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81-98

Antelopes Rookie Coach Accomplishes Impossible

By Donna K. Dean

PHOENIX (BP) — Gll Stafford, Grand Canyon College's rookie coach, accomplished the impossible.

"I'm numbed," he said. "To know how many coaches have dreamed and worked countless years to accomplish this and to think we've done it in my first year..."

"Well, it's hard to know what to say."

Grand Canyon College's Antelopes, under the leadership of their first-year mentor, captured a second consecutive National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) baseball title in playoffs at Lubbock, Texas, in June.

Stafford added, however: "You always have a goal of winning a national championship, but to do it in your first year seems almost unreal."

The team won last year in Dave Brazell's final season, and didn't slow up a bit this year under newcomer Stafford, despite the fact only six players returned from the 1980 NAIA championship squad.

Stafford, 27, a former pro player, took over the Grand Canyon job in June of 1980 after a stint as head coach at Coolidge (Ariz.) High School. When he came, most prospects already were committed to other schools.

Faced with filling out a squad and forming a staff, Stafford could hardly be blamed for resigning himself to playing .500 ball and looking down the road to next year.

The coach, who also is dean of students at Grand Canyon, could thus be excused for having tears in his eyes as his team finished its final 1981 game by swamping Winthrop College from Rock Hill, S.C., 11-4, and retaining the NAIA's baseball crown for a second straight year.

At the season's beginning in February, Stafford and assistants were cautiously optimistic that they might have some success.

And, so successful were the Antelopes that they set a number of NAIA records along the way.

In the World Series, Grand Canyon so outclassed the 10 teams that all that remained in the final game was to see how many tourney records could be broken and how many 'Lopes players would receive the All-Tournament Award.

Third baseman Rick Stromer was named the winner of the Golden Spike Award as the NAIA Player of the Year. He and outfielder Dave Morris scored 11 runs to share a record and Stromer added one more mark with five doubles.

Pitcher Mike Villegas, Stromer, Rick Plautz, Dave Hubert, Pete Bethea and Morris were named All-Tournament.

Catcher Bethea, named the Series' Most Valuable Player, collected 14 hits for another record, while hitting .538 in the tourney. GCC set a tournament record for hits by a team --88. In addition, Tom Nunez stole eight bases and first baseman Kirk Kentera had 16 putouts in one game to set tournament marks.

Coach Stafford and his team returned home from Lubbock to enthusiastic supporters and told TV news reporters: "The ending of the season was like you dream about. I want to thank the Lord for giving us strength and thank all of you for your support."

Stafford has accomplished as a rookie coach what has taken other coaches years to accomplish.

What's left?

For Stafford, there is again the inevitable task of recruiting and rebuilding yet another outstanding team.

His goal? -- The 1982 NAIA crown.

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Dean is director of public relations at Grand Canyon College. (BP) photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers by Grand Canyon College.

Constitutional Expert Hits
Ruling on Hare Krishnas

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WASHINGTON (BP) — Declaring that the Supreme Court "has dealt a blow to religious liberty," a Baptist constitutional expert has criticized a high court decision restricting the activities of Hare Krishnas at state fairs.

John W. Baker, general counsel of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, said the June 22 ruling that authorities may confine all individuals and groups to booths on state fairgrounds indicates a "deterioration in the protection of the free exercise of religion."

In its Hare Krishna decision, the high court held that a regulation by Minnesota State Fair officials limiting solicitation of funds and sale and distribution of literature to rented booths served both a "significant" and "substantial" state interest.

Baker criticized those standards, saying they signal a retreat from positions stated by the court twice in the past decade that the public interest must be "compelling" and "paramount."

But in its ruling in the Hare Krishna case, Baker argued, the court "accepted a lower standard in permitting Minnesota to limit the free exercise rights" of the controversial sect.

"There is a great deal of difference between requiring a state to demonstrate a 'compelling' or a 'paramount' interest in limiting the free exercise of religion and requiring it to demonstrate only a 'significant' or 'substantial' interest," he concluded.

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Baker likened the court's "retreat" in the free exercise field to a similar retrenchment in the criminal justice field, where a high court majority in recent years has chipped away at the famed Miranda ruling which announced certain protections due criminal defendants under the constitution.

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6,000 Argentine Baptists
'Invade' Capital City

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BUENOS AIRES, Argentina (BP) — More than 6,000 Argentine Baptists descended on Buenos Aires recently for a two-day festival of centennial meetings and parades that took the city of nine million by surprise.

Traveling from every part of Argentina, Baptist delegations, totaling almost 30 percent of national church membership, participated in a two-hour parade through downtown Buenos Aires and crowded into Obras Stadium for two nights of preaching and celebration.

Like neighboring Brazilian Baptists, the Argentines are celebrating 100 years of national Baptist work. In 1881 Swiss Baptist Pablo Besson began work among European immigrants, and later organized a Spanish-speaking congregation in Buenos Aires. Southern Baptist missionaries arrived in 1903 and helped extend Besson's pioneer work nationwide.

The Argentine Baptist Convention, organized in 1908, today claims 314 churches with more than 22,000 members. Seventy Southern Baptist missionaries are assigned to Argentina.

According to missionary Benjamin Bedford, national and city government officials and Baptist representatives from Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay were among about 5,000 who attended the first night's service.

The next afternoon, a "Baptist convoy" of 129 buses and hundreds of cars parades through central Buenos Aires for two hours, escorted by police. The evening service drew 6,500, overflowing the small stadium. Bedford estimated 1,000 people were turned away. Backed by a 300-voice choir, Baptist leaders preached and celebrated Argentine Baptist history.

Both stadium services were broadcast nationwide by Radio Argentina.

"I think we made a real impact on this city," said Bedford. "The people were impressed, and so were the government officials. But the most valuable part of this was the encouragement for believers. They came from all over Argentina, where they're isolated from each other, to be together. Here they realized they're not alone."

"Now Argentine Baptists are unified and challenged for the second century," he said.

Argentine Baptist leaders hope the celebration will rally support from across the denomination for an ambitious program of evangelism, church growth, education and community ministry slated for 1981-84.

Mississippi Baptists recently pledged support and volunteer assistance for Argentine churches, as well as those in Paraguay and Uruguay.

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Senator Misses Job Because Of Funeral

WASHINGTON (BP) — United States Senator Strom Thurmond of South Carolina missed his part on the program at a breakfast for Southern Baptist members of Congress because he was officiating at the funeral of a bird.

Thurmond, a 25-year veteran of the Senate and chairman of the powerful Judiciary Committee, apologized to fellow Southern Baptists attending the breakfast.

Thurmond said he was late for the breakfast and missed his assignment to lead the prayer of thanks because his children rescued a bird which had fallen out of a tree. In spite of the children's efforts to splint the bird's broken wing and restore it to health, the bird died. Thurmond, in his role as a father, was chosen to officiate at the family backyard interment service.

Foy Valentine, director of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission which sponsored the breakfast meeting for Southern Baptist senators and congressmen, said Thurmond's devotion to his family responsibilities "was certainly in keeping with the Christian Life Commission's efforts in support of strengthening families."

John Buchanan, former congressman from Alabama and a consultant for the Christian Life Commission, substituted for Thurmond and led the prayer.

Valentine said the purpose of the breakfast held every year or two was to bring together Southern Baptist senators and congressmen for fellowship, prayer and sharing of mutual concerns.

"The Christian Life Commission uses these breakfasts as occasions to help Southern Baptist congressmen and senators to understand that Southern Baptists are interested in what they are doing in their strategic citizenship roles. We also want to support them in being true to their Christian values and their Baptist heritage of responsible involvement in the political arena," Valentine said.

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Court Upholds Exclusion Of Women From Registration

By Stan Haste

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WASHINGTON (BP) — Congress acted within its constitutional authority last year when it excluded women from military registration, the Supreme Court has ruled.

The high court decided 6 - 3 that Congress' responsibility under Article I of the Constitution to "raise and support" military forces took precedence over a challenge by a group of men that the exclusion of women from registration denied them due process and equal protection under the law.

Controversy over draft registration arose last year when former president Jimmy Carter proposed that Congress enact legislation to enable the registration of both men and women. Draft registration had been suspended in 1975, two years after the Military Service Act was amended to end military conscription.

But Congress, while going along with Carter's request for funds to renew registration for men, refused his efforts to have women included.

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Last July, a federal district court ruled that the exclusion of women violated the due process and equal protection rights of all males eligible for a possible draft.

But the Supreme Court, in an opinion written by Justice William H. Rehnquist, reversed the lower court. It says the separation of powers, which is a check and balance, among the three branches of federal government, judicial, legislative and executive, took priority over the men's claims that the law discriminated against them.

Rehnquist wrote that the "customary deference accorded the judgments of Congress" should be exercised, particularly in light of specific congressional consideration of the question of sex discrimination before passing the law.

Rehnquist also said the case dealt with congressional military authority, "and perhaps in no other area has the court accorded Congress greater deference."

Two of the three dissenters, Justices Thurgood Marshall and William J. Brennan Jr., objected to that reasoning, arguing that even in military matters, "deference to congressional judgments cannot be allowed to shade into an abdication of this court's ultimate responsibility to decide constitutional questions."

Justice Byron R. White, the other dissenter, also invoked the separation of powers argument, noting that the unanimous judgment of President Carter and military leaders in the Pentagon was that women ought to be included in military registration.

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Baptist College Coeds
Capture Judges' Votes

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JACKSON, Tenn. (BP) — Two Baptist college coeds were winner and first runner-up in the recent Miss Tennessee Pageant. Both are students at Union University in Jackson where the competition was held.

Angellna Irene Johnson, a 20-year-old senior representing Madison County, was crowned Miss Tennessee before a standing ovation crowd of 5,000 whistling, clapping and elated spectators. First runner-up in the field of 38 contestants was Rita Adair Simpson of Brownsville, Tenn., who was a preliminary winner in swimsuit competition.

Simpson won the recent Miss Union University Pageant and Johnson was second runner-up.

Johnson won the Miss Tennessee talent competition with a ventriloquism act. Two dummies she had hand-fashioned exchanged a humorous dialogue before singing "Making Our Dreams Come True," theme song from the television series "Laverne and Shirley."

An art major at Union, Johnson will represent Tennessee in the Miss America pageant this September in Atlantic City, N.J. For capturing the state title she received a \$3,000 scholarship, a wrist watch, wardrobe and other gifts from local merchants. She will also have the use of a new car during her reign as Miss Tennessee. Johnson, 5-7, brown-eyed and brown-haired, is the daughter of Col. and Mrs. James D. Johnson, who recently moved to Dayton, Ohio.

Simpson, a 5-6, brown-eyed brunette, is a junior at Union majoring in English-journalism. The daughter of Dare and Danny Simpson, she received a \$1,500 scholarship as first runner-up.

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