only once late in the first half did the Owls lose their poise, but they quickly recovered and made a battle of the entire game.

Doug McKendrick scored almost every time he touched the ball in setting a new single game scoring record. Bill Doty and McKendrick controlled the boards, but Rice did make quite a few mistakes. After a few more games the team should start to win fairly consistently.