

It's time to bid farewell to basketball

While sports are my love, basketball is my mistress. Yearly, I carry on a four month affair with her, only to say goodbye at the end of each season.

I'm not yet ready to end this year's involvement. These past four months she's given me more joy and heartache than I have endured in years past. She can be a fickle woman.

Aggie notes

Polo

The Texas A&M polo team is going to Somers, Conn., Friday to compete in the National Intercollegiate Polo Championships.

The Aggies will play their first game Tuesday night at 7 p.m. against University of California-Davis. UC-Davis is the defending NIP champion.

Eight teams are entered from around the country, including Texas A&M, UC-Davis, California-Poly, Connecticut, Virginia, Cornell, Yale and York (Canadian University).

The Aggies will play two practice games before the tournament, against Yale on Saturday and against Norwich on Monday.

R.J. Roberts, the captain of the Aggie team, said that Texas A&M will be the underdogs in the game against UC-Davis. The tournament is single elimination.

Rodeo

The Texas A&M rodeo club competed in the University of Texas rodeo in Austin last weekend.

Mark Ivy and Jake Hersman brought home the only blue ribbons for the Aggies with first place finishes in calf roping and steer wrestling, respectively.

In other events for Texas A&M, Jerry Todd and John Anderson finished fourth in team roping, Bud Bowman finished fifth in bronc riding, Joe Dutton finished sixth in saddle bronc riding, Dorothy Syper finished sixth in barrel racing and seventh in goat tying.

The Aggies will participate in the Temple Junior College rodeo this weekend.

Oliver, Rangers mix well

United Press International
POMPANO BEACH, Fla. — There are certain things that just naturally go together, i.e. cream cheese and bagels, pastrami on rye and white wine with veal.

Al Oliver and the state of Texas have developed that kind of relationship.

It figures. Texans, it is said, love to brag and Oliver loves to be bragged about. It's too bad for the 32-year-old outfielder that it took so long to make the connection.

Oliver, one of baseball's finest all-round performers, spent the first nine years of his major league career with the Pittsburgh Pirates during which he never quite achieved the national acclaim and public adulation he felt he deserved.

Last year he was traded to the Rangers and almost instantly became a celebrity. It was as if Farrah Fawcett-Majors had suddenly discovered a cream rinse shampoo.

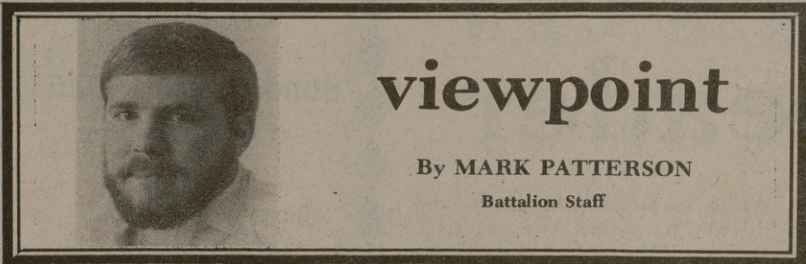
"It was the biggest emotional highlight of my major league career," says Oliver, whose .324 batting average was second only to American League batting champion Rod Carew's. "I never had fans stand and cheer for me throughout my career, even though I did the same things in Texas I did for nine years in Pittsburgh."

"I think the thing that really turned on the fans in Texas was my defensive ability which had never been discussed much in my nine years in the National League. The best thing I ever heard about Al Oliver as a defensive ballplayer was that he was adequate and there's nothing on the field that I'm adequate at. I'm definitely above average and at the top on everything I do on the field."

See how well Oliver fits in? He has a Texas-style self-confidence, yet, unfortunately for the Rangers, not much of Al's self-esteem rubbed off on his teammates last season. The Rangers finished tied for second in the AL West but they won seven fewer games than the year before and were never really in the race.

"The team lacked self-confidence," admits Oliver. "Why? I don't know because if you look at our team on paper last year we definitely had the best team in our division, a team that could have gone all the way. But, you know, in life as well as sports, you have to have self-confidence in your ability and yourself. This is something we lacked last year and, as a result we just didn't pan out as well as we would."

A solution to the self-confidence hangup might be to make Oliver team captain. That way he could use his own boundless enthusiasm to help spark the team without fear that he is overstepping his role.



viewpoint

By MARK PATTERSON
Battalion Staff

She teased the national pollsters this season, allowing them to pick six different teams to sit atop her Top 20, only to have each team lose and be replaced the next week. Week after week, the experts continued to

ignore her only major unbeaten team, Indiana State. ISU finished the season without a loss but still went into the NCAA tournament as an underdog, picked to lose in the opening rounds of the Midwest Regionals.

But, as if it was her choice this season, she guided the small Indiana school through the rough times and allowed the Sycamores and their fans to relish in the joy of advancing to the final four in Salt Lake City. While the nation watched, she took Indiana State from obscurity into the center

ring. My lady can show emotion.

But she can also deliver the crushing blow to others' dreams. For the second-straight season she has dangled the prize before Arkansas' Sidney Moncrief's eyes, only to snatch away the dream at the last moment. Ironically, a member of her Indiana State team, Bob Heaton, hit the shot at the buzzer that bid goodbye to Moncrief and Arkansas, the last representative of the Southwest Conference.

The fickle lady smiled on the SWC this season, allowing four of its teams to play in her post-season tourna-

ments. But as if she was just teasing the conference, two of the teams were destroyed in the opening rounds — Texas by Oklahoma in the NCAA tournament and Texas Tech by Indiana in the NIT tournament.

But for the first time in three years basketball smiled on Texas A&M, allowing the Aggies to advance to the quarter-finals of the NIT tournament. But, as if to keep the Aggies hungry for more of her fruit, she let Texas A&M lose to Alabama and miss a trip to New York City and the finals.

It was her hand in the Aggie season that built my love for the climax. I was able to catch moods and actions as I watched Aggies roller coaster through the season.

Because of the teasing and stronger for her. I know the Monday night's NCAA final will say goodbye to my woman another year.

Absence may make the heart fonder, but it's going to be a summer without her.

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