

Introduction for the Shrader Sports Collection

My dad loved sports from the time he listened to baseball games on the radio growing up in Arizona to the time he attended University of Texas at Austin (UT) football games in Texas.

I remember my dad telling me about the time he ran in track events in high school and later enjoyed watching sporting events when he went to college. He graduated from the University of Arizona as a Wildcat with a bachelor's and master's degree in agronomy. After our family moved to West Texas, he continued his love of college sports at the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) as a Miner and at New Mexico State University (NMSU) as an "Aggie". My dad took additional graduate agronomy classes at NMSU, and I have fond memories of going with him to hunt for crayfish in irrigation ditches and to study crop plantings before watching football games.

Did you know that I thought the Aggies were only a team from Las Cruces until I moved to Austin? True! After I married and settled down with my wife and son in Austin, my mom and dad moved to Austin too, and my dad became an avid Longhorn fan.

Since he was from West Virginia, he was also a Mountaineer fan, and to my amazement, he would travel to Morgantown to see their football games with our cousin. You can imagine my dad's excitement when he learned that West Virginia was going to join UT Austin in the Big 12 conference.

My dad loved being at live sporting events, and he would be sure to get media guides so he could learn more about the players, the teams, and the games he attended, as well as those he wished he could have attended from afar. He collected these guides over the years and lamented that the printed media guides were moving to electronic-only formats.

We talked more and more about sports as he and I got older. I have memories of when we were lucky enough to attend one of the last KLBJ-AM hosted UT and Texas A&M rivalry events. I also have wonderful memories of my dad, my son, and me going to football games together (three generations!). He loved being part of the shared experience at live sporting events.

My dad would also keep me updated on the latest games that he had watched, mostly on TV as it became more difficult for him to travel as he aged. All these memories and more I want to share with you because I felt them as I gathered his sports media collection together after he passed away. I am so grateful that the materials for the sports that he loved in life found a loving home with the H.J. Lutchter Stark Center at UT Austin.

As you look through and use materials from his collection, I hope that you too will feel the love that my dad had for "the game", and that the materials he collected over the years will play an important role in your appreciation and research for sports culture and history.

That would make my dad and me cheer!

Theodore Shrader
Austin, Texas