

Susan Rayl
SUNY-Cortland

Out of the Agony of this Hour, We Will Rise

The 1976-77 Purple Ace basketball season signaled the end of an era. With over 514 wins to his credit, coach Arad McCutchan retired as head coach at the University of Evansville after thirty-one years at the helm. Evansville had won five National Division II titles under McCutchan, and the team faced two challenges, a new coach and a new division. The new coach came in the form of a former 34-year old Oral Roberts University assistant coach, Bobby Watson. At the same time, Evansville competed at the NCAA Division I level for the first time.

On December 13, 1977, however, the course of Evansville basketball changed forever. With a 1-3 record in their first few weeks of play, 24 players, coaches and athletic boosters boarded a DC-3 airplane destined for Murfreesboro, Tennessee for a game against Middle Tennessee State University. Just ninety seconds after takeoff from Dress Regional Airport at 7:20 p.m., the plane crashed in a cornfield and all aboard perished. This paper provides

