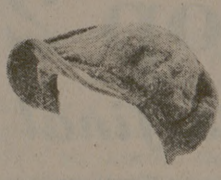


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**Under My Hat**



By TED BORISKIE

Track and field, offspring of the ancient Greek olympics, holds a worldwide respect unparalleled by any other sport.

A runner, a hurdler, a discus thrower, a pole vaulter all have a unique aura of heroism about them, stemming from their rich history. They have been immortalized in art and legend. Jim Thorpe received his legendary status not from his feats in football or baseball, which were enormous indeed, but rather from his efforts as Carlisle College's one-man track team and from his world-stunning performance in the Olympics. Jesse Owens had the pride of an entire nation resting on his shoulders as he proved the fallibility and vulnerability of Hitler's master race and scarcely concealed from appeared on Der Fuhrer's lips.

What may be most important, however, is the amount of faith the sports fan has in the effort of a track star. A fumbled football or a bad pass on the basketball court can bring moans of disapproval from disheartened fans, but a trackman is always credited with giving his all to win. A look of determined concentration as someone clears a high jump bar or the grimace on a runner's face as he races down the final stretch assures the onlookers that the athlete is doing his dead level best.

In the light of all this glorious heritage, it is sad to note that the spirit of the Olympiad is dead at Texas A&M.

This past weekend at the Texas Relays, the A&M track squad handed in what has to be their sorriest performance at the Austin Relays in many years. In my fifteen years of viewing the event, missing the relays only three times, I can't remember being so sorely disappointed over the Aggies' showing.

Perhaps the crowning blow came in the case of A&M's entry in the two-mile relay. Making the trip to Austin were five runners capable of running the 880 in under 1:55, although one of the five was there as a part of another relay team. A member of the team became ill Friday and decided he couldn't run on the relay even though the race wasn't until the next day. The alternate member felt he wasn't in good enough shape to run a half-mile and so Aggie plans for the event were scrapped.

By refusing to run in a relay race an athlete is showing a tremendous lack of concern for many more people than just a handful of frustrated sportswriters. He is denying any seniors on the team the right to make their final appearance in the most prestigious meet of the year in the state. He is preventing all members of the team from receiving needed weekly competition. Most importantly, however, he is refusing all Aggie track fans, some of whom traveled hundreds of miles to the meet, the privilege of seeing their team in action.

This is in marked contrast to the situation in the same race last year when Willie Blackmon left a hospital bed Saturday morning to compete in the two-mile relay in Austin that afternoon. Suffering from a fever and a throat swollen from tonsillitis, Blackmon ran in the cold and rain because he felt being on a relay team was an honor beyond reproach. He sparked the team to a surprising third place finish with an amazing leg of 1:50.5. Such is the stuff legends are made of.

Unfortunately, Blackmon has graduated and so, apparently, has effort. It would be foolish to suggest anything like a boycott of the track team because it seems the track squad has begun its own little boycott of the fans.

# SWC disappointing in weekend's Texas Relays

Baylor's mile relay team set a Texas Relays record of 3:06.6 Saturday but it was an overall disappointing weekend for the Southwest Conference.

Prior to Baylor's record-setting performance, the SWC had managed only one first in national competition, that coming only a few minutes earlier with Texas' Dana LeDuc's victory in the university division shot put.

Baylor had also set a relays mark in the 480-yard shuttle hurdle relay but the race was restricted to Texas schools.

A&M qualified only two individuals for the finals and could qualify no team in any relays event. Scottie Jones placed fourth in the 120-yard high hurdles and freshman Doon Riggs competed in the high jump but couldn't place.

The mile relay team posted a good clocking of 3:12.5 in the preliminaries but the time was a couple seconds too slow to get them into the fast qualifying field.

Bill Newton showed signs of coming back into form in the

javelin, throwing the spear 209 feet, but could not quite make the qualifying mark. It was still a considerable improvement over his marks since sustaining a knee injury three weeks ago.

Jones was the highest SWC finisher in his event but Riggs watched Baylor's Kevin Delorey and Texas' Wyatt Tompkins clear 7-0 to provide the conference with a new top mark.

In the open shot put, the much-heralded battle between world record holders Al Feuerbach and George Woods never came off as indoor champion Woods scratched on all three of his preliminary tosses. Not wishing to disappoint the crowd, outdoor record holder Feuerbach made it a once-man event and set a new relays record of 70-1 1/2 outdistancing runner-up Sammy Walker by more than eight feet.

Mike Slack provided a bit of history as he ran the first sub-four minute mile in Texas Relays history and only the second in the state as he took the Jerry Thompson mile with a time of 3:59.7. He broke Wes


Santee's 19-year-old record of 4:00.5, a mark which has stood many a fine runner over years. His best outdoor mile before Saturday was a 4:06.

Perennial college power Southern was impressive in first foray into major university competition as TSU won sprint medley relay and 880 relay Friday, finished in a heat with Baylor in the mile, to share the winning time, finished second in the 480 relay.

Dwight Stones won the division high jump as expected, tying the meet record of 74, the spotlight belonged to Dean Owens who won the university division event with a mark of 7-2.

Dallas Hillcrest schoolboy sensation Bill Blessing got his taste of major league competition as he competed against quartermilers Larry Jones and Maurice Peoples in the open yard dash. Primarily a half-mile runner, Blessing ran a 47.5 to place behind Jones' 45.2 and Peoples' 45.8.

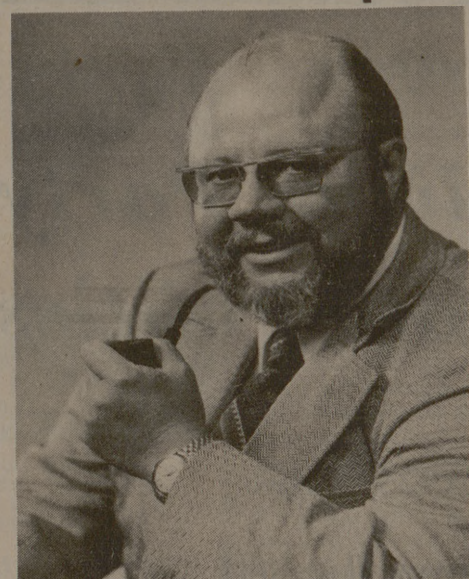
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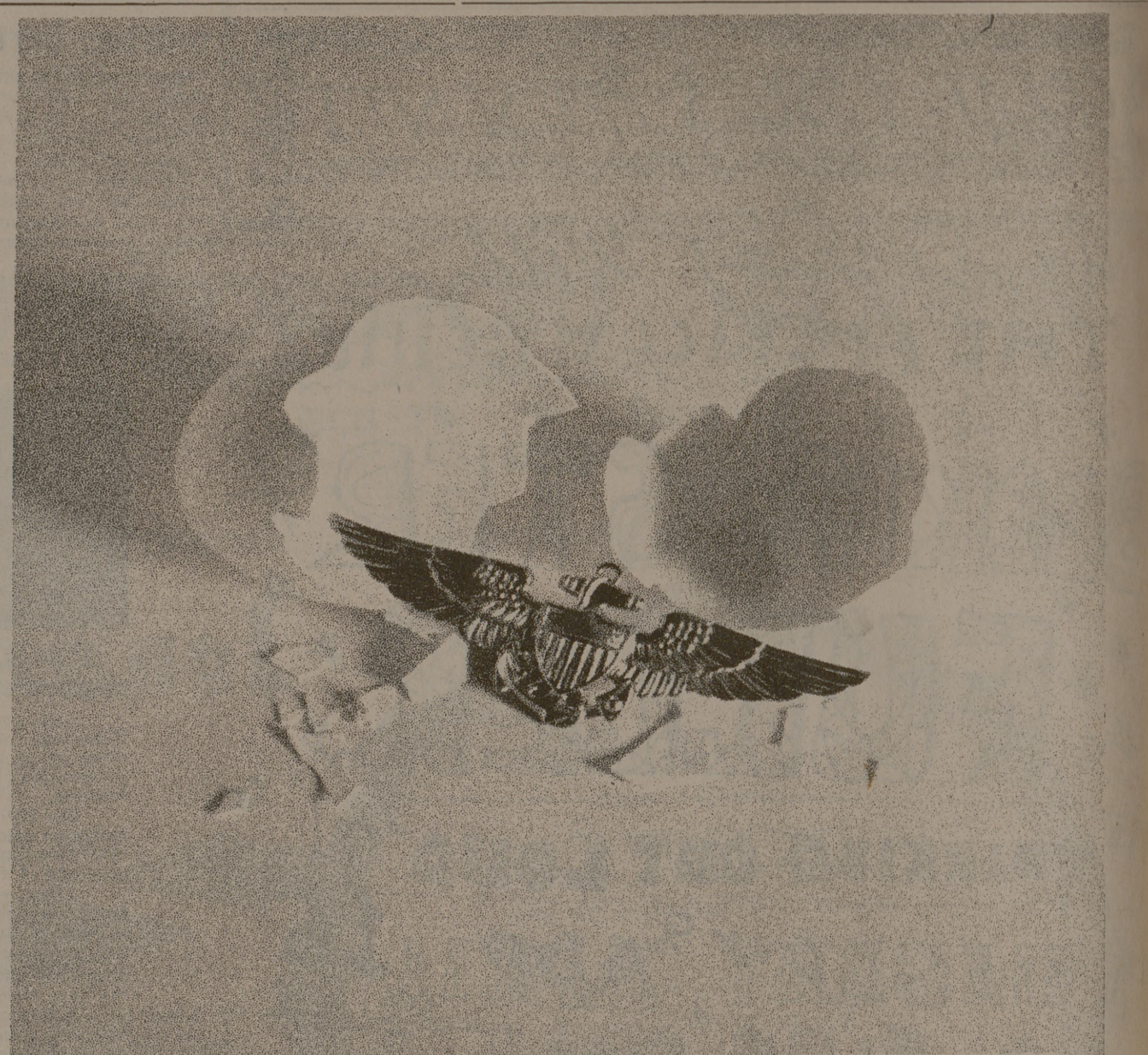
OPAS is a functioning committee of the Town Hall Committee of TAMU.

**Netters plan busy week**

Four days of tennis, three of them in Southwest Conference play, face the Aggies this week. They play TCU in Fort Worth today, Wisconsin here Wednesday, Baylor here Thursday and Texas here Saturday.

Coaches Omar Smith and Richard Barker have not announced lineups but among those likely to play are Bill Wright, Bill Hoover, Dan Courson, Charles Emley, John Kirwan, Mark Silberman, Tom Courson and Kermit Smith.

All of the home matches start at 1:30 p.m.



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