

Aggie swimmers face stiff competition — themselves

By CLIFFORD BROYLES

If competition breeds championships, the Texas Aggie swimming team should be well on the way.

Coach Dennis Fosdick, entering his second season as head of the Aggie swim program, says he has word from at least 32 swimmers who will be trying out for the squad this fall.

Including last year's group of which only one, Tom Sparks, was a senior, Fosdick expects over 50 prospects to try for the team.

Only about 18 players can make the traveling squad and Fosdick says that there is a possibility that he will have a B team, which gives more swimmers a chance to compete.

But the road ahead is a rough one as perennial champion Southern Methodist is—as usual—number one. Their standing is more secure than UCLA's hold on the basketball crown and that's saying something.

Fosdick says the University of Texas at Austin under coach Pat Patterson, who left A&M a year ago to go to accept the head job at his alma mater, has recruited exceptionally well and might actually threaten SMU.

The Aggie coach has some top newcomers coming also and feels that with a good year the Aggies could move up to third in the race over a fifth-place finish a year ago.

Top newcomers for the Aggies are Lester Hammen, from the college of San Mateo, California, where he was a teammate of the Aggies' Fred Meyers, who transferred to A&M during the spring. Hammen was a two-time water polo All-American and was an All-American in swimming in at least six events.

Plans are for him to be used in the distance freestyle events, which Fosdick pointed out as one of the main weaknesses of the team.

Kent Berryman from Seattle, Wash., is expected to help soften up another weakness in the butterfly events. Doug Meaden, from Houston Memorial, will be in the freestyle events for the Aggies and is a top prospect, the coach said.

Scott Jones, another newcomer, is expected to help considerably in the backstroke and butterfly. Jones is from San Jose, Calif.

Sophomore-to-be Steve Prentice heads the returning swimmers. The Houston product set three school marks in both backstroke events and in the intermediate medley.

Eric Wolff, who swam along

with Prentice at the National meet last spring, holds school marks in the 100 and 200 yard freestyle.

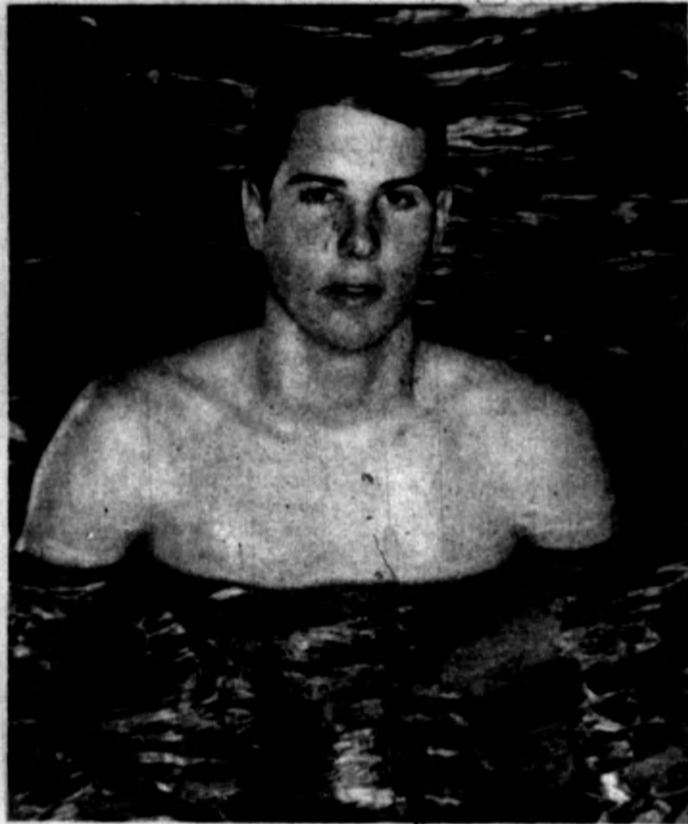
Workouts for the team begin the first day of school, the coach pointed out, adding A&M will host two water polo tournaments in the fall as it tries to build up the sport in the southwest.

Last year the Aggies posted a 6-1 record while asserting themselves as one of the top teams in the area. The first of the tournaments will be a novice tourney which will be open for freshman and high school teams and the second will be A&M hosting the Southwestern Water Polo championships, Nov. 5-6 at P. L. Downs Natatorium.

Fosdick pointed out that the water polo season will be a part of conditioning for the Aggie swimmers and all the swimmers will be out for the team.

Returning from last years squad include John Allred, sophomore; Kim Blakeman, junior; Doug Carson, junior; Duncan Cooper, sophomore; Mike Hicks, junior; Robert Hitchcock, junior; Jeff Hughes, sophomore; Gary Lassiter, freshman; Don Leever, junior; Martin Litteken, sophomore; John McCleary, junior; Dale McElroy, sophomore; Mike McLelland, sophomore; Sandy McPerson, sophomore; Douglas Osburn, sophomore; Mike Rice, sophomore; Greg Rippey, sophomore; Davud Russo, junior; Dan Sonnenberg, sophomore; Steve Sonnenberg, sophomore; Bill Stewart, senior; Barry Steusand, sophomore; Gordon Taylor, junior; Bob Willoughby, sophomore; and Wolff.

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