

BAPTIST FEATURES

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Baptist College Girl
Cagers National Champs

By Theo Sommerkamp

(with accompanying photograph)

PLAINVIEW, Tex.--(BP)--Airplane Manufacturer Glenn L. Martin once said that if he could get the spirit in his factories that he found among the girls on the basketball team at Wayland Baptist College, he'd turn out planes faster than anyone could use them.

This spirited girls basketball squad, now getting ready for the 1957-58 season, is seeking its 105th straight win and its fifth National AAU girls basketball crown in a row. The 105 wins are a national record.

The success of the Wayland team has put Plainview, a northwest Texas plains city of 15,000, on the map for girls college basketball in the same way such cities as Lexington, Ky.; Lawrence, Kans., and Stillwater, Okla., are for men's college basketball.

It takes spirit for 15 girls to outhustle and outshoot the hundreds of girls with whom they've competed for coveted places on the team. As many as 50 girls try out for about three openings a year, and those who don't quite make the Wayland team are often accepted by other well-known amateur teams which battle it out with Wayland in the national tournaments.

But the spirit is more than simply athletic; these girls represent a Christian college in competition with some whose girls have no convictions about intoxicating beverages, use of tobacco, and clean language.

More than once opportunities have occurred for the Wayland girls to have a Christian influence on members of opposing teams and on the fans who come to see them play. Wayland girls live by the Book--the Bible and the rules book for clean sports competition--and it's obvious.

The girls are known as the "Flying Queens" because a well-to-do Plainview airplane dealer and former Wayland student named Claude Hutcherson sponsors them. Hutcherson flies the girls (at his own expense) to meet their engagements as far off as Nashville, Omaha, and the tournament city of St. Joseph, Mo.

He once flew them to Mexico City for the Pan-American Games.

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The girls have to meet college entrance requirements and must maintain their grade averages. Fact is that many of the girls are "A" students and were valedictorians or salutatorians in high school. And many become school teachers.

Coach Harley J. Redin looks for academic grades as well as physical coordination in selecting replacements for graduating players. "If they're not good students, they're not good athletes either," he states without hesitation.

After two or three days of strenuous tryouts each spring, Coach Redin begins the painful job of letting the unsuccessful ones know the score. It's bad news to more than 90 per cent because they come to Wayland with hopes high and on their own time and expense. While most of the girls are from Texas and Oklahoma, players from Georgia and Mississippi will be on the team this year.

Wayland President A. Hope Owen is a strong booster of the "Flying Queens," naturally. He believes the team gives the girls an opportunity "to demonstrate clean sportsmanship, to represent a Christian college, and to give a Christian witness."

All-American Rita Alexander, a co-captain of last year's record-smashing team who now teaches school in south Texas, remembers several times the girls had a chance to witness.

Six girls from Wayland were on a twelve-girl team from the United States at the Pan-American Games at Mexico City several years ago. On their first Sunday the Wayland girls conducted a worship service in the dormitory where they stayed. The six other girls, two Catholics and four "who weren't anything", paid no heed. During the week, Wayland girls read their Bibles daily and prayed at mealtime. The following Sunday, all the girls attended the worship service.

Some of their other six had been smoking and drinking in the rooms they shared with Wayland girls; after a few days, they quit smoking and drinking in the presence of Wayland girls. "The Wayland girls were conscious the others watched their every move," Rita said.

Kaye Garms, another All-American, gave her testimony at a revival last fall. She came to Wayland not a Christian. Her association with Christians both on the team and around campus resulted in her accepting Christ while a sophomore.

The members of the Wayland boys team (basketball is the only college sport at Wayland) join the girls team in an organization called "Athletes for Christ." They speak in churches to interest Christian athletes and to set an example for high school athletes to follow on and off the playing court.

What are the prospects for 1957-58? Everyone at Wayland knows all the opposing teams will be pointing for an upset victory over Wayland to end the fabulous winning streak. But Wayland will be the favorite.

Coach Redin is optimistic. Asked about the future, he said "The big thing in a winning streak is tradition. The competition for places on our team keeps down individual over-confidence." (Girls on the bench are usually on a par with those on the floor.)

Redin believes that a team "that continues to win (as many games as Wayland has) is not as apt to be over-confident as one which has a short winning streak of three or four games." Rita Alexander attributes the girls' success to poise on the floor and their ability to start a rally in a tight situation.

The girls pray in the locker room before every game, but not to win. They pray for no injuries, for good sportsmanship, and for a good game. The prayer is often led by College President Owen.

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Corinth Baptists Honor
Austin Crouch Memory

CORINTH, Miss.--(BP)--Members of First Baptist Church here sent a \$25 memorial gift to the Southern Baptist Convention in honor of their former pastor, the late Austin Crouch.

Crouch was pastor of First Church here from 1900 to 1905. Twenty years later, Crouch became the first executive secretary of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee.

The church asked that the check be used "for any cause in which Dr. Crouch would have been interested." Treasurer Porter Routh said it will be credited to the Cooperative Program, the financial plan of the Convention which Crouch helped bring into being in 1925.

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Baptists Attend Meet
On Decent Literature

WASHINGTON--(BP)--Adiel J. Moncrief, Jr., pastor of First Baptist Church, St. Joseph, Mo., attended a meeting of the Churchmen's Committee for Decent Publications held here Sept. 19.

Moncrief represented the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission, of which he is chairman. The Christian Life Commission has called on Southern Baptist churches to work together in an effort to rid newsstands of morally-objectionable periodicals.

O. K. Armstrong, a Southern Baptist layman from Springfield, Mo., is chairman of the Churchmen's Committee. James P. Wesberry, pastor of Morningside Baptist Church, Atlanta, who is chairman of the Georgia Literature Commission, spoke on the topic "Progress in Obscenity Control in Georgia."

The Churchmen's Committee also received a report on a conference on obscene literature held at Glorieta, New Mexico, Baptist Assembly in August under sponsorship of the Christian Life Commission.

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Georgia Board Favors
Nursing School Unit

ATLANTA--(BP)--The executive committee of the Georgia Baptist Convention has voted approval of a \$500,000 educational unit for the Georgia Baptist Hospital school of nursing here.

If the Georgia Baptist Convention approves the executive committee's recommendation, work on the two-story unit would begin around Jan. 1, Edwin B. Peel, hospital administrator said.

The building will care for educational needs for an enrolment of 500 student nurses.

Funds will come from a Ford Foundation grant of \$232,120, and from a special hospital operating and building fund reserve now on hand.

In other action, the executive committee voted to recommend approval of a \$1,233,400 operating budget for 1958 for all state-wide Baptist causes, and a total budget for all causes, including the Cooperative Program of \$2,770,300.

Plans for long-range expansion of the associational missionary program were studied and approved.

The committee also approved a recommendation for a change in the name of the Georgia Baptist Home for the Aged at Waycross to Baptist Village.

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E. D. Solomon, Retired
Convention Leader, Dies

JACKSONVILLE, Fla.--(BP)--E. D. Solomon, 82, retired editor of the Florida Baptist Witness, died Sept. 13 at Baptist Memorial Hospital here.

Funeral services were held the following day at Southside Baptist Church here.

Solomon was editor of the Florida state Baptist paper from June 1, 1931 through Aug. 15, 1949, and during that 18-year span the weekly's circulation increased from 2000 to over 23,000.

He was active in many phases of Southern Baptist Convention life. In 1941-42 he served as Convention vice-president. Between 1900 and 1955, Solomon attended every session of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Before taking editorship of the Baptist Witness, Solomon was state missions secretary for the Louisiana Baptist Convention. He also had served as pastor of several churches in Louisiana, Texas, and Mississippi.

Solomon played an active part in establishment of the only two hospitals owned and operated by the Southern Baptist Convention as a whole--the hospital in which he died and Southern Baptist Hospital, New Orleans.

Solomon considered himself a product of Christian education. He was a graduate of Mississippi College, Baptist school in his native state, and also a graduate of Southern Baptist Seminary. He also studied at Baylor University and Spurgeon's College in London, both Christian institutions.

His interest in Christian higher education made him a supporter of many denominational schools. He served as trustee of several.

Solomon also was a member of the committee of the Southern Baptist Convention, which in 1925 recommended the Convention adopt the Cooperative Program as its financial plan.