

As Seen in The Mirror's
SPORTS REFLECTIONS
 of Athletes and Events

29 Veterans of Indian Fights Still Draw Veterans Pensions

There was little to cheer about last Friday night, when the New Bern High school basketball team performed poorly against the Greenville Phantoms in the Northeastern Conference tournament.

Actually, the Bruins made a creditable comeback in the second half, and it was Butch Ricks who provided the spark for this endeavor. What a pity the scrappy little guard missed the regular season because of an injury. His presence on the team might well have made the difference in some of the games that New Bern lost.

The tournament contest with Greenville was a nightmare for the Bears. Coach Bo Farley of the

Phantoms has been around for a long time — he starred for Duke as a player and later coached East Carolina College. When the New Bern quint dropped far behind in the first half, Farley had the know-how to capitalize on the windfall and withstand a belated onslaught by the Bruins.

This sort of thing — the catastrophe that caught up with Coach Bob Lewis and his ball club — happens to the best of teams. On the very night that New Bern's frustrated quint paved the way for its own defeat, Duke's mighty Blue Devils were outclassed by a Clemson outfit that had lost a dozen ball games during an unimpressive season.

And, on the first afternoon of the Atlantic Coast Conference tournament, the same Clemson team made the State College Wolfpack look like a collection of clumsy clowns by clobbering them with ridiculous ease. It is generally agreed that State's coach, Everett Case, is one of the top mentors in the nation, but even this illustrious gentleman was helpless when his team unexpectedly fell apart.

Coach Bob Lewis of the Bears was understandably stunned, and keenly disappointed when his lads failed to deliver as expected

J. D. Ramus, manager of the Winston-Salem VA Regional office, pointed out yesterday that Washington's birthday seems an appropriate time to report that there are still 29 living veterans of the Indian Wars.

Washington, too, Mr. DeRamus explained, was an Indian War veteran and he had his horse shot out from under him on the same day that death came to General Braddock in his ill-fated attempt to capture Fort Duquesne.

But the Indian troubles of Washington's day are far in the past. Much more recent in our history have been the Indian Wars since 1860 in which more than 106,000 Americans participated as the nation expanded Westward.

Of these 106,000, there are only 29 alive today, Mr. DeRamus said. All of them are listed on the rolls of the Veterans Administration and draw monthly payments ranging from \$101.59 to \$135.45.

They are widely scattered: four in Arizona, three each in California, Florida and Missouri; two in both Iowa and South Dakota, and one each in Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Nebraska, New Jersey, Virginia, Washington and Wisconsin.

They represent in their own way a cross section of America. They include several Negroes and one or two Indians who had served as scouts. Some are married with families. Others have never married.

against the Greenies. That's the penalty paid by coaches and players alike, when they are on the losing end of the score. The Bears had a good year — and many moments of glory — but the game they'll remember longest is the one they lost to Greenville.

The Indian encounters in which they took part ranged from a single engagement to prolonged campaigns. They began with the Pah-Ute Expedition in California in April, 1860, and ended with the Chippewa Disturbances at Leech Lake, Minn., in October, 1898.

Thus, 1860 is set as the starting date of the Indian Wars for which benefits have been administered by the Veterans Administration. The cut-off date, 1898, was established upon the ruling that after that date the Indian troubles that occurred were not wars but more on the order of local riots.

Fought with different tribes, in different sections of the West, these Indian Wars were isolated campaigns or engagements and, in most cases, had little or no connection with one another.

The remains of old forts in former Indian country and towns which grew around nearby forts still dot the West and were the last great settings of cavalry maneuvers now outmoded by modern warfare.

The Indian Wars included in this 1860-1898 period were fought with either parts or all of the following tribes: Apache, Arapahoe, Bannock, Cheyenne, Commanche, Chippewa, Kiowa, Lipan, Kickapoo, Navajo, Nez Perce, Piute, Sioux, Snake and Ute Indians.

Mr. DeRamus said official records show that of the 106,000

Americans know to have been engaged in these Indian Wars, about 1,000 were killed in actual service.

Although in the early years of this century there were many survivors, the total has dwindled to 5,574 in 1929 and to 1,955 in 1941 just before the outbreak of World War II.

The decline since then has been rapid: to 530 in 1950; 188 in 1955 and 44 in 1960.

In addition to these 29 actual veterans of the Indian Wars, there were 581 widows of Indian War veterans and 25 children totally incapable of self-support (age is not considered in the case of these children) on the pension and compensation rolls of the Veterans Administration at the last official tally, September 20, 1961.

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