

Aggie Tracksters Seek Third Win Against Rice, LSU Saturday

Matson Makes Debut

By LARRY UPSHAW

Randy and the shot put ring meet again this Saturday. You need say no more.

For the Aggies, the state of Texas and the world, the meeting is clear. For the first time this year, Randy Matson steps into that sphere which catapulted him to fame — the shot put ring.

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After some winter-time frolic with the Aggie basketball team, Matson attempts to return to track prominence as the A&M tracksters battle Rice and LSU in a triangular action at Houston.

Although holding the world's shot put record of 70'-7 1/4" Matson noted, "I will probably hit around 60 feet this week. That is the best I've done in practice."

Bothered by a case of the flu, Matson has thrown in practice only four times plus working out with weights. His weight stands at 234 now, well below the 258-300 range which he feels is his best throwing weight.

"It will take me a couple more weeks to get into good shape," he said. "I haven't worked real hard because I'm not in the best shape."

Matson's coach, Charley Thomas noted, "His form is looking good now. He just needs to get his strength up. When he got the flu and his weight fell, his strength went with it."

"I feel he will throw around 60-61 feet this week," added Thomas. "He is further ahead now than when he started working for last season. Of course he started about December for last season, where he's starting in March this year. "I feel he will be at his best shape around June or July and I hope he can break that world record."

The Aggies step on down to Houston with an undefeated record in outdoor competition. On successive weekends the A&M tracksters outpointed Rice and Texas in a triangular meet and a 12-team field at the Border Olympics.

The meet shapes up as a battle of the hospital brigades as both A&M and Rice have a long list of performers in sick bay. The flu bug bit Aggie half-miler Willy Rodriguez and Steven Bancroft but they will compete, while sprinter Alfred Cilio will forego the action for this reason.

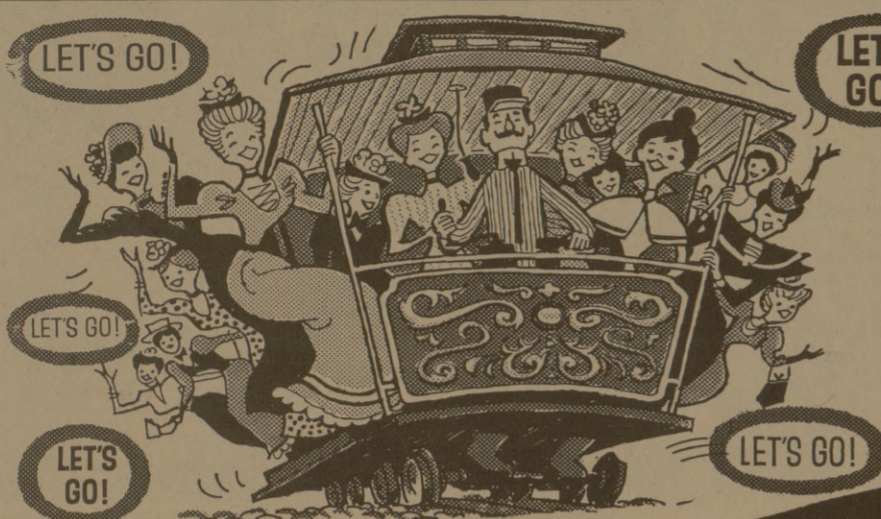
Four-ty man Scott Blessing will also be out with a pulled muscle. Rice leaves Southwest Conference champion three-miler George Stroup on the sidelines with a badly sprained ankle. Ace sprinters Jimmy Epps and Scotty Middlebrook, weightman Gerald Hiltzman, half-miler Greg Peters and pole vaulter Tommy Marshall all suffer from various illnesses.

But the healthy bodies will put on a good show. As sprinter Gil Smith carries an undefeated record in the 100 and 220-yard dashes this season. And high jumpers Mike Schrider and Steve Holtz of A&M lead the conference in their specialty with 6'-10 1/2" leaps each.

"This one is between A&M and Rice, although LSU will collect some vital points," Thomas said. The appearance of the young giant, Matson, should give the Aggies the weight to post a third victory.

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