

Matson teaches son about track, winning

by RICHARD OLIVER
Sports Editor

Sometimes, late in the evening behind the Floral Test Gardens on the Texas A&M University campus, a tall, muscular man can be seen throwing a discus.

He walks slowly after the disc following each throw, and behind him a small boy watches silently. The man returns, and stoops to talk to him. He lifts a smaller discus from the ground and plants it in the youth's hand, and watches proudly as the boy twirls and hurls it as far as he can. The youngster turns and smiles.

Randy Matson hasn't aged much since he won the Olympic discus competition in 1968 at the Mexico City Games. His hair has a little gray, and he looks a bit more distinguished now. His competing days are over, but he still is involved with Texas A&M as the director of the Former Students Association.

Most of his days with the discus are now spent teaching his son Jim the mechanics of throwing. The sessions have paid off, and Jim is rapidly developing into a respectable trackster under his father's watching eye.

"I don't push him at all," the senior Matson said. "He plays basketball and soccer. He really enjoys soccer. He sometimes wants to play football, then baseball. It's a varying thing. He even plays piano, which is unusual for a Matson."

Jim, 9, competes in the shot put and the relay events in a track program for area youth run by A&M Consolidated Coach James Giese.

"The man (Giese) is incredibly patient with the kids," said Matson. "He's really got the patience. He stays cool and is able to help them. He's got mine runnin' 440-yard dashes. When I was that age, I wouldn't touch it."

Tuesday night, Matson took his son and six friends to Houston for a Junior Olympics qualifying track meet. Jim took first place in the shot put and ran on an 880-yard relay team that qualified for another meet July 1. The shot put victory also qualified Matson for next week's meet.

The top four finishers in each event in that meet will go on to compete in another meet later.

Matson said Jim hasn't had to live up to any reputation as yet.

"He doesn't notice it right now," he said. "He gets comments sometimes, I'm sure."

"He doesn't really care for competition right now. If he decided just to run, and not throw, I would be just as happy. He's a good boy. I don't

want him to get involved in it just because his dad was. That would be a hardship."

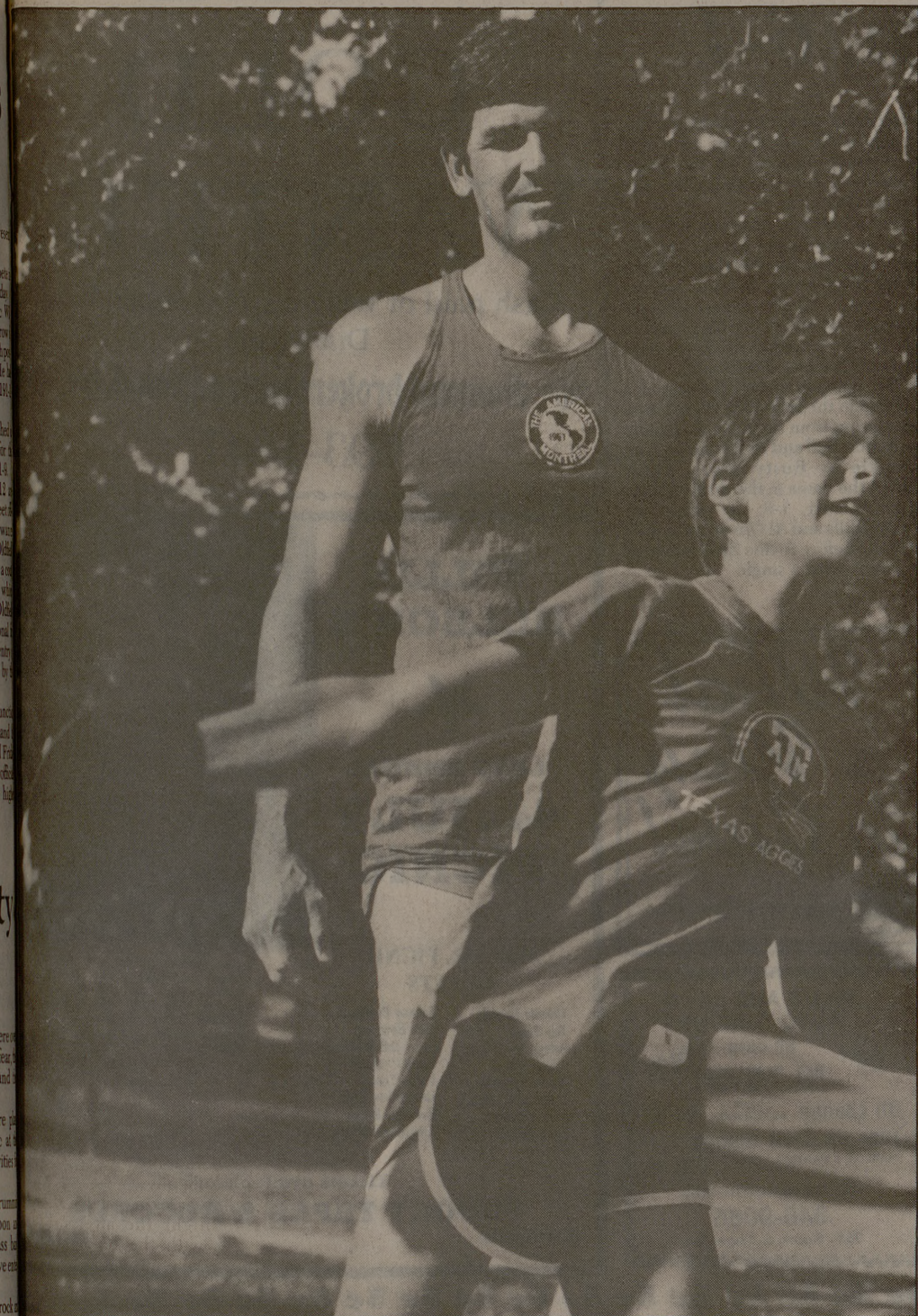
The younger Matson is happy his father shows the interest in him.

"He comes and watches," he said. "I really know how to do all this because he tells me."

Does he feel the pressure of being the son of an Olympic champion? "No, not really. It doesn't bother me ... yet."

For Randy Matson, the chore of raising three children is enough, and whatever they each decide to do is fine with him.

"I don't have any programs worked out," he said. "They have to learn to compete, improve and win. That's the key thing. Some of them are better, and some are not. Some of them could do well — it could be all of them, or not any of them."



Randy Matson watches his son Jim wind for a discus toss. Matson and son practice occasionally behind the Floral Test Gardens on the Texas A&M campus, and Matson teaches

his son the mechanics of throwing. The younger Matson is now doing well in the Junior Olympics program in College Station.

Staff Photo by Lee Roy Leschper Jr.

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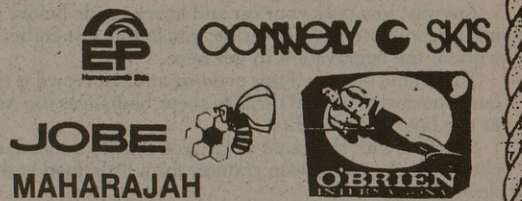
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Staubach helps win

ARLINGTON — The Texas Rangers, who have had trouble putting together a winning streak lately, and another team to lose to Wednesday night — the Dallas Cowboys.

The Rangers and Cowboys engaged in a slow-pitch softball game prior to Texas' meeting with the Dallas Cowboys, a contest that took place in 109-degree heat.

Although no one seemed to care that the final score might turn out to be the Cowboys won, 14-2.

Among those turning out for the Cowboys was ex-quarterback Roger Staubach, who scored the first Dallas touchdown and who made five catches as center fielder. He also rifled a throw from the outfield to third base to stop a Texas runner from moving up base.

As he ran off the field, Staubach rubbed his right shoulder and said: "I've got to save my arm for the next game."

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