

especially egregious. One former SMU player, according to local TV and newspaper reports, had received \$25,000 to sign with SMU's football team; he and his mother reportedly received \$750 a month even after the team was on probation. There were allegations that free apartments, jobs and willing women were provided.

This time the faculty rebelled, with a resolution demanding the "abolition of all quasi-professional athletics" at SMU. Mindful of the genuine anger swirling around them, school officials decided they would cooperate with the NCAA investiga-

Board of Governors, that payments to players had continued after the NCAA put the school on probation in 1985. Clements said that he and several other board members had decided to end the payments gradually rather than eliminate them immediately. NCAA officials said they were not told about this high-level decision—even as Clements was promising SMU's cooperation with the probe last fall. "There was a decision made that we phase out and eliminate, in due course, all of the arrangements that had been made," Clements told a press conference in the state capital, Austin.

This disclosure spurred emergency meeting after emergency meeting by the Board of Governors, which issued denials of wrongdoing. The United Methodist Church continued its ongoing investigation of the school; possible penalties could include an end to the \$1 million a year the church gives SMU. The student senate contemplated suing Clements and others for "injury incurred upon the student body due to the handling of the football situation," and the governors looked into filing a similar civil suit.

**Spending money:** Some still contend, however, that what SMU did was No Big Deal. One alum has even filed a class-action suit against the NCAA, charging that it has violated the civil rights of SMU students. Dallas Times Herald columnist Dan Jenkins, the author of "Semi-Tough," notes that student athletes aren't allowed to hold jobs during the school year. "Where are they supposed to get spending money?" he asks. He says that nothing the SMU officials or boosters did was illegal, beyond NCAA rules. "I don't think this is a problem, period, as long as you get rid of the dumb rules."

But, argues David Berst, the NCAA's director of enforcement, "The student athletes who were paid at SMU were not paid because they needed shoes on their feet or they didn't have enough money for a cheeseburger. They were paid exorbitant amounts of money on a monthly basis by very powerful people in an organized scheme that was developed in a back room so that at cocktail parties and on Saturday afternoons those people could be big shots."

The irony, of course, is that boosters may have done lasting damage to the school they claim to love. Two years ago the university decided to burnish its academic image by becoming more selective. The size of the freshman class was reduced from 1,300 to 1,200, and the average Scholastic Apti-

tude Test scores among incoming students grew 80 points to 1,100. Applications also rose, from about 3,000 to 3,700. When word of the new scandal began to leak out last November, however, student applications fell off 30 percent. Even though they are picking up, SMU admissions officers fear that recent developments may hurt still more. Most worrisome is a 17 percent decline this year in contributions, only some of which can be blamed on plunging oil prices.

SMU already boasts several programs of national rank: its drama department, for example, is one of 10 that make up the prestigious League of Professional Theater Training Programs. The music department and Perkins School of Theology are also well regarded, and SMU's law and business schools have considerable statewide clout. But the university remains saddled with a reputation as something of a finishing school for wealthy whites. The reputation is not entirely fair. Money is certainly in evidence; on any given day, a visitor will be impressed by the number of students wearing Ralph Lauren Polo clothing or driving Porsches and BMW's. Yet, 50 percent of undergraduates receive some form of financial aid. There have been racist episodes in recent years, but SMU has a minority enrollment of more than 9 percent, comparable to the level at several other Texas colleges.

Belatedly, perhaps, SMU is now trying to correct the balance between academics and athletics. Last month the embattled Board of Governors was abolished; a smaller executive committee with new leadership was temporarily established. The larger Board of Trustees will likely be reduced in size and members' terms strictly limited to de-emphasize the power of certain boosters. Other major reforms are also planned. Already shelved are special admissions policies that had allowed high-school sports stars to enter the school regardless of their academic capabilities. "There is no way that we will not come out of this [turmoil] a stronger institution," interim provost Ruth Morgan says. "There may be more unpleasant facts to come out, but there is no doubt there will be change, and positive change."

Not everyone is so sure. "SMU was just stupid enough to get caught," shrugs 19-year-old sophomore Jeff Hyten. "They weren't doing anything different from most big schools in Texas and most big athletic programs. Cheating is a part of the way everything works nowadays." That may be so. But the NCAA has served notice on SMU that it will not be able to get away with football as usual for the next three years. Whether a chastened SMU will arise when the death penalty expires remains to be seen.

MARK MILLER with SUSAN EVANS in Dallas



PHIL HURER/BLACK STAR

**Looking elsewhere:** Defensive tackle Robert McDade

tion. By the end of the year, SMU president L. Donald Shields, who was ailing, had resigned; athletic director Bob Hitch and head football coach Bobby Collins were pressed to quit, according to some trustees.

Then came the announcement of the death penalty on Feb. 25—and the descent of more than 100 recruiters from other schools on the very next day. Most of the team is expected to depart before SMU is allowed to play again in 1988. Said Dave Richards, one of those who is leaving: "I have sacrificed enough of my career [already] than to stick around here . . . and put my chance to play professional ball on the line."

But it was Clements's confession that really sent the school into a tailspin. The governor, who was elected last fall, said that he had known, while head of the SMU