Sports Across Nation

The Washington Post Sports

FINANCIAL

CHURCH NEWS

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 1963 B A12

at Standstill

Harvard-Yale Game Off First Time Since 1875; Many Events Postponed

From News Dispatches

President Kennedy's alma mater, Harvard, led the way yesterday in the postponement and cancellation of sports events scheduled for this weekend.

The Harvard-Yale football game was called off within a few minutes after the assassination of the President. A wave of similar actions followed in all sections of the Nation and sports in the United States came virtually to a standstill.

Harvard-Yale games had been uninterrupted since 1875.

Football games, boxing bouts, thoroughbred and harness racing all had events postponed or canceled.

In the Washington area, Georgetown University called off its one game of the season, against Frostburg State today. Maryland University announced its game with the University of Virginia is off until Thursday. Vanderbilt and George Washington U. will play at Nashville.

The Air Force Academy called off its game with Colorado. Postponed for a week was Princeton's game with Dartmouth, with the Ivy League title at stake.

All AFL Games Off

The entire slate of Sunday's four games in the American Football League was postponed. Also all the games of the Athletic Association of Western Universities (Big Six). Scheduled in that Conference was the Rose Bowl showdown game between Washington and Washington State.

National Football League Commissioner. Pete Rozelle said his league's full schedule of seven games would be played on Sunday, unless a National state of mourning is declared.

The National Broadcasting Co. canceled its network of college football television for today, and the Columbia Broadcasting system announced none of the NFL games would be televised on Sunday.

Big 10 Might Not Play

William Reed, commissioner of the Big Ten, said all games in that conference might be canceled if an official period of mourning is declared.

Gov. Rockefeller said that all racing in New York, flat and harness, will be held up until after the President's funeral. The Aqueduct track canceled its Friday program after seven races were run. Roosevelt Raceway's harness events were canceled last night.

Pimlico called off its Friday racing after five events were held, but has scheduled a full program for today. Shenandoah Downs remained closed last night.

Canceled, too, was last night's scheduled prize fight at Madison Square Garden between Allen Thomas of Chicago and Johnny Persol of New York, booked for national television.

The three games in the Big Six, including Southern Cal vs. UCLA and California vs. Stanford, will be rescheduled for Dec. 7, it was announced.

At West Point, N.Y., an Army spokesman said a decision had not yet been reached whether to play or cancel the traditional Army-Navy game scheduled November 30, which President Kennedy had planned to attend.

"It's a matter of coordination between the two institutions and the Army, Navy and Defense Department in Washington," he said.

The Illinois-Michigan State game which will determine the Big Ten representative in the New Year's Day Rose Bowl will go on as scheduled today. So will Oklahoma vs. Nebraska, which will turn up an Orange Bowl contender.

Other major football games scheduled for Saturday but postponed were the Atlantic Coast Conference headliner of North Carolina vs. Duke, Clemson vs. South Carolina, Missouri vs. Kansas, Kansas State vs. Oklahoma State and Furman vs. West Virginia.

The National Collegiate Athletic Association, through executive secretary Walter Byers, left it to the colleges involved as to whether to continue with their games, but asked that if the games are played they include "an appropriate, dignified opening ceremony and whatever other memorial tribute you might think appropriate at halftime."

The National Basketball Association postponed its entire four-game slate tonight as did the American Hockey League.

A fight between Allen Thomas of Chicago, and Johnny Persol of New York, scheduled for national television coverage from Madison Square Garden, last night was cancelled.

Officials of the National and American Hockey Leagues and the National Basketball Association said their schedules would be resumed Saturday.

The third round of the Cajun Golf Classic in Lafayette, La. was postponed from Saturday and the final 36 holes will be played Sunday.

Princeton to Play Dartmouth, Nov. 30

PRINCETON, N.J., Nov. 22 The Ivy League title football game, scheduled Saturday between Dartmouth and Princeton, was postponed today because of the death of President Kennedy. The game will be played Nov. 30.

Even before Princeton University President Robert F. Goheen postponed the game, football was forgotten on this 207-year-old campus. Groups of anxious-faced students huddled around radios listening to news broadcasts.

In a statement, Goheen said: "In this time of national sorrow it is our belief that all of us will wish to suspend our normal activities out of respect for President Kennedy, and to pray for the good order and security of our Nation. I am therefore directing that all scheduled classes, athletic contests and social activities of the University be suspended until Monday, Nov. 25." George Minot

HOKUM, SAYS NEWSMAN

JFK Murder Theories Persist

By MERRIMAN SMITH
UPI White House Reporter

WASHINGTON (UPI)—Many Americans and apparently even more foreigners persist in the almost mystic belief there is much more to be told about the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

This belief has been fed by a steadily increasing list of books, magazine articles, statements and lectures which challenge proceedings of the Warren Commission set up by President Johnson to investigate the slaying which took place in Dallas, Tex., Nov. 22, 1963.

From this torrent of words spread tributaries of rumor — that Kennedy really is alive and the man shot in Dallas was a double; Lee Harvey Oswald had conspirators, even one or more riflemen who fired at the same time he did; Oswald was an FBI man, a CIA man, a Russian spy, a Castro agent; Jack Ruby was a triggerman who with the bumbling help of the Dallas police, silenced Oswald, and so on, into even wilder flights of speculation.

None of this assorted theory and hokum appears to have any basis of provable fact, but this has not stopped the clamor.

SOME CRITICS of the commission, its procedures and findings are quite serious scholars who have dredged the voluminous evidence to assemble minor flaws into what would appear to be one or more larger errors.

Other self-appointed authorities on the case seem to be outright entrepreneurs bent on profit from a sad situation. And there seems to be profit of a sort for just about everybody who tackles the subject between book covers or from the lecture platform. Part of this profitable public acceptance comes from the fact that Kennedy continues to be a fascinating subject to millions of Americans and many more overseas. Some publishers estimate that more than 20,000 Americans will buy any book relating to the late President.

Continuing deep interest in and grief for the fallen young leader and shock over the manner of his death have combined to create a culture medium ideal for rumor-breeding; an atmosphere of support for challenging questions aimed at the Warren Commission, almost as if discrediting the investigation might somehow undo the tragedy.

MAJOR PARISIAN newspapers assigned top men and many columns of space to the subject. The Times of London has called for reopening of the commission investigation to examine recently raised points of criticism. At least one congressman, Republican Theodore R. Kupferman of New York, wants Congress to set up a joint committee to determine whether a full-scale legislative investigation of the commission is warranted.

Critics of the Warren Commission incline generally to the theory that it erred seriously in concluding that Oswald alone ... proper counsel; that reports from doctors who performed the autopsy on Kennedy were changed and preliminary notes, in one case, destroyed; FBI reports altered.

THE COMMISSION, set up under Johnson's executive order Nov. 29, 1963, under Chief Justice Earl Warren, was intended to avoid overlapping inquiries by state and local authorities while arriving at the truth of the murder of a president. Composed of men of unassailable integrity and with the government's entire investigative resources at its command, the commission on Sept. 27, 1964, submitted a 900-page report backed up by 6 million words of supporting testimony and exhibits contained in 26 volumes.

The commission came to the conclusion that Kennedy was killed by shots fired by Oswald from the Texas State Book Depository building in Dallas—and by these shots alone.

The commission in 10 months of work and after taking voluminous evidence from the FBI, the Secret Service, CIA and other investigative personnel of varying jurisdiction, could find no evidence of any conspiracy "foreign or domestic."

After reviewing the evidence, the commission said "Oswald acted alone." Furthermore, the federal inquiry, despite rumors to the contary, could find no evidence of a link between Oswald and his killer, Jack Ruby.

HAD OSWALD lived instead of being gunned down, most of the current books probably could or would not have existed.

Critical authors have expressed misgivings that Oswald, a former U.S. Marine with a rifle rating of sharpshooter, could have been as accurate as he was with an inexpensive mail order rifle and a telescopic sight described variously by the critics as having been either defective or distorted at the time of the assassination.

While the sight to begin with was not of the best quality, there is evidence that Oswald sighted it in prior to the killing. This means he went out on a practice range and checked the variabilities of the sight under actual firing conditions.

After the assassination, the weapon presumably was thrown to the floor of the book depository and Oswald fled.

Oswald was an experienced rifleman from his days in the U.S. Marine Corps. The distance of the shots — from the sixth floor window of the building to the Kennedy top-down touring car — would be almost point-blank range for many competent shooters armed with a 6.5 rifle and a telescopic sight.

To believe some of the theories put forth in the current wave of anti-commission writings would be to believe that somehow the chief justice of the United States, the FBI, Secret Service, leading members of Congress, to say nothing of President Johnson himself, entered into a monstrous plot to keep the truth from the public.

It isn't possible to deal with everything that has been said and written about the Kennedy assassination and the investigations of it, but some specifics can be commented on.

"Inquest," by Edward Jay Epstein is one of the more temperate books of the current crop, concerned far more with commission fact-finding procedures than with its conclusions.

"Inquest' carries an introduction by magazine writer Richard H. Rovere, who points out that Epstein says "at least one large question of incontestable materiality—the number of rifle shots fired at the presidential party—was never resolved, not even, astonishingly, to the satisfaction of the commissioners themselves."

I MUST at this point inject a personal note. In addition to being a professional reporter assigned to the White House for more than 25 years, I have been a hunter and target marksman for many years. I am not the world's greatest shot by any means, but there are some professional experts who regard me as being competently familiary with many weapons and their behavior.

I was only a few hundred feet from John F. Kennedy when he was shot in Dallas. I would swear there were three shots and only three shots fired at his motorcade.

The car in which I rode as a press association reporter was not far from the presidential vehicle itself, and in clear view of it. We were at the point of turning from Houston Street onto Elm Street when the first shot was fired. The sound was not entirely crisp and it seemed for a split second like a firecracker, a big one. As we completed the turn, then came the second and third shots.

The shots were fired smoothly and evenly. There was not the slightest doubt in the front seat of our car that the shots came from a rifle to our rear (and the book depository at this point was directly to our rear). We remarked about rifle fire before we knew what had happened to Kennedy, although we had seen him slide from view in the rear of the open White House car.

CLINT HILL, the Secret Service agent who raced from the follow-up car to the presidential vehicle to shield the fallen leader, heard only three shots. Malcolm Kilduff of the White House press staff who was seated beside me in the front seat of the pool car heard only three shots. I heard only three shots. Now, who knows more about it—Edward Jay Epstein and Richard H. Rovere or the trained, professional observers who were there?

The commission had to settle for what the burden of evidence showed—three shots. Yet, here is a point regarded by Epstein and Rovere as unresolved.

Lost Correction

Could you please help clear up a point in my article (Dallas 'Exposés' Deflated), which you printed Nov. 20? A number of readers seem concerned.

Concerning the Kennedy motorcade in Dallas on Nov. 22, 1963, I said in a rough draft, "We were at the point of coming out of an underpass when the first shot was fired." Here was a case of my trusting memory rather than looking up my own records for that day.

In any case, we spotted the error and some time prior to the scheduled publication date, sent a correction which changed this paragraph to read, "We were at the point of turning from Houston Street into Elm Street when the first shot was fired." As people in our business know, the best intentioned corrections sometimes are lost in the terrific mass of paper that flows through a newspaper office every day.

So, I don't blame serious students of the Kennedy case for spotting this one.

MERRIMAN SMITH.
Washington.