Grizzlies are pre-tourney favorites for Big 7 contest

This year's Big 7 tournament time rolls around March 3-5, and it will find none other than the Fort Smith Grizzlies in the "favorite" spot.

The site of this year's Big 7 tournament is Hot Springs, where the Grizzlies, one of the few teams to hold a win over the Brins in conference play. Pre-tourney spectators have it that Fort Smith will clean up these remaining conference tests and keep a clean slate throughout the tournament. In the event that Fort Smith doesn't secure this year's trophy, it will probably go to Little Rock North Little Rock, the only two teams that half way have a chance of capturing the Big 7 title, Hot Springs, however, is considered a "dark horse" by some.

SEEMINGLY, it would take a lot for this team to get by such aces as the Little Rock Tigers.

North Little Rock Wildcats and the Fort Smith Grizzlies, but the Tigers do hold wins over Little Rock and Fort Smith, both of which were big upset.

And then there are the weak sisters of the Big 7 conference this year. Pine Bluff, a team with only memories on the bottom of the pile with Texarkana and El Dorado holding the zebras company. Although Pine Bluff is low man, the zebras hold an early season win over the Bruins 55-56. THE FACT still remains that anything can happen in this Big 7 caper tournament, particularly since it has been proven that the Grizzlies are not infallible. One thing seems certain—there will be many upsets.

Ben Simpson given top boxing trophy

IT WAS a dream that came true for a FSU student, and it came true for someone.

Ben Simpson, who was awarded the coveted Barany Sugarman Memorial Trophy for being the outstanding boy in the recent Golden Gloves tournament.

Ben is the first Fort Smith fighter to win this trophy since its existence. Simpson, who edged out a close fight for the 18-pound medium weight, won the trophy for a secret committee for sportsmanship, competitive spirit and boxing ability.

Ben finished his first boxing season with a string of wins, of which five were by knock-outs or technical knock-outs.

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THE GRIZZLIES

by Wendell Nance

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Grizzlies skin Texarkana, edge mighty Wildcats

LOOKING like the team they were predicted to be in pre-season standings, the Grizzlies defeated the Texarkana Razorbacks 83-57 last Thursday. This victory boosted them to face conference win.

The Texarkanas' only threat came in Jim Poynter, who scored 16 points, while center Earl Purslow and forward Jim Gattis had 18 and 15 points respectively for the Bears.

February 8 the Grizzlies won their fourteenth game of the season in a return game with the Fayetteville Bulldogs at piano gyms.

IN WINNING, the Bruins hit 40 percent of their field goal attempts. Leading the way for the Big 7 leading scorers will be playing each against other. These top-notch players will be the Bruins' Jim Gattis and Earl Purslow against Ray Wilson and Brook Robinson.

Toby Will Rogers will invade Ramsey gym February 25, bringing along their 7'6" center Tom Paulius, who is at present a leading scorer in Oklahoma circles and considered the most valuable player in that state.

Closing out their 1954-55 season, the Grizzlies will cross the river to Van Buren for a return game with the Pointers February 30.

IN JANUARY the Pointers found the Grizzlies a tougher team than ever, in the last two years and also found themselves on the losing end of a 37-24 trouncing.

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Bears near end of season, 4 tough battles to come

ON THE COURT, the Bears are 16-8 in conference play and will face the last four games of the season to determine whether they will capture the Big 7 championship.

The Bears' next outing will pit them against the mighty Wildcats of North Little Rock tomorrow night at 8 p.m. in Ramsey gym. The Wildcats are smarting from a recent 64-57 setback on their own court at the hands of the Grizzlies. This game can make or break the Bears' Big 7 lead, and they will certainly try to hold down the Grizzlies' leading scorer, Wayne Yates.

NEXT TUESDAY will find the Little Rock Tigers at Ramsey gym for the Grizzlies' last conference game. An added attraction in this game will be the fact that four of the Big 7 leading scorers will be playing each against other. These top-notch players will be the Bruins' Jim Gattis and Earl Purslow against Ray Wilson and Brook Robinson.

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