

Spots still open on team

Equestrians to compete

by Cindy Lyons
Battalion Reporter

The Texas A&M Equestrian Team will compete in an intercollegiate championship competition hosted by Sweetbriar College in Sweetbriar, Va., April 23-24.

The competition will include modified combined training events of dressage, cross country jumping and stadium jumping. Each team is allowed four team members and an alternate rider.

Coaches Cindy McCall and Pat Moffitt began tryouts for the dressage phase Feb. 16, at Equestrian Park on U.S. Highway 60. Tryouts for the cross country phase were held at Pleasant Acres stables Feb. 19. Additional tryouts for stadium jumping are still being planned.

When the team is selected, McCall will begin training and enter team members in local competitions for experience.

McCall said she anticipates about 15 teams to compete in the championships. Last year's competition, hosted by Midland Community College of Kentucky, was won by the University of Virginia. McCall said she expects Virginia to be the toughest competitor again this year.

"Equestrian competitions such as these are growing increasingly more popular in Texas and in our area," McCall said. "Three-day events have always been strong in California, and highly competitive on the East Coast."

McCall said she doesn't think there'll be a large turnout from the West Coast in the championship competition because of the distance involved. The largest amount of competition is expected to be from the East Coast and in the Midwest.

The major contributor and sponsor of the team is currently

the Texas A&M Horsemen's Association, headed by Gary Potter, head of the horse section in the Department of Animal Science. The Affiliated National Riding Commission sponsors the Intercollegiate three-phase National Riding Competition.

The equestrian team is relatively young, going through its first competition in last year's intercollegiate three-phase riding event. Last year's team included Janet Marden, Brett Pillow, Moira Rankin, Christy Garland, and alternate Tammy Parker. Originally organized and coached by Susan Webb, the team did well in the competition, in spite of some accidents.

Of the three events, cross-country jumping is considered to be the most strenuous. It tests the endurance and athletic ability of the horse in outdoor terrain with natural jumps such as ditches, banks, fences, poles, and water. Cross-country jumping can cover a track as long as a mile and demonstrates the horse's temperament and control.

Stadium jumping is held in an arena with eight to 12 staged jumps (or fences) standing 3-foot-3-inches to 3-foot-6-inches.

Dressage is a quiet, formal judged event focusing on the development of the horse's learning and physical ability, McCall said. She said it makes a horse calm, supple, and confident. All three phases are a true show of how the horse and rider work together.



photo by Cindy Lyons

Texas A&M Equestrian Team member Christy Garland takes "Mr. Nicey" over an obstacle in a recent practice session. The Aggie equestrian team will travel to Virginia in April to take part in a meet. Some spots on the team are still open for grabs, equestrian coach Cindy McCall said.

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NCAA boss declares Walker eligible for college football

United Press International
HARTFORD, Conn. — Georgia running back Herschel Walker will be eligible to play college football next season, despite flirting with the United States Football League, NCAA president John Toner says.

Toner said Monday he is satisfied with the explanations given by Walker and Georgia football coach Vince Dooley denying that Walker signed a professional football contract.

"As far as I can determine, from what I've heard and read, Vince Dooley and Herschel Wal-

ker have each denied there was any contract signed," said Toner, the University of Connecticut athletic director. "It seems to me there is no story at this time."

A published report last week indicated Walker signed a contract with the New Jersey Generals of the United States Football League. However, the contract was said to have a 24-hour grace period during which Walker could change his mind. The report said he exercised the option.

Toner said it is up to member schools of the NCAA to enforce

the rules and regulations of the association. Georgia is aware of those regulations because of the interest shown by Walker's football talents in his freshman year, he said.

"This is the third time these two gentlemen have placed in this same situation," Toner said. "They know NCAA rules."

NCAA rules state that an amateur athlete can sign a professional contract or receive services of someone to act as his agent. An athlete, however, can have a lawyer advise him as a personal advisor, not as an agent.

The USFL, which will begin its first season on March 6, has players who have not signed their college eligibility, but are waiting for their representative to initiate the contract.

Toner said he sees no reason to enact legislation with the NCAA dealing specifically with the USFL. The NCAA would be hurt by the signing of college men if it began to happen, he said.

"College football has stood the test of time," Toner said. "Even if that (university men signings) happens, who's to say it can't happen? We've had a negative impact on the sport of college football."

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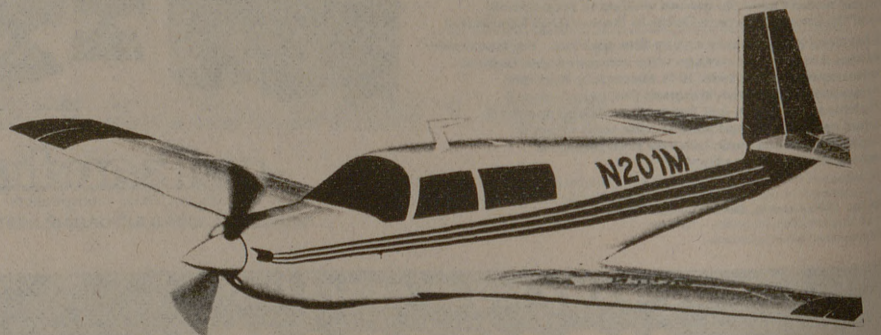
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