

FLOODTIDE

The flooding Brazos surges over a clump of debris near College Station. The river, swollen by recent rains, crested Wednesday. (Photo by Bob Stump)

'State Of Mind' Was Key To FDT Trophy, CO Says

The 1969 national drill championship, the second straight won by the Fish Drill Team, is the product of a state of mind.

Long hours of practice go into team performances, in which the 31 cadets appear to think as one.

"Actually, we don't think about what we have to do," commented George Barrientos, team commander, of San Antonio. "We know that. It's a matter of concentrating on doing each movement precisely right."

The team will call on it again Saturday for the University of Texas at Austin competition. They march April 24 in an LSU meet at Baton Rouge.

THE VIRTUALLY-perfect sequence by the freshmen at Robert F. Kennedy Stadium in Washington during the National Intercollegiate ROTC Drill Championships was anti-climatic, Barrientos observed.

Advisors headed by Mike Casey of Houston kept team minds off the afternoon performance most of the day with a White House tour arranged by Congressman Bob Casey, the senior advisor's father.

An hour before the unit's drill time, advisors began letting tension build. An eight-foot-long telegram arrived at the opportune moment to add psychological impetus.

At the stadium, advisors sent the unit through a practice run. "WE WERE too tense and dropped some rifles," the commander said. "But then we had a prayer and relaxed some."

Tension mounted again as the team waited to go before judges.

"When they motioned us on, we 'humped it,' did our yell to let off the excitement and went out feeling like we owned the field," Barrientos described. "We knew we could win and that's why we did."

He noted the climax came during the yell.

Barrientos cited two other advantages — the team being all freshmen and of the same rank

allowing closer rapport and the constant pressure of practice, being in uniform all the time and becoming accustomed to the daily routine of Corps freshmen here.

"THEN WHEN the pressure comes during competition, it's nothing new," he enlarged. "Other teams march seniors and juniors too, and the difference in rank of individual members does not help them."

Casey said a variety of other factors contributed to the unprecedented second straight national title. Among them are extensive practice ("The team hasn't had one free weekend," he said), support by President Earl Rudder, Dean of Students James P. Hannigan and Col. Jim H. McCoy, commandant; backing of sponsors Malon Southerland, Army Capt. John I. Anglin and Air Force Capt. Jon Gallop, and a group of Aggie-exes in the capital area.

"We had the vocal support of about 50," he explained, "from a major general down."

MAJ. GEN. William A. Becker, 1941 A&M graduate and Army legislative liaison officer, arranged team billeting at Fort McNair and a Capitol A&M Club reception for the team. Southerland said General Becker, as assistant commandant here in 1946, okayed formation of the first Freshman Drill Team.

Casey also praised the team's junior and sophomore advisors. "All of them have marched in the national competition," he pointed out. "In fact, I'm the only advisor that hasn't. Their experience has to be an advantage too."

Junior advisors Richard Gonzalez of San Antonio and Steve Nichols of Crystal Lake, Ill., marched on the Fish Drill Team that finished second two years ago.

Sophomore Francis S. Conaty of Annandale, Va.; John A. Hamilton, Galveston; Robert M. Patten, Houston, and John T. Whipple, San Antonio, already knew the winning feeling, from marching on A&M's 1968 national champion.

High School Thespians Here For Region 4 Play Contest

High school thespians of 14 Texas cities are competing here for the Region 4 one-act play title and a ticket to the state University Interscholastic League finals.

Winning plays in Classes "B" and "AA" will be staged at the state level in Austin during early May.

Conducted under auspices of the Theater Arts Program of the English Department and managed by C. K. Esten, the Region 4 contest will run through today.

Six Class "B" casts are performing Wednesday and eight "AA" schools will take Thursday curtains, Esten said.

Competing in the "B" bracket are Fayetteville, Runge, Academy High of Temple, Riveria, Dripping Springs and Rock-springs.

"AA" entries are from Georgetown, Newton, Mina High in Bastrop, Crockett, Midway High of Waco, East Chambers High at Winnie, Dayton and Katy.

More than 150 participants are involved in staging the one-act plays. Esten estimated the competition will bring more than 400 to the campus.

He will present plaques to the winners and medals to best actress and actor in each category.

Aggie Players members including Rodger Kloppe of Houston, Ruth Reeves of Comfort, Jean Andrew of Bryan, George

McCoy of Marble Falls, Travis Miller of West Winfield, N. Y., Carl Masterson of Sherman, and Bruce McKenty of Arlington, Va., are handling technical details under supervision of Bob Wenck, Aggie Players assistant director.

Contest critic judge is Dr. Loren Winship of the University of Texas at Austin Drama Department.

Council Removes, Replaces Chairman

In a called meeting, the Memorial Student Center Council removed and replaced the chairman of the Contemporary Arts Committee.

According to Council President Benjamin Sims, senior Tommy B. Ellis was asked to resign Monday because he had mismanaged committee funds.

The Council accepted Ellis' resignation and elected senior Don Prycer as new chairman, effective immediately, Sims said. Prycer previously had been vice-chairman of Contemporary Arts.

Ellis said that he had been under the impression that the chairman had the power to allot money appropriated to his committee as he saw fit, without first clearing such action with the Council.

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