

# Aggie discus thrower planning for Olympics

By PAIGE BEASLEY  
State and national titles were only stepping stones for discus thrower Vickilee Cobern as she now plans to use her experience and training at Texas A&M University to step up to her ultimate goal — the 1980 Olympics in Moscow.



Battalion Photo by Paige Beasley  
Texas A&M's Vickilee Cobern practices throwing the discus.

This 17-year-old freshman, one of the top recruits in the state in discus throwing, is from Paint Rock, Texas. Cobern's success has offered her many opportunities not available in her small West Texas hometown. She has traveled across the nation, participating in meets in California, Indiana, Nebraska and Tennessee, capturing national titles and moving herself closer to the United States Olympic trials.

"My father used to tell me that I would go to the Olympics in the discus," Cobern said. "I never would believe him. Besides, I always wanted to do the opposite when I was younger."

"I considered myself pretty good in hurdles, that is why I didn't like the discus."

In the ninth grade Cobern participated in a small-town tournament with other district competitors.

"When I placed sixth, it made me realize I could go to regional in the discus, maybe even state," she said.

That year, Cobern won district and took second in regional and state. Her second place throw of 75 feet was to increase within the next three years so as to become a new state record. Last year, she broke the state record with a throw of 150 feet 10 inches, but it was broken two hours later by two inches.

Cobern later topped her longest throw with a new one of 151-10 at a regional meet for the Junior Olympics in Fort Worth. This throw broke the national record.

Cobern threw another record breaker of 156-6 at the West Texas Amateur Athletic Union Association Region Meet in Borger, Texas. This score is pending until national officials meet in September.

In addition to this success, Cobern recently claimed first prize in the National Junior Olympic Meet in Lincoln, Neb.

Texas A&M's women's track and field coach, David Williams said, "She can be sure of a first or second in any meet we go to this year."

"She is a very, very talented discus thrower with a lot of potential and there is no reason why she can't develop into one of the top discus throwers in the nation."

# Shepard to be red-shirted

United Press International  
HOUSTON — A University of Houston spokesman Wednesday said quarterback Darrell Shepard, who has told sportswriters he wants to sit out this football season, will be red-shirted if he so chooses.

Shepard was the center of a recruiting controversy that landed the Cougars on a year's probation in 1977.

"That's the way Coach Yeoman does it," spokesman Ted Nance said. "He just lets his player's tell him. If he (Shepard) told somebody that, I guess he will be."

Nance said no official steps had been taken in what amounts to an informal decision by Shepard, a sophomore with three quarterbacks ahead of him in the lineup.

"A guy isn't really officially red-shirted until he goes through the whole season. Say our first two quarterbacks got hurt in first game of season, he'd play," Nance said.

"He just won't play and after a few games, then he'll probably just stay out. He wouldn't want to

waste a whole year's eligibility. I think it's very logical because we've got three quarterbacks ahead of him."

"I want to red-shirt," Shepard told a group of touring sportswriters this week. "It doesn't make sense to waste a year."

Shepard played last year on a team that was highly touted early but finished 6-5 in a season marred by the recruiting controversy and the subsequent NCAA probation.

But Danny Davis, who led the 1976 Cougars to a Southwest Conference co-championship and then was injured early in 1977, is back, pushing Shepard further behind junior Delrick Brown and sophomore Terry Elston.

"Danny is good," Shepard said. "He knows more than I do. I'll sit and wait my turn, then do the best I can."

Shepard, rated Texas' top quarterback prospect after graduating from high school in Odessa in 1977, was the center of a recruiting controversy sparked by a new car fi-

nanced for him in violation of NCAA rules.

"Yep, I still drive it," Shepard said of the now-famous Pontiac Trans-Am with custom paint job. "Gets real good mileage — especially after I took off the catalytic converter."

Shepard's 22 minutes at quarter-

back last year included a dramatic fumble which Texas converted into a go-ahead touchdown in a 35-21 victory over Houston at Rice Stadium.

"I still wake up thinking about it," Shepard said. "I feel like it cost us the game. It was just something that happened."

## Conference notes

### Hogs scrimmage

United Press International  
FAYETTEVILLE, Ark. — Arkansas' passing game and goal line play got special attention from Coach Lou Holtz in a minor Razorback scrimmage Wednesday.

The first offense was matched against the starting defense and scored once in two series in the passing portion of the workout.

"Our receivers caught the ball well," Holtz said. "Robert Farrell and Bobby Duckworth both made fine catches."

Duckworth was the leading receiver with three receptions for 39 yards. Quarterback Ron Calcagni completed seven of 13 passes for 51 yards and rushed four times for 17 yards. Orange Bowl hero Roland Sales was leading rusher with 24 yards on four attempts.

"All of our running backs ran

well," Holtz said. "Cowins and Eckwood ran well. Gary Woods, James Tolbert and Thomas Brown are promising young backs."

AUSTIN — The Texas Longhorns' defense dominated the offense in a brief scrimmage Wednesday, but coach Fred Akers said that was to be expected.

"Every defense in the country is ahead of the offense at this time of year, but I was pleased with the effort on both sides," Akers said. "It's obvious we have to do work on pass protection. I'm pleased with the secondary and I have been all summer, but a good pass rush helps the secondary and we have had that."

"We're still trying to find the right combination in the offensive line. We don't know who will be there but we will find them."

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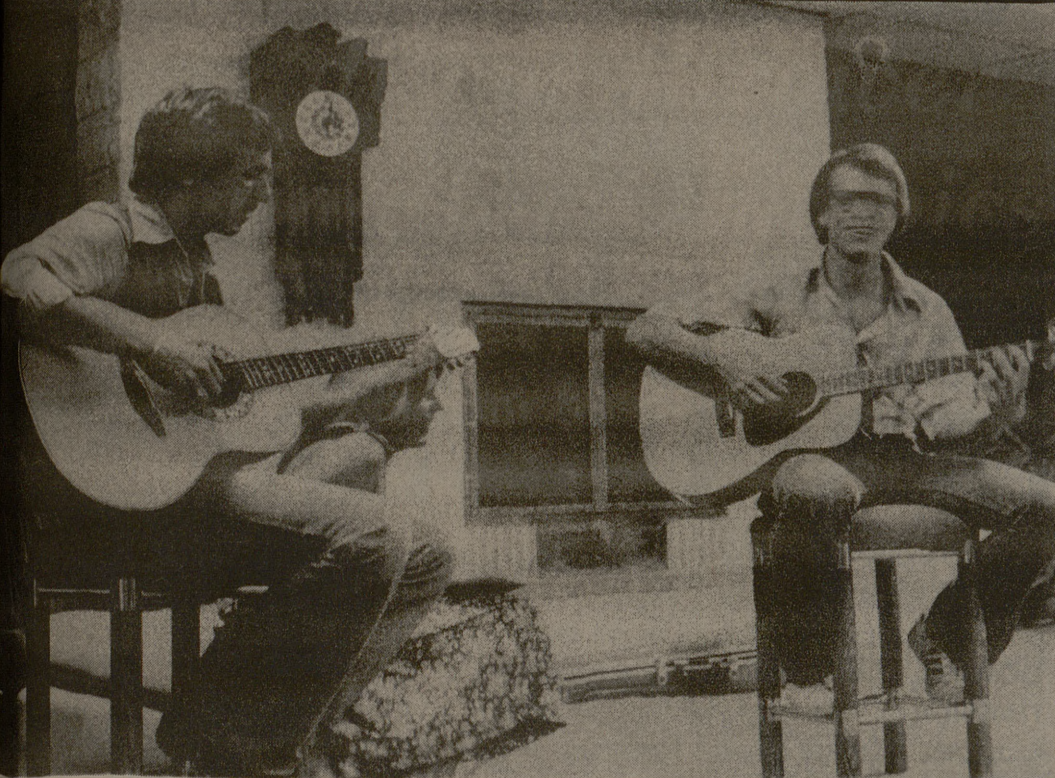
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