

sports

Gymnasts competing on pride

Texas A&M Men's Gymnastics team is headed in new directions this year. Or at least that's what team members want.

"We are going to blow the top off gymnastics," team member Mark Hartwell said. "This is a rebirth of gymnastics at A&M."

The team members said they will put on an exhibition this semester and also hope to have more home meets.

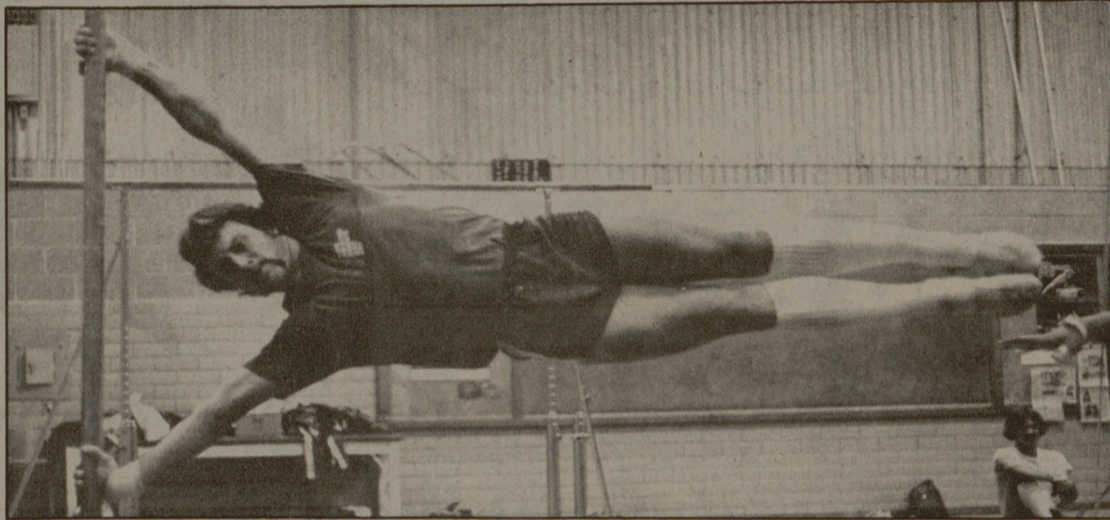
Hartwell, who was on the University of Texas gymnastics team for several years, said the A&M team has a lot of talent this year. He said several team members are good enough to be on gymnastic scholarships at other institutions with a varsity men's gymnastics team.

Texas A&M does not give the men's gymnastics team varsity status, but recognizes them as a club. The women's team, however, is given varsity status.

The men said they have no hard feelings about not being recognized as a varsity team. They said they feel they will be given varsity status eventually.

One team member said the team is not interested in publicity or promotion, but gymnastics and true competition with other teams.

Hartwell said the Texas Collegiate Gymnastics Club Conference was formed this year so that non-varsity Texas teams could compete with each other.



Mark Hartwell demonstrates a good gymnast's superior strength and body control, as he performs a human flag. Hartwell is a graduate

student from Austin and a member of the Texas A&M Gymnastic Team.

Photo by Roxanne Smith

Teams in the conference include The University of Texas at Arlington, Southwest Texas State University, North Texas State University, The University of Texas at Austin and Texas A&M University.

"According to new NCAA rules established last year a team cannot compete on an NCAA docket unless they are varsity funded," Hartwell said. "It is formal competition

although it is below the level of the NCAA."

The team members feel they improve mainly by competing and workouts are essential. The team works out five nights a week and Saturday mornings.

Team president Pat Callihan said the team also sponsors a coed gymnastics club.

"We provide the supervision that the university requires," he said.

"That provides a great service to the university."

Callihan said an example of the upswing of gymnastics at Texas A&M is the increase in enrollment in the coed club this year compared to enrollment last year.

"Last year membership topped out at 20 people," he said. "This first semester we had over 105 people come by the gym to work out at various times and sign up in the club."

Game tickets available

Wally Groff, Texas A&M Athletic Department Business Manager announced today that reserved seat tickets are available here for the Saturday basketball game between A&M and Texas in Austin.

That game is set for 2:40 p.m. at the University of Texas Special Events Center — "The Drum".

Tickets are available on a limited basis for \$5 each and can be purchased at the ticket windows at G. Rollie White Coliseum.

—Tony Gallucci

Britton among West seniors nominated for Hut game

WICHITA, KAN. — Kevin McHale, a rugged and versatile center for Minnesota, and Ronnie Lester, Iowa's textbook point guard and A&M's David Britton are among the seniors whose names appear on the ballot for the 1980 Pizza Hut Basketball Classic as West squad candidates.

The charity event will be played March 29 and will be nationally televised from Las Vegas on CBS Sports Spectacular. Players in the contest are determined by popular vote with balloting at participating Pizza Hut restaurants beginning January 21 and ending March 5.

The names of the top 124 seniors, as determined by an 11-member media panel, are listed on the ballot. The top eight vote-getters on each squad automatically receive invitations to play in the game.

McHale was the starting center on the United States team which captured the gold medal at last summer's Pan American Games. Lester, who averaged 19 points per game and helped lead Iowa to a share of

the Big Ten Conference title last season, also was a member of that team.

While McHale is an extraordinary outside shooter for a man 6-11, at least two others on the West side of the ballot can make the same claim. Brand Branson, a 6-10 forward for SMU, averaged 16.8 points and 10 rebounds per game and McNeese State's 6-11 David Lawrence, who is agile and a good ball handler, as well, averaged 22.4 points and 12.7 rebounds per game as a junior.

Two other West squad candidates who averaged more than 20 points and 10 rebounds per game while scoring on more than half their shots were Centenary's George Lett and Portland's Rick Raivio.

Andrew Toney of Southwestern Louisiana and Oklahoma City's Ernie Hill, both guards, are candidates who entered their senior season with career scoring averages of 20 points per game. Hill was seventh in the nation in scoring last season at 26.6 points per game and Toney 21st at 23.3. Also on the list is Texas A&M's Britton, a two-year starter.

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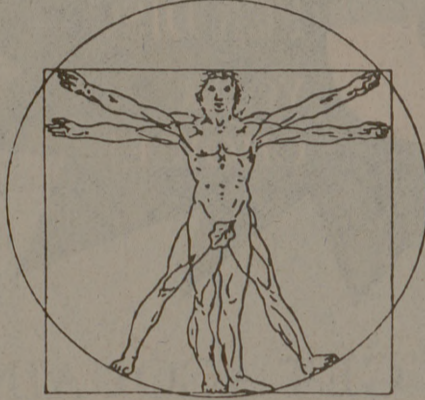
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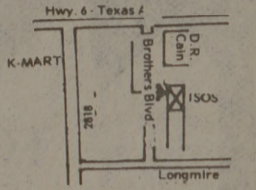
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