

A&M hockey club ready

By Tom Dobrez
Battalion Reporter

In Texas, there are easier things to do than start an ice hockey team.

The Texas A&M Ice Hockey Club opens its inaugural season in New Orleans Oct. 30 against the Tulane Waves but by then the hardest part will be over.

Playing Texas A&M's newest club sport requires a little more than showing up at the team meeting every week.

Besides being a student, you must know how to ice skate, own some expensive equipment, and be willing to travel and travel some more.

Perhaps, the hardest obstacle to overcome is finding a place to play.

Originally, plans called for the team to practice and play all their "home" games in Houston at the Sharpstown Ice Arena. But disaster struck just two days

before the Ice-Ags first practice. A lightning bolt struck a generator on top of the rink, melting the ice and a few of the player's hopes.

"It would have been easy for these guys to just pack up their equipment and give up all hope for hockey at A&M. But they just love the sport too much to let it die like that," says Aggie head coach James Johns.

The search for a new rink lead them to Austin.

One-hundred and ten miles away from campus, the hockey team had a place to practice — for now. Northcross Mall provides an ample rink for practice, but scheduling conflicts and rink size may force the Ice-Ags to travel to Dallas — for a "home game."

But few of the players are discouraged now.

"We have come this far, and after last weekend's practice

most players are impressed with the team and our coach," Todd Steinweg, the club's vice-president, said.

The coach was instructed as a player by Gordie Howe, one of the sport's greatest players. Johns skated for a year with a Detroit Red Wings farm team at Howe's recommendation.

Johns, a Houston resident, coaches the team because he loves hockey.

"I'm too old to play the game competitively anymore, so I figure I'll at least stay close to the game through coaching," says Johns, who makes the four hour trip from Houston to Austin for each practice.

The team has formally practiced together only twice and only one more practice is scheduled before they face-off in New Orleans.

"We are going to rely on the player's individual experiences on high school and men's league

teams," Steinweg said. "A high percentage of our players are from the North originally and have years of hockey experience."

Johns said the team is much improved over its first practice but stressed the need for consistent teamwork.

"The team will have to quickly learn how to function together," Johns said. "It takes time to learn how fast your teammate can skate or how good he can pass and time together is one thing these guys haven't had, unfortunately."

The team's first game will also be the first for the newly-formed Southwest Collegiate Hockey Association.

League plans had originally been drawn to include seven teams, but because of problems similar to those encountered by Texas A&M — along with a lack of interest — teams at the University of Houston, the Univer-

sity of Texas and Texas Tech University never were formed.

There are now four teams in the league.

Southern Methodist and North Texas State University join the Ice-Ags and Tulane as the pioneers in college ice hockey — Southwest-style.

Steinweg says the team is excited about the possibility of winning a conference championship, which would earn it a trip to the National Club Finals in Colorado — but for now players are just hoping there are enough cars available to make the trip to New Orleans.

Although the season is about to begin, Steinweg said the roster is by no means complete.

Interested hockey players may still join the club. There are 20 players on the team now but it has room for at least five more.

The club meets every Thursday in 221 Sterling C. Evans Library.

Custom Alterations

By Bea

Professional quality/reasonable rates
9:30-5:30 M-F — 9:30-1 Sat.
804 Villa Maria Rd., Bryan

779-1774

El Comal

MEXICAN RESTAURANT

HOURS
SUN. 10-3
MON. CLOSED
TUES.-THURS.
11-2:30, 5-9
FRI. 11-2:30, 5-10
SAT. 11-10

Serving wine, beer,
mixed drinks and the
best MARGARITAS!

*Serving fine Mexican Food
for your dining pleasure.*

775-6446

W. 25th St. @ N. Brazos
10 Blks. West of Downtown

Seahawks fire, replace coach

United Press International

SEATTLE — After seven years, Seattle Seahawks' Coach Jack Patera finally ran out of tomorrows.

Patera, 49, coached the young franchise from its inception, recording winning records in 1978 and 1979, but falling to 4-12 in 1980 and 6-10 last year.

Each year, the Seahawks promised improvement and each season Seattle fans packed the Kingdome. But after two big losses at the beginning of the 1982 season, the owners decided it was time for a change.

Elmer Nordstrom, representing the partners of the Seattle club, announced Wednesday Patera and General Manager John Thompson had been fired because of the team's lack of success.

Mike McCormack, director of football operations and past coach at Philadelphia and Baltimore, was named as interim head coach.

"We've been disappointed at our lack of progress on the football field the past years and that is the sole reason for the dismissal," said Nordstrom. "It became apparent in our early season performance things hadn't turned around."

Patera, reached by telephone at Queets on the Olympic Peninsula, had only one question for the owners: "Why now?"

Seahawk owners voted unanimously to fire both Patera and Thompson.

John Nordstrom, representing the owners, said Thompson was released because of his total influence over the team.

"John was the head man," he said. "We aren't the football experts and we relied on him. He was responsible for the program."

No general manager was named because the owners wanted to focus first on straightening out the team.

"The strikes gave us a chance to reflect on what's going on," said Nordstrom. "We're committed to producing a winning team."

McCormack, Baltimore's head coach for two years before coming to Seattle, was reluctant about taking over for the rest of the 1982 season.

GAMES Galore

**MIDNIGHT MADNESS
EVERY FRIDAY NIGHT**

Midnight — 2:00

8 TOKENS FOR \$1⁰⁰

Culpepper Plaza Only

Where do you
go for a quality
haircut?

ShearClass

505 University Drive
Suite 805
College Station
846-4771

MSC TOWN HALL

November 4, 8 p.m.

G. Rollie White

Tickets: 6⁵⁰, 6⁰⁰, 5⁵⁰

MSC Box Office 845-1234

Cheap Trick

Cheap Trick

Optional Pass Period
October 11-15
General Public
October 18

MSC TOWN HALL