1967

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CLARKSVILLE—Yes, I know the Smith Brothers did more for the Illini than short skirts have done for males, but as far as Ohio Valley Conference basketball coaches are concerned, there's a certain "Smith Brothers" act they'd just as soon do away with.

It's the Smith brothers from Western Kentucky—Dwight and Greg.

Austin Peay State College and a crowd of 4,500-predominantly Clarksvillians—got an eyeful of them Monday night in the Hilltoppers' 94-87 victory over the Govs.

I don't know if Dwight and Greg have contributed anything to the toll-sloping business or not, but their presence on this powerful Western team has meant a great deal this month toward the OVC crown and a spot in the

Baseball Helped

Dwight—and Greg—hail from Princeton, Ky., and are junior and sophomore respectively. It's an interesting story as to how Western got Dwight. After that, getting Greg was relatively a simple matter.

At Dotson High, Dwight was an All-Stater and sought by several colleges. His credentials were especially promising. Now Western's present baseball coach, Jim Pickens, is a Princeton native and he knew the boy's father—Henry Smith—real well.

Mr. Smith knew about Western Kentucky's basketball reputation and secretly wanted his son to go there. But he refused to influence the boy one way or the other.

Dwight decided in the affirmative and Johnny Oldham couldn't be happier. It was a challenge; Dwight became the first Negro to be awarded an athletic scholarship.

Aggressive Hustler

Oldham appraises his 6-4, 195-pound guard thusly:

"Dwight is one of the best defensive players I've ever seen; he's been the glue which has made our defense stick together. He's one of these 110 per cent guys. Always hustling, always giving that little extra which divides the mediocre from the star. His aggressiveness is one of his greatest assets. He has as good a pair of hands as I've ever seen."

"In short, Dwight Smith is a great all-round player. He could adjust at forward or center just as well as he had at guard if the need ever arises."

Look At It This Way

By MIKE FLEMING

The Smith Brothers—Greg and Dwight.

"He's improved steadily in every facet of the game. Strength is certainly in his favor. He doesn't know how strong he is. This helps tremendously in rebounding."

Strongboy Who Can Jump

As for "little" brother Greg, 5-11, 135-pounder: "Greg is good in his own right," continued Oldham.

"He's made a great deal of work."

"He's improved steadily in every facet of the game."

"Strength is certainly in his favor. He doesn't know how strong he is. This helps tremendously in rebounding."

This and That

—Teddy Morris, who holds every passing record at Middle Tennessee, and teammate Jerry Smith (regular slotback this past season) will try out with Montreal of the Canadian Football League in June.

—Western Kentucky's Clem Haskins is rated by some professional scouts as the top prospect in this area.

—I recently asked a coach if he could pick a college team from all over the country which would be on to get to the

—the center from Ohio.

—Ed Diddle, for 42 years Western Kentucky's beloved, red towel-waving coach, has been designated by present Hilltopper Coach Johnny Oldham to help with administrative duties April 1-2 when the Kentucky-Indiana All-Star College series.

—Recently in Chattanooga, a golfing twosome had a wager going. On a par-4 hole, Mr. X hit his tee shot right into a pond, not into on, because the lake was frozen solid. He trudged out onto the lake, hit the ball with a seven-iron. The ball landed 20 feet from the hole; he finished with a par. This so unnerved his partner that he boggled, losing the hole and the wager. Honestly, it really happened.

—Loyola of Chicago and Dayton appear the likely choices at the moment to be the OVC winner's first opponent in NCAA tournament play.

—Chicago Cubs' Jim Stewart, former Austin Peay star athlete, was in attendance Monday night.

—APSC has a most unusual opening act. Center Tommy Head leads the team onto the floor, squatting on all fours right under the basket, Dennis Snyder, all 3-3 of him, comes running out, steps on Head's back and attempts to dunk the ball. It's a crowd pleaser.
Dwight Smith Helped Other

By DAVID C. ADAMS
Courier-Journal & Times Staff Writer

The death yesterday of Dwight Smith and his sister Kay stung a family that went to church together, prayed together and cheered every dribble and rebound at Western Kentucky University the past four years.

The Henry Smith family of Princeton, Ky., became fixtures at glistening Diddle Arena to see Dwight, 21-year-old senior, and Greg, 19, form a basketball brother act second to none in the Ohio Valley Conference.

The death of Dwight and his sister left the Western campus in shock. They were apparent drowning victims after their car ran into a rain-swollen ditch near Madisonville yesterday. (See story on Page A 1.)

A 'Natural' for Pros—Oldham

Perhaps their Western teammate Joe Mac Hill best summed up the impact of the tragedy: "I'll always remember Dwight as someone to look up to. He was determined to help the other guy first instead of himself."

Through hard work and perseverance, Dwight had a promising pro basketball
Hilltoppers' Smith Brothers

A large share of Western Kentucky's current basketball success must go to Greg (kneeling) and Dwight Smith, who hail from Princeton, Ky. Both are averaging in double figures and can be seen Saturday afternoon in the Hilltoppers' regionally televised game at Murfreesboro against Middle Tennessee State University.
From AP and Special Correspondents

Dwight Smith, 21-year-old Western Kentucky University basketball star, and his sister, Kay Smith, 18, were killed yesterday afternoon when their car hit high water on U.S. 41 south of Madisonville and plunged into a rain-swollen ditch.

The scene of the crash was about two miles south of Nortonville, which is 13 miles south of Madisonville.

Hopkins County deputy Coroner Harold Randy said the car submerged in water, and speculated that both may have drowned before they could escape.

Smith's brother, Greg, 19, also an All-OHio Valley Conference player on the Western team, was in the car at the time of the accident but, although injured, managed to escape from it.

He was taken first to Hopkins County Hospital at Madisonville, where he was treated for a leg injury and allowed to return home. However, later in the evening he was taken to Caldwell County War Memorial Hospital at Princeton in a state of shock.

Greg, who played center on the basketball team, is a junior at Western, kay was a freshman.

Dwight Smith, a senior at Western, had been drafted by both the American and National Basketball associations. The 6-foot-4 guard was to have been graduated in June.

The two Smith brothers and their sister were returning to Western after a Mother's Day visit to their home in Princeton, Ky. The brothers had been guests of honor at a banquet sponsored by Stillman Chapel Methodist Church.

At the Smith home in Princeton, the trio's father, Henry, said he had learned this version of the tragedy:

Greg was driving and Dwight was sitting with him in front, while Kay was sitting alone in the back seat, studying.

Shortly after the car ran into the ditch, onlookers pulled it out, and Greg climbed out through a back door. The father quoted witnesses as saying that if the car had remained under water "for another three or four minutes, Greg would have died, too."

Dwight and Kay apparently were trapped, he said. They were dead when those who pulled the car from the water removed their bodies from the auto.

He said that both Greg and Dwight could swim, but that Kay could not.

Although Greg was first treated at Hopkins County Hospital in Madisonville and released, the father said, Greg had to be taken to Caldwell County War Memorial Hospital at Princeton later in the evening because he was in a state of shock. He said Greg was unable to discuss the accident.

Hoped to Become Coach

Dwight and Greg, one of the best-known brother combinations in college basketball, had been key players on the Western team that won the Ohio Valley Conference title and went to the NCAA tournament the past two years.

A guard during most of his college basketball career, Dwight Smith ranked ninth among all-time scoring leaders at Western and seventh among three-year players.

At Western Kentucky University at Bowling Green, basketball coach John Oldham said the campus was "stunned" by the tragedy.

"It's impossible to say enough good things about Dwight," Oldham said. "He was the leader of the ball club, and captain in his junior and senior years.

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"It's impossible to say enough good things about Dwight," Oldham said. "He was the leader of the ball club, and captain in his junior and senior years. He was a tremendous player, and I felt he had a great future in pro ranks."
Basketball Star, Sister Die On 41A
Plunges Into Creek; Death Said To Be
By Drowning

NORTONVILLE, Ky — Dwight Smith, 21, named as one of the top college basketball guards in the nation while starring for the Western Kentucky University Hilltoppers the past three years, was killed in a one-car accident one mile south of here Sunday afternoon, along with his sister, Sheryl Kay, 13.

The accident occurred during a heavy rain Sunday afternoon at 2:06 p.m. as Dwight, Sheryl and their brother, Greg, 20, who was injured, were returning to Western after a Mother's Day vacation with their parents, Mr. and Mrs. Henry Smith at Princeton, Kentucky.

Loot Control On Water

According to reports, Greg was driving the 1965 Chevrolet found on US 41A when he lost control of the car after hitting water that was running over the highway. It had been raining hard all day.

The car sprayed to the left side of the highway, striking a mail box at the Jim Walker residence, hit a driveway culvert and flipped over into a 3-foot rain-filled ditch, coming to rest on its side and top.

Soon after the accident, a passing motorists stopped and called for help at the home of Harold Bandy, Hopkins County deputy coroner, who lived just up the highway.

On reaching the scene, Bandy found the Smith car reared over in the ditch with only a small portion of the rear out of the water.

Greg was in the back seat with his head pressed against the side roof trying to stay above the rising water.

Sheryl pulled the car from the ditch, looking for his brace to the Smith car, and broke a rear window in free Greg. The bodies of Dwight and Sheryl were found in the floor in the front seat. Both were dead when removed from the wreckage.

Death Probably By Drowning

Although no autopsy was performed, it was speculated that Dwight and Sheryl drowned before they could be removed from the wreckage.

Greg was treated at the Hopkins County Hospital and released. However, after returning home, he was admitted to the Caldwell County Hospital at Princeton Sunday night, where he is being treated for shock. He suffered a laceration on the hand, but is not serious.

Dwight and Greg, making up one of the better known brother combinations for the Western Hilltoppers, were honored at a banquet Saturday night, sponsored by the St Hilman Chapel Methodist Church at Princeton.

According to reports, Greg was driving the car with Dwight riding in the front seat and Sheryl sitting in the back seat, studying, as they returned to school.

It was speculated that if Greg had remained in the car a few more minutes he would have drowned, also. When pulled from the car, in a state of shock, he asked, "What happened?"

Dwight, ABA

Dwight, a senior at Western, had been drafted by the Los Angeles Lakers of the National Basketball Association and the New Orleans team in the American Basketball Association. It was reported that Dwight was selected by the Lakers in the first round of the draft. Dwight ranked ninth among all
Final Respects Paid To Dwight Smith And His Sister

Special to The Courier-Journal

PRINCETON, Ky.—A saddened community paid final respects yesterday to Dwight Smith and his sister Kay, killed Sunday near Madisonville when their car plunged into a rail swollen ditch.

Dwight, captain the past two years of Western Kentucky's NCAA Tournament basketball team, and his sister were eulogized as products of a close-knit family. A turnout in excess of 2,000 attended the funeral services at the Caldwell County High School gymnasium.

Western Kentucky coaches Johnny Oldham, Gene Rhodes, Buck Sydnor and Ed Diddle (who recruited Smith) and the Western players served as pallbearers.

Among the many dignitaries were University of Louisville basketball stars Butch Beard, Westley Unseld and Dave Gilbert and Kentucky Wesleyan standouts Dallas Thornton and Sam Smith.

Burial was at Cedar Hill Cemetery.
Toppers' Dwight Smith, Sister Killed in Automobile Accident

BOWLING GREEN, Ky. — News of the automobile accident which took the lives of Dwight and Kay Smith spread quickly across the Western Kentucky State University campus here yesterday afternoon.

"IT'S TERRIBLE. Students, faculty members and friends of Western basketball are stunned. They all ask details of the tragedy. Then, they just turn and walk away.

"I cannot remember a sadness, such as this on our campus," said Robert Cochran, Western's veteran director of public relations, who assisted in the recruitment four years ago of Dwight, the first Negro to receive a basketball scholarship at Western.

Dwight, 22, and his sister, Kay, 16, were killed and their brother, Greg, 21, injured when their automobile overturned as they came back to the Western campus after spending Mother's Day with their parents, Mr. and Mrs. Henry Smith, in Princeton, Ky.

THE TRAGEDY occurred on U.S. 41A, 10 miles south of Madisonville, Ky., at approximately 3 p.m. yesterday.

"Our reports say the car apparently hit high water on the highway and overturned into a ditch containing several feet of water," Cochran said.

Hopkins County deputy coroner Harold Bandy said the car submerged in water, and speculated that both may have drowned.

Dwight, named to the All-

Ohio Valley Conference team for three straight seasons, recently had been drafted by the Los Angeles Lakers of the National Basketball Association and Louisville in the new American Basketball Association.

GREG, WHO was hospitalized with minor injuries and being treated for shock in Madisonville, is a Junior and a starter on the OVC championship Western team last season.

Kay, a freshman at Western, worked part time as a secretary in Cochran's office. The three left Western Saturday to attend a banquet in their honor at a church in Princeton.

"Dwight was a model, stu-

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John Oldham said last night, "He was a boy of tremendous character, great basketball ability and a wonderful personality. In my years of association with athletics, I've never known a finer young man.

"HE HAD planned to attend our press conference Saturday (when it was announced that Western had signed high school star Jim McDanielis of Allen County High), but he felt it more important to be a part of the church festivities and asked to be excused. The three of them wanted to be home on Mother's Day.

"I extend my deepest sympathy to the parents and family. It is a great, great loss to our University community."

Ed Diddle, the retired coach of the Toppers who signed Dwight to a basketball grant-in-aid, described him as "just a good boy. I followed his high school career closely and talked to everybody in Princeton about him before we signed Dwight.

"NOT ONCE in all those years of recruiting did I ever hear anybody say anything except something fine about Dwight. He was the same type boy at Western. He was articulate, intelligent, friendly and a great basketball player. He was just a good boy. I'm so sorry about this tragedy and my heart goes out to his mother and daddy and his family."

Diddle then said Dwight had been "so excited about playing pro-ball. He was planning to fly to Los Angeles right away to visit with the Lakers. I believe maybe they already had sent him his plane ticket."

A member of the Kentucky College All-Stars, who beat a team of Tennessee college seniors, Dwight performed in Vanderbilt's Memorial Gymnasium, April 14. At a luncheon on the day of the game, Dwight said:

"I'M SO excited about playing professional ball that I'm having trouble keeping my mind on my studies. I'm really anxious to get with the pros."

During his career at Western, Dwight became one of the nation's finest rebounding guards. At 6-5, he averaged more than 11 rebounds and 14 points a game for three varsity seasons. He also was considered one of Western's top defensive players.

In addition to their parents and Greg, Dwight and Kay Smith are survived by a younger brother and sister.

Funeral arrangements were not complete last night.
Coach and Teammates Say That Smith Had Character to Match Playing Ability

By DAVID C. ADAMS
Courier-Journal & Times Staff Writer

Act second to none in the Ohio Valley Conference.

The death yesterday of Dwight Smith and his sister Kay stunned a family that went to church together, prayed together, and shared every dribble and rebound at Western Kentucky University the past four years.

The Henry Smith family of Princeton, Ky., became fixtures at glistening Diddle Arena to see Dwight, 21-year-old senior, and Greg, 19, form a basketball brother.

The death of Dwight and his sister left the Western campus in shock. They were apparent drowning victims after their car ran into a rain-swollen ditch near Madisonville yesterday.

Perhaps their Western teammate Joe Mac Hill best summed up the impact of the tragedy: "I'll always remember Dwight as someone to look up to. He was determined to help the other guy first instead of himself."

Through hard work and perseverance, Dwight had a promising pro basketball career at his fingertips. Drafted by both Louisville and Los Angeles of the rival pro leagues, he leaned toward the Lakers.

Western coach Johnny Oldham, who had considerable playing experience in the pro ranks, felt Dwight was a "natural." He had predicted a great future for the 6-foot-4 guard based on his shooting ability and raptor-like quickness.

"I'll remember his leadership qualities, his hustle and determination," said the grief-stricken Oldham yesterday.

When Dwight reported for the 1963 Kentucky-Indiana schoolboy summer all-star series, he was virtually overlooked in spite of an eye-catching scoring average (22.3) for three seasons at Princeton Dotson High.

Averaged 14.6 Points

In three varsity seasons at Western, he averaged 14.6 points and 10.9 rebounds. Oldham constantly referred to him as the greatest rebounding guard in the nation.

Aside from his pro dream, Dwight thought of the NCAA championships. But in each of the three defeats last season, either Dwight or teammate Glenn Hanks was sidelined or handicapped by injury.

One of Dwight's most rabid supporters was Jim Baehtoldt, recently-resigned
DEATH OF STAR SHOCKS 'TOPPER CAMPUS
Team Always Came First
For Western's Dwight Smith

By MIKE FLEMING

On this particular December night a stiff breeze—often nippy—was swirling in from the North. There was a sense of snow, but one look skyward revealed a star-emblazoned sky.

The scene was Bowling Green, Ky., and Western Kentucky University's Hilltoppers were in the midst of yet another basketball season. They had just won the game, but that point is elementary.

Sitting in one corner of the 'Toppers' dressing room was Dwight Smith, playing his last season in the red and white. He seemed almost impervious to the surroundings; he was quiet, subdued.

SMITH had just poured in a lot of points and a reporter had asked for a comment. This was it: "Well, I was fortunate. But we're a team. Be sure and fit that into your story. We're a team, first, last and always. That was the team that got those points, not me."

This was Dwight Smith, a warm individual who turned out to be one of the country's outstanding basketball players. He was eagerly looking forward to a professional career, too. The Los Angeles Lakers of the NBA drafted him. Louisville of the new ABA also drafted him. He had signed with neither.

One pro scout, upon seeing Smith in action, had said during the season: "This kid can, I believe, play in the big time as a guard. He's one of the finest defensive men I've seen. And he can score, too. How can you miss with a combination like that?"

You couldn't. But Dwight Smith will never see the Lakers' tryout camp—or steal a basketball again.

Dwight Smith died Sunday in a rain-engulfed ditch near Nortonville, Ky., along with his 18-year-old sister, Kay. Dwight's brother, Greg, also a star Western player, 19, was injured.

OFFICERS said the traffic mishap occurred on a highway when the car apparently hit a low, water-filled, spot and lost control, careening off into the ditch. Both victims, it is believed, drowned before they could be removed from the wreckage.

The three were returning to classes from their home in Princeton, Ky. Dwight and Greg had been honored at a banquet at their church in Princeton Saturday night.

"This is the saddest tragedy in my entire coaching career," stated Western Coach Johnny Oldham upon hearing the news. "I've never had anything to hit me like this."

"I was in a fraternity meeting when the news came. Everyone was so shocked we just dispensed the business and left. He was admired by all," said a Western student.

"I cannot remember a sadness such as this on our campus," declared Robert Cochran, head of Western's public relations department.

The 6-5, 197-pound senior was among the nation's top rebounding guards.

He averaged better than 11 rebounds and 14 points a game during his three-year varsity career and was the 'Topper captain during both his junior and senior years.

Western won the Ohio Valley Conference title both seasons and competed in the NCAA tournament.

Exactly one month ago today, Dwight played in the Kentucky-Tennessee All-Star game in Nashville.

In addition to their parents and Greg, Dwight and Kay Smith are survived by a younger brother and sister. Funeral arrangements were still incomplete today.
Basketballer Dwight Smith, Sister Killed

Western Kentucky University basketball star Dwight Smith and his 18-year-old sister were among five persons killed in two automobile accidents in Hopkins County yesterday.

Smith, 21, and his sister, Kay Smith, apparently drowned when their car ran into high water and skidded into a ditch on U.S. 41-A near Nortonville.

Their brother, Greg Smith, 19, who was driving, was pulled out of the submerged car alive. He was treated for a leg injury at the Hopkins County Hospital and released. Later in the evening he was taken to the Caldwell County War Memorial Hospital at Princeton in shock.

Dwight Smith, a star guard at Western, was to have graduated in June. He had been drafted by teams in both the American and the National Basketball Associations.

Greg Smith, a junior, played center.

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Basketballer Dwight Smith, Sister Killed

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3 Killed in Another Crash

In the other accident, a 20-year-old mother and her four-month-old son and a nine-year-old neighbor girl all from Evansville, Ind., were killed.

The victims were identified as: Mrs. Janet Hale; her son, Michael Ray Hale; and Mary Pace.

The car in which they were riding with three other passengers struck the abutment of a bridge on U.S. 41-A about a mile north of Madisonville.

The automobile was ripped in half by the impact, and the baby was thrown from the car into the creek. His body was found about 125 feet downstream.

Mrs. Hale's husband, Gordon Hale, and two other men, William David and John Paul Hale, were injured in the accident.

The group had been visiting relatives at Clifty, Ky., and were returning to Evansville when the accident occurred.

Hopkins County Coroner Tommy Craft said Mrs. Hale and the Pace girl died of head injuries. He said an autopsy was being conducted to determine if the baby drowned or died of injuries from the wreck.