

Rock Rider to fight evil on Rockboard

By CINDY GEE

Battalion Staff

Rock Rider, sporting pink goggles and a "spacey" helmet, flies around the world on his wheel-less skateboard smashing evil and promoting good, but it's not all that easy.

For every move Rock makes, every second Rock is brought to life, someone has to draw 12 pictures showing even the slightest movement Rock makes, transfer those drawings onto sheets of acetate, retrace the drawing with black ink, color it and finally film it.

It's a tedious and timely process — for every one second of film, at least 1,800 more are spent producing it. Even though there can be a lot of money in making animated films, not too many people pursue it.

But Eric Schulte, an engineering design graphics major at Texas A&M University, decided he would. Schulte got the idea for the Rock Rider series "Midnight Virtues" from a picture he saw drawn by Jon Hennigan, a co-worker at Texas Transportation Institute.

The main character, Rock, is not related to Rock the Good Ag, but he does display an occasional gig 'em, as his creators are Aggies.

Hennigan said he's been drawing graphics for quit some time, but he said when Schulte showed him how his pictures could move, that got him hooked. He said with science fiction animation there are really no limits.

"You can put that character any where you want, and make him look any way you want," he said. "If you want him to have one leg instead of two, it's fine."

Schulte and Hennigan work with a handful of other people on Monday and Thursday nights, completing about two seconds of film a week. The film will eventually evolve into a 10 to 15 minute series. Schulte is funding the project himself and is doing it mainly for the exposure, experience and money. He and Hennigan hope to sell the film upon completion to Home Box Office, which pays \$1000 a minute.



Anyone interested in learning about animated film production and who wants to lend a hand in helping Rock spread his message — converting people over to the good side — is welcome to help out on Mon-

day and Thursday nights in 304 Old Engineering Building.

"We'll take anybody that can hold a brush and won't mess up too much," Hennigan said. "We'll even put their name on our credit list."

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