UTSA's young athletic department sprinting to the front of pack

Antonio's athletic departand the men who are ng to shape the future of A athletics.

by John P. Lopez

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Battalion Staff
ANTONIO — Don head basketball coach at Iniversity of Texas at San nio, doesn't know much. He knows all about X's and on the basketball court — his onsecutive trips to the nal tournament while head ch at Eastern Illinois proves But Eddy doesn't know a team which didn't even old." basketball two years ago uldn't have a halftime lead inst the Arkansas Razorks - especially on the Hogs' ne court.

le also doesn't know that his shouldn't be able to beat na, a team that lost to LA by only three points. And doesn't know that his wetnd-the-ears Roadrunners put 'Rank Huldn't barely lose at the buzsuch teams as Baylor, the ersity of Texas at El Paso igure oud Houston Baptist.

But Eddy's Roadrunners going to see done just that — in only good opponents.

En a whole ir second year of existence.

Eddy said next e feats become even more essive if financial and re-

t when talking to Eddy, gets the impression that nonal championship within against just about any team. ears. Tight budgets, sleep- "And we'll still have a tou ights, long practice sessions countless recruiting trips seem to bother the Roadners head man as he bubbles excitement and anticipaabout his team like the d father of a newborn in-

's note: This is the first of most of his players were not heavily recruited by Division I schools and he knows that there isn't a lot of depth on his roster, but the Roadrunners are getting better every time they step onto the hardwood. And that's exact-

ly what he wants. "I think we're right on schedule," Eddy said, in an interview that took place on the UTSA campus. "You always dream and hope for miracles, but you'd just astound the athletic world if you beat a big school.

"I think realistically we're in pretty good shape because we're able to play just about any team in the country right down to the wire. That's a great accomplishment for a team barely two years

Eddy said the foundation for a winning team has already been

'We are already a big-league defensive team," he said. "Right now we can play defense as well as anybody in the country — whether it be Kentucky or UCLA — we can horse 'em defensively. But our offense is not like that. It's not as developed.

"I don't put a lot of stock in numbers, but I think that if we're anywhere close to .500 this year we'll be right on schedule, because we're playing a lot of

Eddy said next year just might be the Roadrunners time to come of age, even though it will ng limitations are taken only be their third season.

'I honestly feel that next year we'll be truly competitive. I don't know what we'll yield recordin the world can keep the wise, but we'll be able to walk out unners from winning a on the court and have a chance

"And we'll still have a tough schedule. It might even be tougher than what we have this year. We'll play just about every at Eastern Illinois, and he came team we're going to play this year (Arkansas, Baylor, Texas Tech, TCU and UTEP, among others) and also play USC and Cal-Fullerton. And the year afddy, however, isn't living in ter that we're going to play in the "I think everyone needs a constant challenge professional-



staff photo by John P. Lopez

Don Eddy, head coach of the UTSA Roadrunners, talks to his team during a timeout in a game against the University of Texas at El Paso. Eddy

always a tough tournament."
Whether or not Eddy's confi-

dence does yield better results

for UTSA in the future, the

Roadrunner head coach gave up

play basketball.

and athletic director Rudy Davalos have built UTSA's program from the ground up, and both are pleased and excited about UTSA's athletic progress.

doing well and we were an established program.

And also it (coming to wanted to move my family into a when there are many other

ly," he said, "and the challenge was gradually eluding me up at to do something that very few people have had the chance to Eastern Illinois because we were do. We're building from absolute scratch. And of course I

nice climate in a metropolitan area. I never dreamed I would live in Texas but it so happens that I got to come to the nicest part. I've been all over the coun-try and to me this is it. San Antonio is the best.

Eddy has other reasons for

liking San Antonio. 'When I first came down here to visit," Eddy said, "the road around the gym here was a dirt road. You look around at first and say, 'I don't know if I can sell this or not (to a recruit).' But when you examine the situation

you find a lot of good things.
"One is that San Antonio is the 10th largest city in the country and it did not have any major college athletics until the time we started playing. The (NBA San Antonio) Spurs were the only major-league team in the city. It was a major market that had not been saturated athletic-

"Also, it is a beautiful city to live in. The economics are great, the weather is great and potentially a recruit has a situation where he can have immediate career opportunities after he finishes playing basketball. San Antonio is a major metropolitan area with a lot of career oppor-tunities available for someone just out of college. At some places where you go to school, the community is a lot smaller which makes it difficult to stay

there after you're through." But before UTSA's players hit the real world, Eddy is concerned with his team's performance on the court. Recruiting an athlete that can perform both in dous progression on his part. class and under the hoop, He's a lot like all of us. He's not however, can be difficult. And it becomes especially difficult

established schools a prospective player can attend.

"The quality of your talent is the most important aspect and problem when trying to build a program," Eddy said. "It's diffi-cult to recruit at the level of some of the better teams in the country. Our first year, the players we recruited were considered to be Division II-type players. We really didn't have anybody on the team that was recruited heavily by Division I schools. But this year we improved significantly in the com-

petitive market for recruits. "What we do is try to recruit athletes that have a lot of improvement potential. There are some players that come out of high school that are pretty close to their peak. So we've spent a lot of time trying to get the athletes that are good to start with, but at the same time are going to get better. I like coachable, physically talented athletes that might have their basketball talent partially latent.'

One of the better players that Eddy and his staff have landed in the Roadrunner fold is Derrick Gervin, a 6-8 forward from Detroit, Mich. Gervin was recruited by such teams as DePaul, Michigan and Texas and is the younger brother of four-time NBA scoring champion George Gervin.

"Derrick Gervin has done well and is going to be a fine player," Eddy said, "but he is still not anywhere near his brother. But from the time we recruited him to now there has been a tremenwhere he wants to be yet, but he's a lot further than he used to

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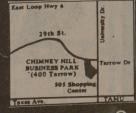
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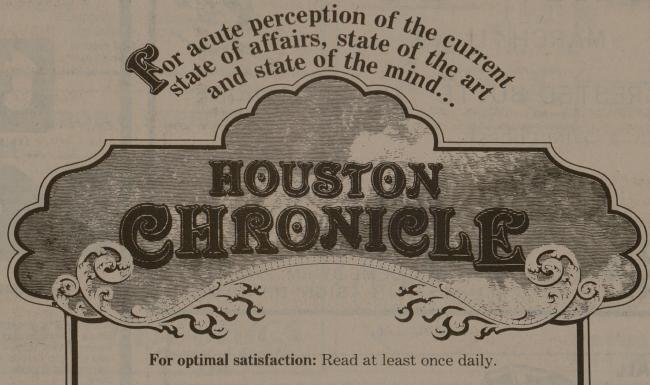
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