

Much Time, Effort Spent Recruiting

By CHARLIE ROWTON
Outside of molding a winning team from the personnel he has, the next most important task a coach faces is continuing to bring in new material.

The most basic means of achieving this goal is through recruiting.

The Texas A&M Athletic Department has an extensive recruiting program in most sports. Naturally, football and basketball skills are the most highly sought in the hunt for future stars, but baseball, track, tennis, and swimming follow closely.

The coaches of each sport have their own individual techniques of locating and wooing future A&M athletes. Baseball coach Tom Chandler starts looking at boys before their senior year in high school.

"THE LAST WEEK of July and the first two weeks of August, there are many Connie Mack and other teen-age baseball tournaments in Texas. I attend all the games and formulate a prospect list."

He then contacts the coaches of prospective players and checks their grades.

"It would be foolish to follow a boy's progress during his senior season if he does not meet our entrance requirements," Chandler explained.

Chandler centers his attention on Texas and seldom recruits an out-of-stater because of tuition costs. Competition is keen for the top few boys, the ten or fifteen "blue-chip" prospects, but after these boys are signed, competition eases off.

"WE DON'T have the rat race that football, basketball, or even track does," Chandler continued. "We are fortunate that Coach Gene Stallings can augment our program by permitting a few football players to play baseball."

Bob Long and Dan Westerfield are prime examples and David Elmendorf, Houston Westbury halfback who has just recently signed a football letter of intent, is one of the top baseball prospects in the state.

Professional baseball scouts give Chandler "invaluable aid" by suggesting prospects. He also

receives about 300 letters each year from boys asking for scholarships.

"I take the letters and make the nicest reply possible, trying to sell the boy on attending A&M on his own financially, with the understanding that, if he proves himself, he will be rewarded with scholarship aid."

Chandler is quite happy with the scholarship aid he has been allocated.

"I PERSONALLY feel very appreciative to the Athletic Council for giving baseball an adequate budget to have had in the past years nationally high-ranking teams."

In 1964 the Aggies finished sixth nationally, and were twelfth and eleventh in 1965 and 1966.

Aggie Track Coach Charlie Thomas works in much the same way. He has 21 track scholarships and tries to have about five of them available to give to incoming freshmen each year.

"The people who win track are the ones who are spending the money on it," Thomas observed.

He explained that this was the reason Abilene Christian College and the University of Houston always have top track squads.

UNLIKE Chandler, Thomas receives very few letters and recruits out-of-state athletes. One of the top prospects is a 6-9, 270-pound Mississippian, Douglas

Brewer. Brewer has thrown the discus 230 feet in practice.

Other top prospects include Reginald Robinson, a Negro sprinter from Wichita Falls, Mike Bennett, a San Antonio hurdler, San Angelo high-jumper Rocky Woods, and John Martin, the best half-miler in Texas from Houston Memorial.

Thomas goes to all the high school meets he can and decides who he would like to have run track for the Aggies.

"If we get three of the top ten, we are doing pretty good. In deciding on a boy, I look at his size, grades, and attitude. High school times are not really good indications of a boy's potential."

SWIMMING Coach Art Adamson runs a somewhat smaller operation in that he only has from four to six scholarships.

"If we see a good boy, we try to get him to come to school here. We don't try to change his mind, though," Adamson emphasized.

Adamson gets tips from ex-swimmers and high school coaches on top swimmers, in addition to letters from swimmers from around the country. His outlook towards scholarships, however, is different from many coaches.

"My swimmers swim because they like it and want to participate. I like it this way. I want them to swim because they want to, not because someone has given

them a scholarship, even though the lack of scholarships hinders the building of a winning team. If he wants to be an Aggie, he is welcome."

ADAMSON added that anyone enrolled in Texas A&M is eligible to try out for the team.

"I think everyone should have the chance to make the team if he wants to try."

Omar Smith has six scholarships to distribute to members of his tennis squad.

"I know the top-ranked boys from records I keep and I see a lot of them play. Also, the Texas Sectional Ranking lists the top players from the previous year."

SMITH'S MAIN problem in attracting top players in past years was the lack of facilities, but this is less of a problem now since new tennis courts were constructed last year.

"We have ten freshmen this year on the best team we have had in a long time. I will only try to recruit two or three new boys next year."

The only real problem Smith faces is the lack of enough good tennis players to go around.

Most of the athletes visit A&M before they make their final decision. Standard procedure is to show them the campus, a task usually assigned in part to one of the members of the team the

young athlete may someday join. Smith gave the best explanation for this.

"THE PLAYERS are the best recruiters. The team members can sell new boys on the school by making them feel wanted."

Chandler handles this chore for the baseball team as most of the incoming baseballers do not visit A&M during the regular school year.

All the coaches face a similar restriction in that they cannot sign prospective Aggies until the state meet in their particular sport has been completed.

Athletic Director Barlow (Bones) Irvin explained why Texas A&M continues to attract some of the top schoolboy athletes year after year.

"Good academic standards, tradition, spirit, and a strong Former Student's Association all help Texas A&M in recruiting of athletes."

CLAY IMPORTED HEREFORDS LOUISVILLE (AP) — Statesman Henry Clay gave an assist to the beef cattle business in Kentucky, which now produces more than one million head a year for the market.

Clay imported the first Herefords into the state and by 1852 Kentucky cattle were rated prize offerings on the New York markets.



WELCOME HOME!
The Aggies Pat Rozypal is all smiles as he accepts congratulations of his teammates following his homer in Tuesday's game.

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