ALL-TIME "ALL AMERICAN

"CAT" THOMPSON and the GOLDEN BOBCATS

By J. A. & K. L. Moran

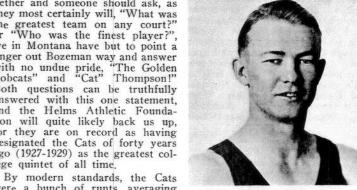
As comparative youngsters, who happened along just about seven years too late to have had the privilege of seeing the great Bobcats in action, we were filled with a feeling of awesomeness as we paged through Cat Thompson's thick book of press clippings chronicling the fantastic career of America's greatest cagester, and the greatest basketball aggregation of all time. Then, too, we were seized with a feeling of utter helplessness as we struggled to write this brief account of those basketball titans - a story that could, and certainly should, fill an entire volume. It is not possible to describe here the heritage of Montana's basketball fame. Suffice it to say that in "Cat" Thompson, Montanans can justly claim the "Babe Ruth of Basketball" and in their Golden Bobcats —

- The Authors

Whenever basketball fans get together and someone should ask, as they most certainly will, "What was the greatest team on any court?" or "Who was the finest player?", we in Montana have but to point a finger out Bozeman way and answer with no undue pride, "The Golden Bobcats" and "Cat" Thompson!" Both questions can be truthfully answered with this one statement, and the Helms Athletic Foundation will quite likely back us up, for they are on record as having designated the Cats of forty years ago (1927-1929) as the greatest college quintet of all time.

were a bunch of runts, averaging only six feet, with Cat Thompson himself hitting a mere 5"9"! But what the team lacked in altitude they more than made up for in determination, aggressiveness, speed and trickery. It must have been humiliating for the Goliaths of that day to be sent reeling into oblivion at the hands of so many Davids— but fall they did. The squad of 1927 got off to a comparatively slow start, but still wound up their first season with an enviable 30 and 7 record. To make it even more enviable, the "Cat" found himself an All-American forward, quite an achievement for a "runt" who had never even played basketball until he was fifteen! And just to emphasize that it wasn't all "beginner's luck," he proceeded to make All. he proceeded to make All-American four years running at Montana State (1927-28-29-30), and topped off his career by being named to the all time All-America team.

"Cat's" memory is a bit hazy on his high school playing days. His home town was LaVerkin, Utah and he played high school ball at Dixie. At Dixie young Thompson was named to the first "all-state" five in 1924 and 1925, and then won All-American honors while playing at the National High School tournament in Chicago. But, incredulous as it now seems, incredulous as it now seems, Thompson says that the only col-



John Ashworth Thompson

lege in the United States that was the least bit interested in him was Montana State.

The Golden Bobcats hit their stride in 1928, under the guidance of G. Ott Romney, winning 36 contests while losing only 2. In 1929, Schubert Dyche took control of the already proficient team and coached them to a similar 36-2 season, the Western Division championship of the Rocky Mountain Conference, and the Helms selec-tion for National Championship honors.

Led by J. Ashworth (Cat) Thompson, the Golden Bobcats of 1929 scored 2,293 points to their 38 opponents' 1,208, with the Cat scoring 17.14 points per game. And they took on every team that came their way. (Loyola of Chicago refused to face them), including the Livingston Railway Club (73-19), the Havre All-Stars (whom they crushed by an amazing 110- 10), and the National AAU Champs, the Cook Painters, who they beat two out of three times! Dyche is still bemoaning his lack of foresight when he says, "I probably made a mistake back in 1930. I should have taken those kids and toured the country for a couple of seasons.'

THE NICKNAME "CAT"

The Golden Bobcats were one of the first teams to play the raz-zle-dazzle, fast break type of ball. They had blinding speed and were firm believers that the best defense was a good offense. They attacked as often and as quickly as possible. The quickest man, of course, was Thompson. Thompson has been called a lot of nicknames by sports writers throughout his career, "Tommy the Terrible," "Blonde Dycareer,



1929 GOLDEN BOBCATS-Top L to R: Cliff Swanson, Orland Ward, Frank Ward, Cat Thompson, John Breeden, Max Worthington, Coach Schubert Dyche. Bottom, L to R: Harold Sadler, Fred Browning, Ed. Buzzetti, Ott Gardner and Peck McFarland.

while Bobcat coach G. Ott Romney was watching his great find at a pre-season scrimmage in 1926, he remarked to a bystander - "that isn't a human being - that's a treecat!" And thus the nickname "Cat" was born and has remained to this day, and it was a fitting nickname for he certainly was as quick as any cat and just as clever. Dyche says, "He would come in from behind a man, flick the ball away from him, and go in unmolested for a basket.'

But just how good were the Bobcats? They completely dominated the hardwoods for three years in a fashion that still seems incredible. Two of the regulars, (Thompson and Frank Ward) were chosen as All-Americans and were joined by two others (Orlin Ward and John "Brick" Breeden) on the All-Rocky Mountain conference team. The golden age of 1927-29 saw the Golden Bobcats win three such conference championships and a National Championship. Their first conference title was with a record of 30 wins against only 7 defeats in 1927, when they were still cut-ting their teeth. By 1928, the Mon-tana State "Wonder Team" had reached perfection, and there was little substituting. "We played on little substituting, "We played on the basis of the kids knowing one another and working strictly as a unit," says Coach Dyche. "Each was an integral part of the team and knew exactly what the other was going to do. They were intelligent, had terrific speed, and all had a great dedication to the game." Perhaps, their greatness can be summed up in that one word: Dedication. Dyche recalls that after he had dismissed the team to enjoy Christ-mas Eve back in '28, "those kids went to the gym, jimmied the lock, and practiced on their own. That was just a few days before we left

namo," the "Golden Whirlwind," the on a road trip to Washington and "Dixie Flyer," among others. But Idaho." They beat Washington Idaho." They beat Washington State College 39-34 and took the measure of Idaho University twice, 44-21 and 54-40.

"CAT" IS STOPPED

The Bobcats lost one game in 1928 when their opponents finally stopped the great Thompson. The way they stopped him was most unorthodox . . . and embarrassing . . . and forced him to leave the game. That incident resulted in zippers being sewed into basketball trunks.

Dyche, in keeping with his belief that the Cats operated as a unit. refuses to single out any one player. Thompson, although only five-nine, led the team in scoring with a 17.14 average and his three-year scoring mark of 1,541 points was only recently surpassed by Larry Chanay. Frank Ward, the 6'2" center, was the tallest man on the team and second in the scoring department with a 15.6 average. He was selected as a first team Helms All-America in 1929. Orlin Ward (Frank's brother) was third in scoring with an average of 10.2. Guards Breeden and Worthington were the Cats' defensive aces and playmakers and seldom scored in double figures.



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national attention when Knute Rockne, in his syndicated column "Campus Comment," said, "The natives out in the Rocky Mountain country believe that the Montana in America. This statement may cause a snicker in big city circles, but that is no reason why the folks out in the wide open spaces of the West are not right. They point to "Cat" Thompson as the outstanding player of the country. Altho opponents have been putting two aging 20 points a game. Too bad they can't get a look at him back East." men to guard him he has been aver-

BOBCATS vs. AAU CHAMPS

The Cook Painters of Kansas City, the National AAU Champs, apparently thought it high time to give the small town lads their comeuppance. At any rate, the Painters, the greatest independent team in the world, journeyed westward for a three game series with the Cats. The match itself was nothing less than awesome, for nowadays no college club in the country would dare face the likes of an AAU team. The Painters won the initial clash by a close 44-40 decision. The know-italls chuckled and sided with the soreheads who had stated that the Cats were "merely flat footed, lucky, sharp-shooting hoopsters, with two stars and a trio of dubs, and with absolutely no team play, system or anything else in the way of basketball fundamentals."

Such an impression was certainly unfortunate for a number of coaches admitted that their style of play wa as clever as any they had ever

Cat states, "We would take the long shots frequently because we had the marksmen. When the opposing defense played tight," he continues, "we just started sinking those long tosses, and pretty soon they were forced to come after us then we would run right through them for the set-ups. We were probably the first 'run-and-gun' ball club." Thompson goes on to recall, "The defense played back and kept their opponents from getting close to the basket. The offensive teams spent a lot of time working the ball around trying to get in close, rather than take the long shot. Also, in those days, they didn't stop the clock when the ball went out-ofbounds. And there were other factors that kept the scores low. College teams only averaged 40 points a game, and when we were averaging 60 points a game it was phenomenal."

With one win under his belt, the Cook manager, Red DeBarnardi, still had plenty to fear from the Bobcats, indicating this when he assigned himself the difficult job of smothering the "Cat." That Red was outstanding in his basketball ability is easily ascertained, for he was not only an All-America center and forward, but an All-America guard as well. During the season he had played that position in most of the Painter games and no player had thus far run wild against him. Besides, he had additional All-American support in teammates A1 Peterson and Gale Gordon, not to

The Golden Bobcats attracted mention his 6'7" center, Victor Holt. DeBarnardi felt confident that, although it would be no easy task, he could stop the great Bobcat. His confidence was on the wane when the Golden Bobcats took the sec-State five can best any college team ond game in Bozeman by a decisive 48-31 score. However, Red was now determined, more than ever, that these western upstarts would be given their lumps. It was un-thinkable that a team of "runts" could pull off the miracle of the century.

Or was it? At any rate, many questions that had troubled the minds of coaches, players and fans for a long time would be answered. When the final whistle had blown that night in the Mining City, the State had done the impossible. They had held the giant Holt to 10 points while All-American Peterson scored only 6. The Painter manager, playing left forward and left guard, managed to score but five points, losing the decision 46-34. In the meantime, Cat Thompson led the scoring with 14 points, followed closely by the Ward brothers, Frank with 13 and Orlin with 12 markers -more points (39) than were registered by the entire eight man squad of the National AAU champs!

When the Cooks left the floor exhausted after their second drubbing in the cage battles of the decade, Cat Thompson pleaded with them to stay and scrimmage so he could get warmed up.

Brick Breeden demonstrated his tremendous defensive skill in the



John "Brick" Breeden-Guard

Cook series by holding the peerless De Bernardi (one of the nations scoring greats) to a total of 14 points during the three game set. And he only committed a total of five fouls in doing it.

When asked to assist in selecting the All-America team of 1928-29, Knute Rockne, the wizard of Natre Dame, said, "Much has been said and written regarding the impossibility of picking an All-America basketball team. Having traveled and visited every section of America the last three months and having talked to basketball players and coaches in all these sections no one recognizes this more than I do."

"There may be those in the east," he continued, "who will question my choice of 'Cat' Thompson of Montana State and they may say who is he and who have they beaten? Montana State averaged better than 60 points per game this



The Bobcat scorers--Orland Ward, (forward), Frank Ward (center) Cat Thompson (forward).

hombre, 'Cat' Thompson, has averaged 20 points per game himself. The recent AAU championships in Kansas City were won by the Cook Paint company with such select personalities in its lineup of Holt of Oklahoma, Haggerty of Michigan and DeBernardi and others. They went through the AAU championships beating the best teams from



Max Worthington - Guard

all parts of America. Yet, Montana State won two out of three from the Cook Paint company and this young man 'Cat' Thompson was just the best of five very good basketball players who represented Montana State this year."

MSC SUCCESS SECRET

During the 1928-29 season, the Bobcats scored 2056 points in 34 games, or an average of 60.5 points. They may have soared to even greater heights, but they would leave the floor when they had top-ped their scoring average, leaving the reserves to finish up. During this period, Montana State held opposing teams to an average of 33 points

season and although guarded by two the Utah Aggies; 65-21 and 62-33 men in almost every game, this over Colorado University, one of the nation's top defensive teams; and ran rough shod over Montana U, 62-18. After the Bobcats had beaten the strong Colorado team two straight for the Rocky Mountain title, Coach Dyche started the reserves in their third meeting. And after 12 minutes of play the Cats trailed 7 to 23. In the second half Dyche put in the regulars, but with the Colorado fans screaming madly for the prospective victory, the Colorado club played as they never played before and held a 46-46 tie with only minutes left to play. The Colorado team had more than fighting spirit. It clicked on long shots and broke up the Bobcat offense repeatedly, but the Bobcats finally beat them out 53 to 47. Fans criticized Dyche severely for not starting the first five, whom they had paid to see - and it nearly cost him the game. Coach Schubert Dyche says Frank

Ward was one of the first players in the country to shoot a hook shot. "He'd make a couple of hooks and everyone would claim he was lucky, or maybe silly to be shooting a shot with his back to the basket. It wasn't unusual at all for either Frank or 'Cat' to pass accurately behind their backs or come up with other

sensational plays."

Cat Thompson, who never smoked or touched liquor, stayed in training throughout the year and always gave 100 per cent, said in commenting upon the outstanding playing qualities of his Bobcat teammates, "They loved to play the game. They kept themselves in superb physical condition, had a burning desire to win and were well grounded in the game's fundamentals beautifully, were excellent dribblers and uncanny marksmen. But, most importantly, we all had the ability to mold ourselves into one func-tioning, unshakable unit. This was a game. They ran up such impres-sive tallies as 69-29 and 69-25 over the real secret of our success."



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GREAT FALLS - HELENA - MISSOULA

The rangy center, Frank Ward, ed a drive with a flurry of trick was quite capable of "dunking" the dribbles and passes, followed by a ball and was the team's offensive re-bounding leader. "Brick" Breeden, whose hands hung nearly to his knees, led the quintet on the defensive boards. The team was some-"But they weren't," maintains Dyche. "They were just simply that good." Thompson himself explains, "Every man knew what the other was thinking - what they were going to do - always thinking way ahead. We could pass the ball to any spot without looking and a man would be there. We could even pass to a sound, knowing a team-mate would be there." He had sev-eral special moves of his own that he used to outfox his opponents: A good, back pivot; a fake shot, then a quick stop on a dribble - or a fake shot, then a dribble, feint, and continued dribble in for a set-up. Cat's high scoring mark for one game was 38. (which was the Montana record at that time.) Against Colorado he hit seven field goals in less than ten minutes, and in another game scored three goals in 40 seconds. His shooting specialties included a two-handed shot; a shot while still moving fast; a good onehanded shot, and both a short and long toss. That he was a dead-shot is further proved by the fact that he once hit 20 points with his left hand, a bone having been chipped in his right!

THE CATS OF "OLD"

Generally speaking, when the members of a star basketball team graduate from college, they go their separate ways and the team becomes a fading memory. Rarely do they meet again as a unit. Not so the Golden Bobcats. In 1932, the Golden Bobcat alumni gathered to defeat the MSU Bobcats 50 to 35. And a couple of years later, in December of 1934, the one-time national champs were once again united as a team

Anxious to prove that they were not yet through as stars of the court they ran onto the hardwoods to face none other than the then New York Globe Trotters in Great Falls in a two game match. As everyone expected, the Globe Trotters won the first game, but only by a scant four point margin. The once splendid Cats seemed unable to jell. They had ample opportunity to win. but their shots simply refused to register. The Cats had come close. but nobody really had expected them to win. The next night saw an entirely different team. The return to form of Cat Thompson was the feature of the contest, During the first game Thompson got off plenty of shots but couldn't find the net. For about five minutes in the first half of the second game he was the Cat of old. flipping the ball through the hoop from every conceivable angle. He best shot was an overhand looper with his back to the basket.

The Golden Bobcats ran up a 5 to 0 lead early in the first period, only to see the Globe Trotters come from behind to knot the contest at six-all. A free throw put the Bobcats out in front once again, 7 to 6. and from then on they never relinquished the lead. Trailing by nearly 20 points, the Trotters openbarrage of shots. But this time it was the Trotters who failed to find the range, and they bowed to a 51-31 defeat by the still-glorious Golden Cats.

Frank Ward was high scorer with 20 points. The taller of the bro-thers who helped put MSU on the map made only three baskets in the first half, but succeeded in hitting for five more in the final 20 minutes, and added four free throws. Thompson was close behind with 17 points, while Orlin Ward and Brick Breeden rounded out the scoring with 12 and 2 tallies respectively. The other two Bobcats, Worthington, and Glynn, were held scoreless.

Even at that late date, the Golden Bobcats, like the Montana mountains, were still shining.

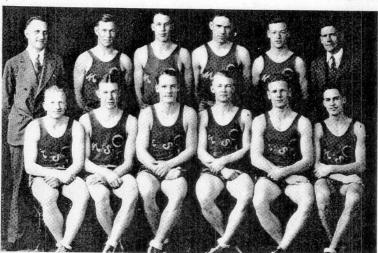
CATS' RECORD STILL STANDS

When speaking of Cat Thompson or the Golden Bobcats, one is speaking of greatness. Of average height, the Cat never depended on size for his points like some of the modern human towers who simply stand over the basket and drop the ball in instead of shooting for it. All he asked was a chance to get the ball and a space large enough to dribble through for his shot. And anytime he passed the center line he was ready to fire. For years the scoring aces of the old Rocky Mountain Conference were content to vie for second place, knowing the Cat to be firmly entrenched in first. His record of 629 points scored in one season (1928) still stands.

And the rest of the Bobcats were great hustlers, too. Players like Brick Breeden, and Frank Ward (both 6'2"), and Orlin Ward and Max Worthington (each even 6 footers), applied plenty of pressure on the enemy and chased the leather up and down the court. And if anyone thought they could stop the Bobcats merely by putting two, or three, or four players on Thompson, they were in for a severe shock for all of the Cats could score, and usually did.

In 1930, the Golden Bobcats, although severely hampered by the loss of several players through graduation, were still strong enough to take an eastern swing, losing a still disputed one-point fray to Pitt, the national titlists. In that contest, the Bobcats were leading in the final quarter when the officials began calling repeated fouls against them, which enabled the Pittsburgh team to pull the game out of the fire. Eye-witnesses still claim the referees repeatedly made bad calls in the closing minutes. But the undaunted Cats continued through the East, beating such clubs as Penn State, Marquette, Nebraska and Purdue.

Coach Dyche said. "We lined up the tour back East because we received so much publicity in 1928 and 1929, and teams were anxious to play us." Dyche retired from coaching several years ago. "We had a good team in 1930, but it didn't measure up to the previous clubs. Of course it doesn't do any good to talk about it, but I feel the 1929 team would have won all of its games on a similar tour." The scoring power of the Golden Bobcats



1928 GOLDEN BOBCATS--Standing, L to R: Coach Ott Romney, Frank Worden, Frank Ward, John Breeden, Max Worthington and Schubert Dyche, Sitting, L to R: Fred Browning, Russell Hurd, Orland Ward, Cat Thompson, Ott Gardner and Harold Sadler.



1930 GOLDEN BOBCATS-Top Row, L to R: Mgr. Frank Brown, Elmer Mencer, Keith Ario, Frank Ward, (unidentified), Wally Wendt and Ass't Coach Bob Adams. Center Row, L to R: Harold Sadler, Ed Buzzetti, Cat Thompson, Max Worthington and Orland Ward. 1st Rcw, L to R: Ray Buzzetti, R. Breeden, (next two unidentified), and Roy Homme.

was awesome in that era of low point production, but it becomes even more impressive when one considers that it was not until Kentucky won the 1946 national title that their scoring record was surpassed.

GOLDEN BOBCATS' LAST GAME

Cat. Frank and Orland played their last game as Bobcats against the Hardin Giants at Hardin. (Teammates Ed and H. Buzzetti both came from Hardin). The Giants were much taller than the Bobcats and had an unblemished record for the season. Then they issued a challenge to the college team boasting that they would play them to a standstill. Cat hit 34 points in that game and Frank Ward added 33 as the Giants suffered a humiliating 86 to 11 shellacking before their home-town supporters.

After leaving the MSU campus Thompson and Frank Ward played with the Long Beach Shields for one season. The coast club was on the verge of winning a national championship when Cat was seized with an appendicitus attack and was

rushed to the hospital for an operation. The team just couldn't function without him and their prospective title went down-the-drain.

The next year Cat accepted a coaching position at Livingston and during his eleven years there his teams never failed to place at least fourth in divisional and state tournaments.

One memorable incident "Cat" recalled during his coaching days at Park High occurred during a state tournament at Billings. The Rang-

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ers were playing Eddie Chinski's these players went on to star for Miles City Cowboys and it was a either the Grizzlies or Bobcats. close, hard-fought contest. Cat says Chinski made some remarks to an official and immediately the referee whirled around to the Park bench and shouted, "That is one on you, Cat!" He awarded Miles City a free throw and the toss was good. It gave the Cowboys a tie with Park and in the overtime Miles City won by a single point. "That," concluded Thompson, "was the most unjust decision an official ever made in a game."

"CATS" GOLDEN RANGERS

The former Livingston coach recalled the years when the Park team was called the "Golden Rangers" — 1937 through 1939. The '37 club was the first and only Park team ever to win the "All State" championship. The '38 team won the 16 conference championship with 18 victories against but 1 defeat, a 34-36 battle against Havre, but were defeated by Billings in the Southern Divisional championship game in a double-overtime contest. Park had beaten Billings twice before during the regular season, but in those days only the divisional champion went to the state tournament. Those three games marked scoring duels between Park's great left-handed ace Bill Jones, and the Broncs' equally great Willie DeGroot. During the tournament game Jones hit for 23 points, a remarkable feat at that time, despite the fact that, unknown to Coach Thompson, he was playing with a broken wrist. Both Jones and DeGroot went on to play for Montana's Grizzlies, where they won fame as the "Gold-dust Twins." The team again won the Big 16 conference pennant and went on to win the Class "A" state champion-

Thompson had other good teams at Livingston, but these three were the best. Cat remembers many standout players, which included:
Bill Ogle, Barney Ryan, Tom and
Bob Stachwick, Eddie Collins, Bruce Ryan and Ralph Farmer, Wally Buettner, Gene and Tom Brown, Stebbins, Robinson, and others besides the great Bill Jones. Most of

either the Grizzlies or Bobcats.
In 1942, Thompson left Living-

ston for a coaching job in Idaho Falls, where he was head basketball coach for four seasons. His 1945 and 1946 teams won Idaho state championships. He also won two district softball titles and four straight track crowns. He resigned from coaching in 1946 to open a sporting goods

store in Idaho Falls.

When asked, Cat Thompson replied, "I think the Golden Bobcats would have done okay in present-day basketball. You see," he explained, "we were as fast as the modern boys. I think the game is faster today, and more fun to watch, through the elimination of the center jump. But that wouldn't have bothered us. In three seasons, MSU averaged 60 points a game, even though slowed down by the center jump. If we'd have been playing the speeded up brand of basketball today, you can guess what we would have averaged." (It has been esti-mated that the Golden Bobcats, through elimination of the center jump and calling time when the ball went out of bounds, would have



1954 RE-UNION-Members gathered to receive awards for their outstanding achievements. At the ceremony, "Cat" Thompson was honored for being voted into the Helm's Foundation Basketball Hall of Fame.



PARK RANGERS-1939 BIG 16 CONFERENCE AND CLASS "A" STATE CHAMPIONS. Top: Bob Stachwick, Bruce Ryan and Eddie Collins. Center: Coach Thompson, Tom Stachwick, John Ephes, Warren Buettner, Mgr. Tom Joseph. Bottom: Tom Barry, Tom Johnson, Red Brooks and Mike Pizzi.



1937 RANGERS-ALL STATE CHAMPIONS-1st Row: Ed Collins, Dick Campbell, T. Obenhoff, Charlie Graves, Red Klarr, Bill Allen. 2nd Row: Coach Thompson, Earl Chaney, Ken Bowman, Nick Lopez, Wally Buettner, Tom Johnson and Mgr. Andy Stachwick. Top: Tom O'Neil, Bruce Ryan, Gene Brown, Bill Jones and Bruce Stewart



1938 RANGERS-BIG 16 CHAMPIONS-1st Row: Mgr. Joseph, Johnson, Barry, Collins, Ephes, Tocher. 2nd Row: Coach Thompson, O'Neil, Sullivan, Buettner, Taylor, Graves. 3rd Row: Jones, T. Stachwick, B. Stachwick, Buettner, Brown, Ryan.

scored in the vicinity of 150 points.) "I notice one difference in modern basketball, in contrast to our style of play. The teams today do not figure on the long or medium shot as an offensive weapon. I always figured that was my best shot, but most of the college teams I've seen try to work the ball in, dreaming for those tall boys to rebound if the shot is missed." When asked what changes he thought should be made in the basketball rules today, if any, Cat replied, "It seems that the rules are fine. The only suggestion I think I would make, would be to raise the basket a couple of feet."

STILL SETTING RECORDS

Although Cat Thompson finally retired from active sports, he certainly didn't stop setting records. In 1949, when he was scoutmaster of Troop 5, in Idaho Falls, he set what is believed to be a unique record of achievement among the Boy Scouts of America. From a troop enroll-ment of only 30, and with an aver-age age of 14, 22 of his scouts were awarded the Eagle rank en masse. including his son Jerry, who was the Park Ranger mascot during the days of the Golden Rangers. Cat himself added the 23rd award when he was presented with the coveted Eagle. Troop activities during the year included a 30-mile hike over the Teton Mountains to Jenny Lake, Wyoming; a 35-mile pack trip from the southern boundary of Yellowstone Park to Old Faithful, and a two-day outing on the Snake River in February - in 30 below weather! Another time Cat took his entire scout troop on a 2500 mile trek across the entire United States, visiting seven National Parks. Cat Thompson is, in every sense of the word, truly an All-American.

When asked what advice he would give today's youngsters who wish to become cage stars, the vet-eran mentor stated, "If a boy wants to make a team, he should start early to gain skills — he should train hard - and have a strong desire to do a good job. Then, practice — more practice — and still more practice."

And that's the advice "Cat' Thompson always followed himself, and it made him the greatest basketball player of all time: John Ashworth "Cat" Thompson-All-Time, All-American.

And it's the advice the great Bobcats followed, which made them -The Golden Bobcats - The All-Time National Champions.

The once-in-a-lifetime player, and the once-in-a-lifetime team.



Still a champion-"Cat" presents a trophy of appreciation to his old coach, Schubert Dyche.

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