

# Outdoors

By John Humbert

## Time is ripe for fishing

This is the first in a series of outdoor articles by John Humbert which will appear in The Battalion sports pages once a week. Humbert is a sophomore bioengineering major at Texas A&M University.

Spring is in the air and so should be your spinnerbaits, all you bass fisherman. With the past few days of warm weather, the water temperature in ponds and smaller lakes in the area has risen enough to trigger the bass into their spawning urges. So put away your Remingtons and Brownings and dig deep into your closets for your Ambassadeurs, Fenwicks and other fishing tackle.

My fishing buddy, Dale Kornegay, and I decided to check out some local lakes and ponds to see if the action has started. I like fishing with Dale even though his driving down county roads resembles the pilot for Dukes of Hazzard. However, as soon as someone prys my hands off the dashboard and door, I'm usually ready to do some serious fishing.

We chose a small lake between Brenham and College Station to start our latest adventure. The lake's real name is Lake Langly, but after closer inspection it could be more aptly named Lake Weedy Scum.

Literally hundreds of ponds can be found within 20 minutes of the Bryan-College Station area. In fact, most anybody can recall passing a few the last time they drove one of the many county roads that lead off the highways. The best way to find your own secret pond is to invest a tank of gas and go driving. This can be done with your wife or girlfriend under the pretense of a Sunday afternoon drive.

When you pass a promising-looking pond, jot down its location and find out who the landowner is. Next, pay a visit to the landowner to secure his permission to fish. One may have to "hunker" with the farmer or rancher awhile. By "hunker" I mean offer to help around his place in exchange for fishing privileges. Most landowners are good-natured and will welcome help and friendship if you respect them, their fences and their livestock. You might want to bring along an extra rod for him and offer some cleaned fish afterward. By observing this protocol, you not only discover a year-round fishing hole but a new friend as well.

Meanwhile, back at Lake Weedy Scum, we started throwing small spinnerbaits and topwaters. Not only are these baits excellent for small bodies of water this time of year, but they are great for working the water around heavy weed patches.

The first cast of the day produced a small bass from the edge of a large weedbed. It is an unwritten rule with Dale that if you catch a fish on the first cast of the day, fishing will be lousy the rest of the day. Thus, he was ready to call it quits and move on to the next pond.

I disagreed, partly because I thought he was being a bit hasty, and partly because my knuckles and nerves were still raw from our drive down Washington County Road No. 29. As the morning progressed, however, Dale's Fishin' Rule No. 1 was holding true. We caught about a dozen more small bass and drew several more missed strikes before deciding that the big bass had not yet moved into the shallows in this lake.

This brings up an important concept in pond fishing. While at one pond the fish may not cooperate, often at the next pond a few acres away, the fish may be waiting in line to strike your bait.

After our conclusions about Lake Weedy Scum were reached, I loaded the rods in the trunk, donned my cash helmet and away we went, bouncing off fence posts and mailboxes.

Our next stop was a little-known cove on Lake Somerville; in fact, it is so little known that it is not even on the map. I had caught some nice largemouths last March (yes, Virginia, there are big bass in Somerville), and was hoping they had already moved into the shadows.

There are many coves at Somerville that are 4-5 feet deep with a lot of standing timber in them. These coves produce a good number of big bass in the four to six pound range, mostly in late February through March.

Most of these fish fall to weedless spoons, white spinnerbaits and plastic worms. The best way to fish these coves is by wading, throwing your lure far back between log jams and brushpiles. You won't catch the numbers but your stringer will be heavy all the same with large fish.

I would like to say we hit those big bass that day, but we didn't. Actually, the only excitement we had happened when we disturbed a sleeping snake on a floating log. From the way Dale was laughing, you'd think he had never seen a four-foot water moccasin chase a wade fisherman, hip deep in water, around a cove.

# McMullen weathers Astro storm



United Press International  
HOUSTON — Houston Astros principal owner John McMullen admits he was battered by criticism during controversy over his firing of General Manager Tal Smith in October, but as training camp begins he is in control and Smith is looking for a job.

McMullen's determination, which saw him through the storm, appears steadfast.

"There's no question I've been battered a little bit," he said. "But I must say that through it all, I've been dedicated to this team. I'm consumed with the idea that I want to make it the best team in baseball."

The Smith controversy finally has died out, but not before it deeply hurt McMullen, 61, his close associates say.

He learned from a corporate coup by 20 minority owners in November that he did not run the ballclub in a vacuum, insulated from them and from millions of fans feeling heavy due to a taste of high baseball drama in October.

Filing of papers transforming the team's umbrella organization into a corporation, with McMullen as one of three equal directors, was only days away, he said, as he spoke Tuesday by phone from his Manhattan office.

"There's nothing impeding the corporation. It (controversy) lasted longer than I had expected,

I must admit. I'm happy to say we are heading into a season in good shape," he said.

"As you know, there are many elements to a championship team. There's an element of luck in it. There's an element of team morale. I tried to keep the players away from it, and I succeeded. I take credit for that."

In Cocoa, Fla., where the Astros trained, the gregarious, gravel-voiced executive committee man, as he is titled now, happily greeted players who almost to a man stayed out of the Smith brouhaha which broke October 27, two weeks after the Astros had lost a fifth and deciding game in the National League Championship Series to the Philadelphia Phillies.

Almost to a man. Starting pitcher Ken Forsch believed it was unjust to fire Smith, a man who brought the team with Manager

Bill Virdon from last place to first in five years. Forsch has been on the trading block since, and he did not report to camp when the other pitchers did.

"The team is technically superior to what it was in 1980," McMullen said. "It's capabilities are sound. We still have a few more moves to make before the season starts or soon after it starts."

Acquisitions of veteran pitchers Don Sutton from Los Angeles and Bob Knepper from San Francisco indicated McMullen's willingness to move ahead.

The Astros staff could be the best in baseball with the return of stoke-victim J.R. Richard.

He gave Richard and Richard's agent, Tom Reich, full credit for making the comeback and arriving at Cocoa the first day of training camp. Richard still must overcome some weakness caused by the stroke before he will play.

However, for McMullen and General Manager Al Rosen, the man who McMullen hired to replace Smith, there is no room for a collapse of a pitching staff or bad luck in 1981. Losses — for whatever reason — will resurrect Smith's ghost and cast dark shadows.

For now, though, there's five opponents in the National League West Division to contemplate.

"Los Angeles is always tough on us," McMullen said. "They've

been working very hard to improve. They'll always be there. Cincinnati still is making moves and has a reasonable amount of trading to do. Atlanta is awesome in their hitting. I don't know how they will do in their pitching. San Francisco will be better. San Diego has a couple of years to go."

McMullen is untrusting of the media because of what he considers to be their figurative hanging of him following Smith's firing. To better his communication with re-

porters, McMullen has hired A.R. Busse as his personal public relations consultant.

Before the Smith firing, the Astros were run by a partnership with McMullen as general partner. The limited partners, angered over lack of accountability by McMullen and moved to action by the firing, dissolved the partnership and forced a corporation to be formed with a three-man executive committee at the top.

## DON'T FORGET!!

Schmaltz's Special is Tonight

A SCHMALTZ — ICE TEA — CHIPS

Only **255** Reg. 3.25

After 5 p.m.

Culpepper Plaza 693-8276



OPEN:  
Mon.-Sat.  
8 a.m.-9 p.m.  
Sun.  
12-9 p.m.

Here's the difference between a bank's interest-bearing checking account and ours: Ours has a \$300 minimum balance. Theirs requires more (in some cases, much more).

MoneyStore was the first interest-bearing checking account in the Brazos Valley. And it's still the best. Look at these features:

- **\$300 Minimum Balance** (not \$500, \$600, \$700, \$1,000 or \$1,200). You pay no service charges at Brazos Savings if you maintain only a \$300 minimum balance.

- **Maximum Interest — Regardless of Balance.** MoneyStore pays you 5¼% interest, compounded continuously, on your balance (an effective annual yield of 5.47%). Even if your balance drops below \$300, you earn maximum interest on your funds.

- **Telephone Bill Paying at No Extra Cost.** With your authorization, MoneyStore will pay some of your bills direct. Just call us, tell us who to pay, how much and when. Keep your funds earning interest until you need to pay your bills. (On telephone bill paying, we pay the postage. If we miss a due date through our error, we pay the late fee.)

- **Overdraft Protection.** Brazos Savings has automatic overdraft protection for qualifying MoneyStore customers. And it costs you nothing — until you use it.

It's easy to open a MoneyStore checking account. And we'll pay you to use it.



COLLEGE STATION: Texas Ave. at Southwest Parkway / 696-2800

Main Office: 2800 Texas Avenue/Bryan / 779-2800

## Owls tie with Lamar

United Press International  
HOUSTON — Frank Dishong belted three doubles and drove in two runs Sunday to lead Rice to a 15-2 win over Mary Hardin-Baylor and give the Owls a tie with Lamar for the championship of the

Cameron Foundation tournament.

Both Rice and Lamar ended the round-robin tournament with 2-1 records. Lamar lost to Rice, 2-0, Saturday.

## DermaCulture

SKIN CARE FOR MEN AND WOMEN

1st Anniversary on Tuesday, March 3

½ off March 2-6  
All Moisturizers  
Eye Shadows  
Eye Pencils  
Lipsticks  
Blushes

Drawing Friday, March 6  
You may win 5 treatments valued at \$100  
Be sure to sign up March 2-6

707 Shopping Village 693-5909

photo by Greg Gamm  
point, 78-77, who  
back in the last  
vs TCU tonight  
in the first round  
tournament.  
ns;  
7-2  
owd was the worst  
30 years of hit  
zed tennis," said  
n Cannon.  
ke matters were  
d for about an hour  
for the police in  
the rough treat  
retained their com  
ndly whipped the  
iliana Fernandez  
ser 6-4, 6-1; Pan  
acon 6-7, 6-4, 24  
n lost to Rhoads  
Amy Cross beat  
6-1, 6-1; Soup  
efeated Melissa  
and Laura Hana  
6-3, 7-5.  
Hutcherson-Hill  
Tacon 5-7, 7-5, 6  
beat Lewis-Hill  
ernandez-Hoon  
Riley 1-6, 7-5, 7  
atch was a little  
s the Lamar team  
standing with the  
the theft caused  
re so delayed  
ston, I called the  
I asked if we could  
h," said Cannon  
urday: Fernandez  
ttos 7-5, 5-7, 3-6  
Holm 6-1, 6-3;  
Christina Ortega  
loss beat Monica  
Hutcherson-Hill  
son 6-0, 6-2 and  
ina Moriera 3-6  
lts: Hutcherson-  
el-Mattos 6-2, 6-  
anna beat Hollis  
-2 and Hootner  
eated Ericson  
the Ags season  
The team's next  
at the Brigham  
ity Invitational  
rovo, Utah. The  
ament has seven  
opponents with  
lone exception  
gar box  
77) — Drexler 1  
2, 3-5, 7, Brown 1  
1, 7-8, 29, Young 9  
1-2, 1, E. Davis 1  
0-4, Bunce 12-3  
Totals 30 17-23  
(78) — Smith 6  
-9, 22, Riley 5-4  
0 16, Woodley 4-1  
1 4, McDaniel 6-  
22-35, 78.  
Texas A&M 46  
al fouls — How  
M 21. Fouled out  
Brown, Smith,  
cals — Houston  
uston coach Kirk  
9.