

Coach Thomas is hopeful Track team to compete in SWC meet Friday

By PAUL McGRATH
Battalion Staff

With all of the warm-up meets out of the way, the Texas A&M track team now focuses its eyes upon the Southwest Conference indoor meet held this Friday in Ft. Worth.

The Tarrant County Convention Center will house the fourth rendition of what is now an annual event in the SWC. The top contenders this year include defending indoors champ Baylor, Houston, Texas A&M and last year's outdoor champion, Texas.

Texas A&M Track Coach Charles Thomas voices uncertainty about the meet.

"It's all a question mark," he said. "There's four teams that have a chance. I think we have a chance, but it depends on a lot of things."

The Aggies finished sixth in last year's meet.

Thomas has not yet been able to determine his 24-man travel squad due to injuries and illness, but said he should have his team ready by Thursday.

Freshmen Kent Figgs and Reggie Jameson both have leg strains and may or may not be ready for Friday's meet. However, Chuck Butler, out much of the indoor season due to illness, will be competing this week.

"We'll have 24 there," he said. "I don't know which 24, but we'll have 24."

Last weekend, the Aggies token squad to Monroe, their final meet prior to the indoor championships.

Shifton Baker, A&M's 100-meter, showed his versatility in a 23-5 foot long jump. With a long jumper and sprinter out, Baker could obtain points this event.

High jumper Lynn Byrd got glimpses of coming around by clearing 6-8 feet after performing par much of the year. Byrd was at A&M his freshman year, then transferred to Ranger College, cleared seven feet at Ranger.

Brad Blair pole vaulted 12 feet after setting an A&M record vault of 16 feet earlier in the year.

No point totals were kept in the 17-team meet, giving no comparison of A&M to other teams present.

"It was hard to get a good position," Thomas said. "But it gave us some experience."

A&M basketball climbs higher in SWC standings

By TONY GALLUCCI
Battalion Sports Staff

Aggie starter Wally Swanson was asked recently for a quote concerning the team's play at Arkansas. With a lot of help from his teammates, he said, "We tried to throw a monkey wrench into the intricate workings of the conference cog at Fayetteville. We didn't."

But when the Ags returned home to face cellar-dwellers TCU at home, neither Swanson nor teammate Willie Foreman needed any help.

Against TCU, Foreman continued his recent inspired play. He gathered a career high of 23 points to tie Steve Jones for scoring honors, while Swanson broke out of a recent slump of sorts to gather in 12 rebounds to lead the Ags.

The two post-forwards picked apart the Horned Frog defense as Steve Sylestine, Dave Goff and John Schlicher kept the ball moving inside.

"It's about time we got a win," said Swanson after the TCU game. That win moved the Ags back into .500 territory and the ensuing 93-60 victory over Rice moved them back into the winning column and upper division standings.

The Ags have not finished in the lower division in six years, and the year it will happen again, is not in sight.

The main reason for the success this year, considered dry by many observers, is the overall determination of the young players.

Head coach Shelby Swanson notes, "Willie is a good athlete. He's got all the tools. Wally's shooting better. He made some rebounds against TCU and better defense. I'm pleased with them but they haven't reached potential."

Willie said, "I guess they came out thinking it would be a walk in the park. We weren't down in the standings. We played hard."

Willie Foreman was also pointed in Rice's play. He previously beaten TCU at Rice.

Foreman has been one of the main reasons that those Aggie fans look quite so admirably on the team of C. Rollie White.

Foreman's performance in games has amounted to a 22 per game show. His season averages show that his improvement is advancing rapidly.

Of course the leader in Steve Jones but one might hold that second spot. He's son.

The number two scoring overall all he owns. Besides the overall scoring average, a mark in conference play, leads all rebounders with an average of 9.2 for the season and league games.

Swanson, the 6-8 sophomores from Watseka, Ill., started the season as a freshman. He topped off last year when he was needed against Rice. He finished that game with 10 points, his Aggie career high. He currently has the lowest rate of any starter and the team in blocked shots with the season.

Foreman is new to Aggie fans although not new to all. Willie and teammate Steve Jones both played for Wheatland High School in Houston during school's "dynasty". Foreman scored 49 points in a game against Wildcats.

Aggie fans might not expect a junior to do any better, but he knows what may be in store.

"This is the hardest play I've ever been on," said Swanson. "We're playing better than expected to. Our record reflects how we play."

Metcalfe said, "There is no one can fault them as a team. They're better."

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