

Track

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Charlie Thomas' Aggies competing in Sooner Relays

also have improved over the year. The return of Mike Glaspie and Chappelle Henderson has given the Aggies a positive outlook. Glaspie, a senior, was the event in the Sooner Relays last year and Henderson was the event in the finals in the indoor meet last year before pulling a muscle.

Thomas praised his team's efforts this year. Despite the outbreak of bad weather, he said it's been better overall than last year, so the team would be in better shape for this weekend's meet.

He said some of the other teams participating in the Sooner Relays have already entered a meet this season and could have an edge on the Aggies. But he's not really concerned about the outcome this time around. The first track meet is usually held in the first week of the year.

just to enter everybody and get them to do some indoor running and give them competition," Thomas said.

Competition will be tough in the SWC this spring, Thomas said, with Arkansas the likely favorite. SMU and Texas should

also finish high.

But while Thomas is overloading the bus this weekend, women's coach Bill Nix is hoping big things can come in small packages.

"We only have 12 girls on the team right now," Nix said. "And we're only running eight girls this weekend."

The fourth-year coach said he's not concerned about his team being small in numbers. Nix favors quality over quantity. Although having only 12 members probably means the Aggie Ladies won't score enough points to finish higher than third in the Southwest Conference meets, a talented few could mathematically earn Texas A&M an NCAA championship.

As a matter of fact, capturing third place in the SWC is Nix's goal for his team, he said.

Nix's emphasis isn't on team victories in small tournaments. Instead, his sights are on outstanding individual performances that will give Texas A&M points in the big ones like the

NCAA meets. Each first place finisher earns 10 points for her team in that meet.

Three of the eight competing this weekend will be high hurdles. Sophomore Chanda Phillips, junior Pam Biesenbach and junior Deanie Palmer make up a fourth of Nix's roster, but they'll be entered in the same event this weekend.

For the 60-yard dash, Nix will use sophomore Novaita Samuels, who last spring finished second in the 200-meter dash and third in the 100-meter dash at the AIAW national meet. She was an all-America last season, and Nix said she'll also compete in the 300-meter dash in this weekend's meet.

Nix is also looking for some positive output in the 600-yard run from junior Jana Graves, who last year posted the nation's 12th fastest time indoors in that race.

In the 880-yard dash and the mile run, Nix will depend on junior Suzanne Sheffield. The coach also will be de-

pending on a lot of youngsters to come through this spring, he said. He'll have a chance to test freshman Debbie Noel in the mile and freshman Paula Odom in the 2-mile race. Despite their youth, the coach said he'll be looking for team leadership from veterans like Sheffield, Graves, Samuels and Phillips.

"Those four will probably end up being the big guns on the team. They have the biggest opportunities for qualifying for the NCAA championships indoors," Nix said.

Nix said his team won't participate in field events. He's out for top-notch performance in the running events. He's the Aggie Ladies' lone mentor, and he said splitting his time between track and field could lower his team's chances of success in either category.

"I don't have an assistant coach, and it's very difficult to coach everything and do a good job at it," Nix said. "So we're going to do one thing right, and that's run well."

Men's, women's swim teams 'meet' LSU

The Aggie men's and women's swimming teams will meet LSU tonight at Baton Rouge and against Texas Tech and Northeast Louisiana Jan. 29 at 11 a.m.

Both the men's and women's squads will swim against Rice in Houston on Tuesday at 6 p.m., and both will compete against Texas Tech and Northeast Louisiana Jan. 29 at 11 a.m.

1:51.70.

Two Texas A&M relay teams are ranked in the top 12. The 400-yard medley relay, which includes Kevin Londrigan, Mark Viminitz, Chris O'Neil and Peter Gatchell, is ranked 10th with a time of 3:26.37. The 400-yard freestyle relay team (John Heldenfels, Clark McDonald, Peter Gatchell and Craig Buchmann) is ranked No. 12 with a time of 3:06.74.

There are eight meets sche-

duled for both the men and women this spring, and the NCAA championships (in March) will be the ninth meet for those who qualify. The Southwest Conference cham-

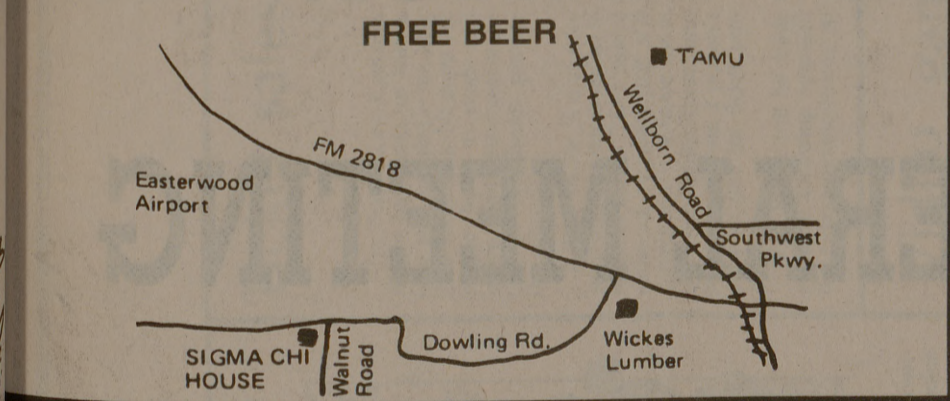
ampionship meets are Feb. 24-26 for the women, and March 3-5 for the men. Both the SWC championship meets will be held in Austin on the University of Texas campus.

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