

Netters in Pan Am tourney, Feb. 6

16th-ranked Ags start season

By TONY GALLUCCI
Staff Sports Writer

The 16th ranked Aggie tennis team will take to the court for the first time this season on Feb. 6, 7, 8 when they travel to Edinburg to participate in the Pan American tourney.

First year coach Richard Barker will take his top four players to the tourney. Bill Wright, Bill Hoover, both seniors and two sophomores Mark Silberman and Charles Emley will make the trip.

Looking forward to the season ahead Barker notes that Houston, Texas, SMU and Rice, as always, will be the tough teams in the conference. And, Barker says, "As far as Texas teams go, Trinity will probably be the one to beat." All five of those teams are in the top twenty along with A&M.

The fight for the SWC title will probably be between UH and SMU again, says Barker. George Hardie, the defending Singles champion for SMU will return although the Mustangs lost Tim Vann. Houston lost Lee Merry to graduation and Bob Ogle to the pros, but return a strong team.

The only player lost to A&M was last year's No. 1 player, Dan Courson. The lineup this year in current order will be Wright, Hoover, Silberman, Emley, Tom Courson, John Kirwan, Alan White and Hal Harkey.

"We'll be a better team. Our top two are pretty well proven and the soph's are better with a years experience. We have a good chance with just about anybody," continued Barker. "We should get better as the year goes along. We should be a late season team which is good because our conference matches are later in the year."

On the players, Barker says, "The top four are set. The rest of the bunch are quite close. We have four new freshmen that haven't quite found their places yet. They have

quite a bit of ability, they're just behind on experience.

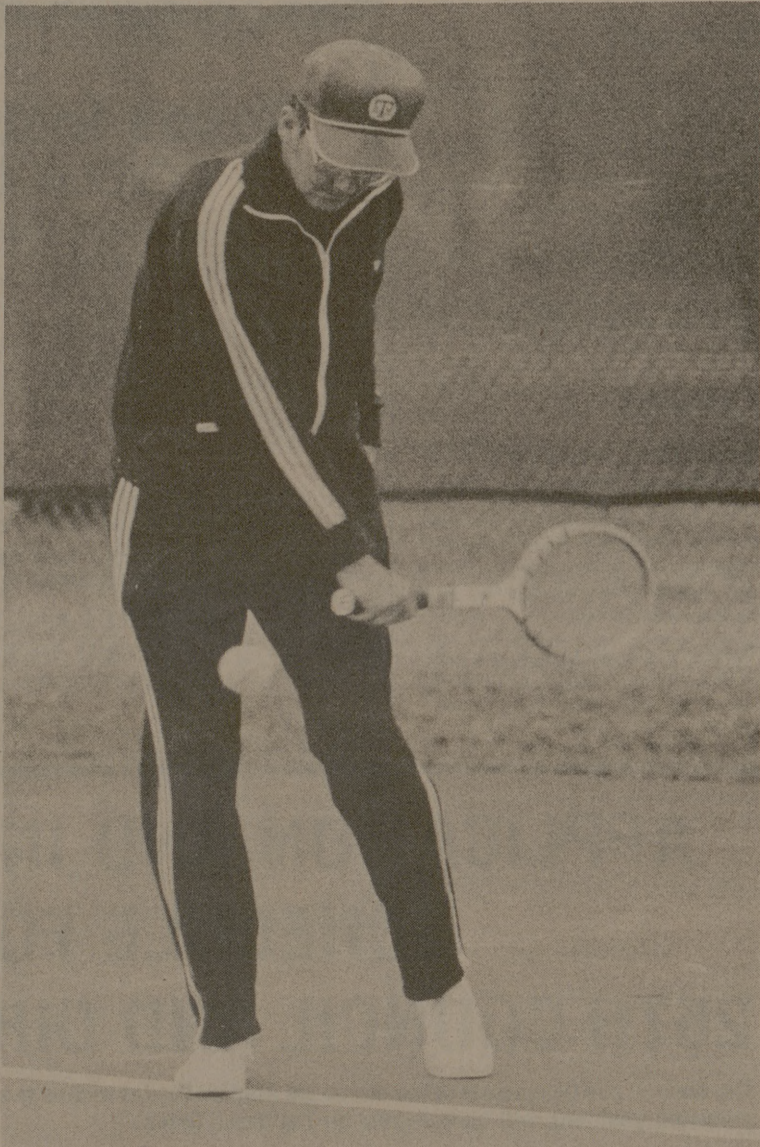
"If we can get real good play out of Hoover and Wright, that'll be the key. Good play from our top players will keep us in a match," said

Barker. "We'll certainly have a good team."

The Ags finished rather strong last year although they took a back seat to some of the stronger SWC teams. Hoover finished as the singles runnerup in the SWC meet be-

hind Hardie. In the NCAA meet in June the Ags wound up 16th after some good play and a good draw. SMU finished 5th, Trinity 8th,

Houston 9th and Texas 13th. UH is the defending SWC team champ followed in order by SMU, Texas, Rice and A&M.



(Photo by Chris Svatek)

Tennis coach Richard Barker demonstrates a backhand swing.

Athletic oatmeal

Officials stifle SWC basketball

By TONY GALLUCCI
Staff Sports Writer

Remember basketball? That exciting fast game played with a rather large round ball? And remember when referees were not booed before a game? They were just kind of ignored.

Well the disappearance of both from the Southwest Conference is a prime example of cause and effect.

Fortunately for those of us who love basketball, the game has been gaining popularity in Texas by leaps and bounds. A pretty good accomplishment for a state that will hardly admit there is anything but football.



Yet, the office of the Southwest Conference and its trainees (and puppets), heretofore known as referees or officials, are trying their best to stifle the sport.

While I can never say officiating was good in the conference in the years I've watched, this year has seen an especially bad downturn. And the fault is not necessarily bad or inept calls, though they certainly take their toll. And the problem does not necessarily lie with lopsided calls. The problem is, that the referees simply call too close. Not just a renege on the no harm no foul rule, but calls for sneezing, for turning the wrong direction or raising a hand too high. It's ridiculous.

The refs have made the game into an accuracy show. Players must now be conditioned for long walks. From one free throw line to another. In fourteen Aggie games this year a total, for both teams, of 681 fouls have been called, an average of 48.4 fouls per game. The average is 52.5 for two conference games.

The result is extremely long and drug out games like Saturday night's two hour and ten minute job. There is also little chance of "Running" away with a game or even an upset as the almost continuous whistle kills momentum, a vital part of good basketball.

And how many conference teams do you remember making it to the NCAA final? Why? Simple, SWC teams are not prepared for playing the way other teams do, and it all goes back to the officiating under which they are conditioned.

Close and/or bad officiating also alienates the crowd. Take a hint Cliff Speegle, read Dr. Shelby Metcalf's dissertation on crowd control. In fact memorize it. Then make it required reading for your referees' quickie course. You might learn something, your officials may get hit a little less often by flying ice and maybe a SWC basketball team will get the credit their talent deserves with a top twenty listing.

Meanwhile back at the ranch, I'll note that there were 46 recruits at Saturday's game and 23 of them are on the top 50 hit list.

The word from Houston is that A&M will not be hurting at quarterback much longer. Mark Thurmond, brother of Aggie Al, is apparently headed this way. Mark does more than QB, though, he is also a tough pitcher, a spot where Coach Tom Chandler's crew needs help. Wharton QB Charles Vaclavik wants to wear maroon and white and so does Dallas Roosevelt caller Keith Baker. I hear that THE quarterback Thomas Lott of San Antonio Jay was headed for College Station until he found out that Emory Bellard was including the I-formation and then decided on Texas.

Rumor has it that A&M has the book on 17 blue chip running backs. I didn't even know there were that many.

Batt sports

Ag yell leaders, here to stay?

By ROBERT CESSNA
Staff Sports Writer

With the Women's Liberation movement moving into everything from truck driving to men's locker rooms — A&M's yell leaders go unchanged.

While other schools have cheerleaders with shapely bodies and pretty legs, A&M has weathered the female storm and kept their male yell leaders.

This year's yell leaders include: senior Steve Taylor head yell leader; G-II Lassiter and Charlie Scott both seniors and juniors Jim Mickler and Chuck Hinton.

Each spring the yell leader positions come up for election. The requirements are that the individual filing with student government must be a junior and meet certain grade requirements. Each year three seniors and two juniors are elected by the students.

Once you file, you start campaigning using several methods such as door to door or by direct communicating in your classes.

Taylor had to go through a screening process to become head yell leader. First he had to appear before a faculty-student committee with the other seniors. They were then asked individually a series of questions from the committee.

"They ask you opinion questions," Taylor said. "They want to know how you feel toward doing what the faculty wants versus what the student wants," he added.

The responsibilities of the yell leaders range from bonfire to the stirring up of the crowd at athletic contests. But the position of yell leader goes beyond this. "Also we hold a position where we have to be

ambassadors on campus. We listen to all the people's problems," Hinton said.

Each one had his own reason for becoming yell leaders. Scott said, "I decided I wanted to try. My feeling became stronger. If you have the spirit of Aggieland, then your love will grow."

Mickler said, "Ever since I've been coming up here I've been real sports oriented. I couldn't play athletically. I like nothing better than seeing the Aggies win. This is where I could do the most for the Aggies."

Hinton added, "I recognize the two factions on campus, civilian versus Corps. I'm close to people in both areas. I didn't have any dreams of it (becoming a yell leader). But a girl kept suggesting why don't you try it. Last spring it became a reality."

But with women invading everything imaginable the question has to arise, when will we have women yell leaders? Or will they always be out of place? The consensus among the current yell leaders was that A&M is different and unique and let's keep it that way. Female yell leaders would only make us a carbon copy of other schools.

"We are yell leaders; we yell, we don't cheer," Mickler said. "I can't see a girl doing some things but I can't say it won't change. There would be a lot of problems. Midnight yell practice and bonfire would be some. Girls are very capable but I can't see them sitting on that stack. It's hard for me to fathom a girl doing it," he added. Mickler concluded, A&M is unique and he didn't want to be like other schools and students here don't want to be like the rest of the schools. In other words — another Aggie tradition.

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