

Coogs, Razorbacks meet in key SWC matchup

United Press International
The teams that were supposed to be the top dogs in the Southwest Conference this season, finding themselves standing third and fourth at this stage of the race, meet for the first time Saturday in Fayetteville.

Houston and Arkansas will compete before a regional television audience, with both teams needing a victory to stay within viewing distance of the league-leading Texas Longhorns. Houston coach Guy Lewis said he planned to start 7-foot Nigerian Akeem Olajuwon for the first time in a SWC game.

If history has anything to say about it, the winner will be Arkansas since the Cougars have never won in Fayetteville. Houston suffered its worst loss in history six years ago in Fayetteville, falling to the Razorbacks, 92-47.

Their confrontation will

highlight the day's schedule, which includes an intersectional contest between the unbeaten and fifth-ranked Texas Longhorns and South Carolina.

The rest of the conference schedule has TCU (2-3) meeting SMU (1-4) in a daytime game, Baylor (2-2) going to Texas Tech (2-4) and Texas A&M (3-1) and alone in second place) visiting Rice (1-3).

Lewis said he planned to start Olajuwon, who has started in two non-conference contests previously, in a plan to go with the biggest lineup possible.

"I'm gonna play Akeem, win or lose now. We may lose some now but down the road it will help us win," Lewis said.

Olajuwon will replace guard Lynden Rose, and the change will mean forward Michael Young will play at a guard position.

Lewis also revamped his basic

zone defense for the game with Razorbacks, moving 6-6 forward Clyde Drexler to the middle position on the back line into a spot Olajuwon and Larry Micheaux have been occupying.

Lewis said the change on defense will give the Cougars more

movement in the middle. Both Arkansas and Houston have suffered two consecutive losses — both of the Cougars.

setbacks coming at home, both of these clubs lost last week.

Soccer

A&M recruiting for fall

by Frank L. Christlieb

Sports Editor

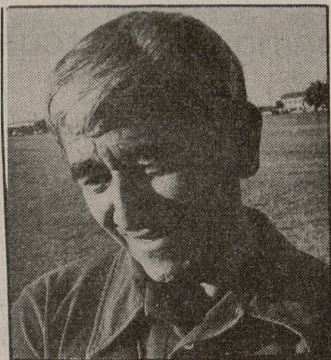
Coach Telmo Franco of the Texas A&M men's soccer team hasn't wasted any time since his squad finished its fall season Nov. 14 with a 5-1 defeat of the Rice Owls.

Franco spent the holiday break recruiting players for next season's team, which begins play in the fall. NCAA soccer regulations, which Franco said are stricter than those of other sports, prevent him from releasing any names of potential recruits. However, he expressed confidence about his chances of bringing several quality players to Texas A&M.

The Aggies, who finished the season with a 7-4-3 overall record and a second-place 4-0-3 Southwest Conference Soccer League record, were elevated Oct. 5 from extramural club status to the varsity level. Since that time, Franco has traveled to different parts of the state to look at soccer players whom he'd like to have on his team.

Franco took one of his major recruiting trips Dec. 28-Dec. 30 when he attended the Dallas Cotton Cup, an event which each year attracts over 200 of the top high school soccer players in Texas. Coaches from around the nation come to coach the athletes, who are divided into 16 teams of about 14 members apiece.

Franco said that nearly every college coach in the state has his eyes on about 10 players who attended the event, and that Texas A&M has been in contact



Telmo Franco

with most of them. Neither the men's team or the Texas A&M women's team, coached by Jim Butts, will be able to award scholarships to their players, but that doesn't worry Franco.

"We have been very fortunate to get commitments from all the top players," Franco said. "We are very optimistic about the future. Most of those kids I've known since they were eight years old. We're never sure (of whether they'll play here) until we get them to start school, but we're very optimistic."

Franco said the method of choosing the team will have to be different next year, since there will be a select group of players involved. When tryouts are held two weeks before the start of the fall semester, Franco expects to have about 30 athletes in attendance.

"If (a player) comes, he will

have to go through the process of selection," Franco said. "Right now, we cannot offer any scholarships because we don't have any. I'm waiting for the administration to tell me if we can have them."

"I think the players will still have incentive to come to A&M if they know it's a good school and a good soccer program. If anyone asks, I tell them that if we have any scholarships, it may be later, but right now, we just don't have (them)."

Franco said the recruiting trips he and assistant coach David Flentge have taken have been successful.

"Some of the very top blue chips we already have because I know the parents and I've known the players for a long time," Franco said. "We might lose some of those super kids (without the scholarships), but if we have any scholarships available from the administration, it will be a big help. That probably will be a turning point."

Franco said he has confined most of his recruiting to Texas, where Dallas is the major source of soccer players.

"One of the reasons I haven't been able to recruit out-of-state is because we don't have that much to offer," Franco said. "If in the future, we have scholarships to offer, we may have a better chance to get players from out of Texas."

This week, Franco is attending an NCAA soccer meeting, at which the Aggies' fall schedule will be arranged.

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