By CHUCK YINLING

Well, here it is nearly the end of another year, most of us are still here, and with this weekend's action, the 1986-87 sports program of Rice University comes to a close. It is probably fitting that we sit back and take a last look at the year in review.

Of course, everyone knows that the football team wound up with a 7-5 record in regular season play, and for second place in the SWC, and went on to a thrilling Sugar Bowl game with Ole Miss which nearly became the upset of the year.

OUTSTANDING play from such people as Billy Cox, Boyd and Rufus King, Bobby Livsey, Max Webb, Robert Johnston, Johnny Burwell, and Paul Smithson made the Owls tough indeed. And with a potent nuclear of talent returning, as we well know, this promises promising freshmen, the outlook is even brighter for next year.

In basketball, Coach Frank Franke's five, almost a unanimous pick for last place, surprised everybody by finishing with a 7-7 conference record and fifth place. Included were victories over Texas A&M and eventual champ Texas Tech.

Steve Smith, Dick Park, Mike Maroney, Ollie Shipley, and Jim Fox all turned in outstanding performances on the court. Of these, only Smith and Park graduate, and Kendall Rhodes & Co. from this year's fresh squad promise strong replacements. The All conference vision finish is within easy range for next year's cagers.

SAMMY GIAMMALVA'S strong tennis team lost that last game because of a puzzling 5-1 loss to Texas, but played well throughout the season and still managed to peak and shot at the singles and doubles title in this week's tournament. Seniors Ronnie Fitch-Fisher and Sam Comos, along with junior Neal Marcus, made many opponents look sick.

No team could lose men of the calibre of Fisher and Comos and still be as strong, but freshman Butch Schunk and Frank Bertram will be a good foundation for teams in the years to come.

Crippled by the mid-term loss of Lee Rasenner and Paul Timme, the baseball team faltered. But they did attempt to win Rice's first diamond championship, but Bobby Livsey, Richard Krieger, John MacFarland, Jim Fox, Butch Blume, and Al Hartman all turned in quite creditable performances. As for next year, well...

THE TRACK TEAM had depth, but was not at its best for quality with such performers as Mickey Hollingshead, Fred Burrell, Senior Thomas Jones, Norman Charlot and Dave Edwards. Chances are none of them will be ftp of the teams coming off with even more honors come tomorrow afternoon.

The golf team ever had its moment of glory in defeating Texas in a team match, a rare occurrence indeed. The streaking and troubles because of no swimmers, but a new Rice fencing team brought home a gripping number of trophies, and the Rice bowlers finished fourth in a twenty-two team tournament at Cal Conference, which was the nearest equivalent to a SWC tourney in this non-sanctioned sport.

Overall, the year has been a good one, with many highlights as well as a few heartbreaks. We would like to close out a year of these rarely-read columns by congratulating Neely and his hard-working staff for a job well done, and by thanking the student body of this university for their continued and enthusiastic support of the Rice athletic program.