Thinclads can salvage Rice's name

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And so, as the end of the year draws near, it seems that it's all up to the track team to carry Rice's honor by bringing home a Southwest Conference Championship. Not that it was a really bad year, though, for there were certainly bright moments, such as the football team's near upset of number two rated UCLA, the basketball team's inspired play and increased hustle under the new leadership of Coach Knodel, and the baseball's team's school-record-tying seventeen victories.

The baseballers closed out the season as strongly as they began, notching two consecutive victories over Baylor and splitting the final series with TCU, fighting all the way before bowing to the superior pitching of Mickey McCarty, a fellow the basketball team well remembers also. And yet, the baseball team's record, at least to us, was a little disappointing, for this year the Owls boasted by far the best overall pitching staff in the Conference (and pitching, to coin a phrase, is the name of the game), possessing such proven hurlers as Bill Palmer, Ron Henson, Ray Hooten, and Mickey Holder, all of whom really should be named to the all-SWC team. It was indeed tragic that key injuries (Palmer's shoulder and Mandola's broken leg) and feeble punch at the plate (only Billy Costa and Lynn Bery got on base with a fair degree of consistency) had to take their toll during the middle of the season.

Even the tennis team, weakened by graduation and hurt badly by John Pickens' decision to take this year off for a State Department tour of the Far East, managed to hold its own in the latter games. The team achieved its moment of greatest glory in absentia, however, as Pickens was recently named to the All-American Tennis Team, by vote of the All-American Board of the U. S. Tennis Association. Needless to say, John's return next year will greatly improve Rice's tennis picture.

And so, this weekend in Dallas, it's all up to the tracksters. The outlook is good, as the relay teams shattered virtually every record at the Penn Relays last week. In the process, however, Doug Belzung injured his leg, and if he is unable to participate in the Conference Meet, Rice's chances will be greatly reduced. This weekend will tell the story.