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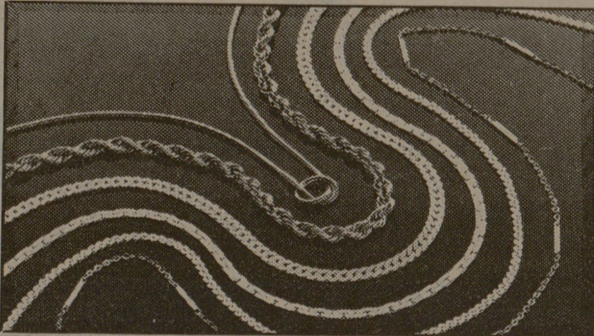
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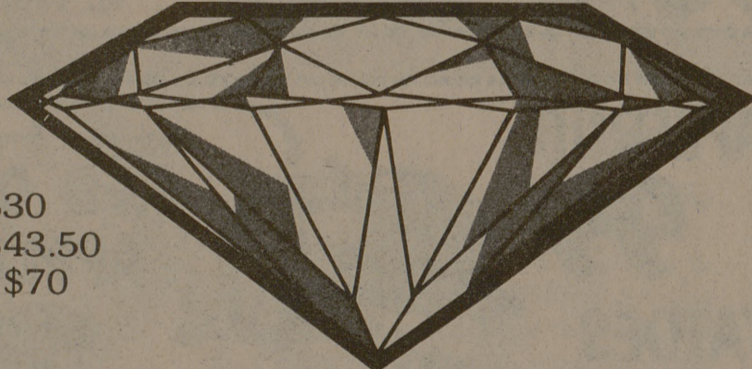
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the sports

Hall soaring higher

By DAVID BOGGAN
Battalion Sports Staff

Randy Hall's future is up in the air. As a matter of fact, so are his past and his present. Hall is a pole vaulter for the Texas Aggies, the defending Southwest Conference track champions.

In 1978, Hall used his pole vaulting skills to aid the Texas A&M track team in its victory of the Southwest Conference championship. This year, the sophomore from Port Lavaca hopes that his performance can once again lead to an Aggie victory at the SWC meet. And Hall envisions a trip to Moscow in 1980.

"Everybody out here dreams of going to the Olympics," Hall said as rain clouds threatened his Tuesday afternoon practice session. "It is the ultimate thing to do."

Hall, who last week set a personal record and a meet record at the Drake Relays with a vault of 17-5 1/2, figures that it will take a vault of at least 18-6 to even qualify for the U.S. Olympic team. But, according to Hall, his first 18-foot vault is "right around the corner."

"I don't think 18 is very far away," he said. "Even in high school I think I was capable of 18. It's just a matter of technique and psych jobs and everything else. My biggest barrier was getting over the 17-foot mark."

Hall cleared 16-10 while vaulting for Calhoun High in Port Lavaca, but he did not pass the 17-foot mark until last summer. Ironically, that vault, made in Bloomington, Ill., qualified him to compete with the AAU junior team — in Russia.

"I can't believe they're having the Olympics in Moscow; it's so terrible," Hall said. "They are technically so far in the past. Their airports are bad. Their hotels are bad."

Hall said that he feels the Russian government, which pays its athletes to train for the Olympics, will do almost anything to gain an advantage in competition.

"They intentionally kept us away from the (Olympic) stadium so we wouldn't know what it's like," he said. "And I'm sure all their athletes work out on the (stadium) track."

"Their athletes train year-round, eight hours a day, just like a man over here who has a job. That's another advantage for them. The American athlete can't train because it costs so much money."

This summer, Hall will participate in the AAU senior meet, another stepping stone towards the Olympics.

"If I can finish in the top six (in the AAU senior meet), I'll be ready for the trials in '80," Hall said. "The



Randy Hall, who broke the SWC pole vault record last year with a vault of 16-feet 10-inches, has already cleared several times this year and has his sights set on breaking his own record this year.

Olympics would be such an accomplishment. Once you've made it, everyone knows how much you've worked."

Assistant track coach Ted Nelson knows how hard Hall has worked and he says that Randy's Olympic dreams can be fulfilled.

"He's got a good shot," Nelson said. "He's an up and coming young jumper. And he's hitting it at just the right time. It will be his junior year. He'll still be in school and he'll still have a good team concept."

But the Olympics are in the future. Hall's present concern is the SWC meet which takes place in Austin May 11-12.

"I think we'll win, but it won't be by as big a margin as last year," Hall

said. The Aggies won't be out of that way. Everybody's going to win, in which Hall set a record with a vault of 16-10. Last year, the upper as well as told us early in the year that going to win conference was not as freshmen, we were serious. As the conference meet that required to win it. Even if people mess, held in C knew we could place enough a week, and get enough points to win, it's the players.

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Hall says Houston and the major challengers to the championship. In the past through event, Hall says the Coach challenge him the most.

This will be the best vault that the conference has seen," said Hall, who won the SWC indoor competition vault of 16-4. Houston Dames, who beat Hall at the Olympics in March, and as well as Texas A&M team to come to Ruchle will provide the match with pressure, he said.

"I'll go into the meet just to win," Hall said. "The only season, I can get is first place. I can't underestimate anyone else. going to take at least a 17-foot senior win."

Hall, who started pole vaulting in junior high, was coached by his father, Charles, in high school. "My dad was a vaulter, and he helped me get into the sport," Hall said. "I still call him on the phone before meets to get some words, finish and get psyched up and get tips."

In that case, Coach Hall surely like nothing better than to lect call from Moscow in 1980.

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