

Football

College football from Russia, courtesy of Raycom

If Raycom Sports has its way, *glasnost* will extend to the gridiron next season. The syndicator, which is more used to broadcasting from places like Waco and Fayetteville, really is determined to stage a college football game in the Soviet Union during the 1989 season. Those reports you

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may have seen or heard over the weekend are true; Raycom has talked to Texas officials about the proposal, and they seem receptive. But company executive Ken Haines says that UT is only one of several schools being pitched.

Since arrangements may not be worked out with the Longhorns — and Colorado has shot down moving the Sept. 23 game — Raycom is looking elsewhere for suitable opponents. It's targeting September for the game, which would be the first big-time football matchup in a communist-bloc country. Raycom, based in North Carolina, produces weekly Southwest Conference and Big Ten telecasts.

"I can't get very specific other than to say we've talked to a lot of schools," Haines said. "Texas is one that appeals to us. Florida is another. It's a tedious process, but I'm optimistic we'll pull it off."

Raycom was inspired to pursue the idea after seeing an increasing number of Ameri-



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tional relations."

can teams playing overseas. The NFL has made Europe a regular preseason stop the past few years. Last weekend Boston University and Richmond traveled to England. Later this year Texas Tech and Oklahoma State will square off in Japan.

So, Raycom figured, why not go one better and let the Soviets in on the fun? Haines says they appear all for it.

"We talked to a number of groups and organizations that have staged sporting events overseas. The impression they've given us is that they (the games) are worthwhile," he said.

"To our knowledge, nothing like this has been done in a communist country before. With our current detente, and the Soviet interest in American sports, it's a great time to explore it.

"If we do it, we think it'll be a real positive thing, both for college sports and for interna-