

The Battalion Sports

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A&M swimmers at USS meet

Nash takes group of 18

by Tracy Johnston
Battalion Reporter

The Texas A&M men's and women's swimming teams will compete at the United States Swimming Championships in Indianapolis, Ind., today through Saturday.

Six women and 12 men will swim for the Aggies in their final competition of the season. Head coach Mel Nash says he's pleased to bring such a large group to the championships.

"During my first couple of years at A&M," Nash said, "we only had one or two swimmers qualify for the nationals. Last year we had nine and this year we have 18 swimmers that qualified for the meet."

"This is my fourth year as head coach and for the first time, all of the swimmers on the team were recruited by me. It seems to be fitting into my 10-year game plan very well."

Many of the Aggies will be competing in their first national meet but Nash says that they should do well regardless of inexperience.

"For as young of a team as we are, I am very pleased to have qualified so many for the meet."

"This is the first taste of national swimming for a lot of them, but I'm looking for some good performances and we should be able to score some points."

The preliminaries will be held in the mornings. The fastest 16 swimmers will advance to the finals, which will be held at night. Only the top 16 finishers score points.

Several of the Aggies competed in the NCAA swimming championships two weeks ago, which featured the best collegi-

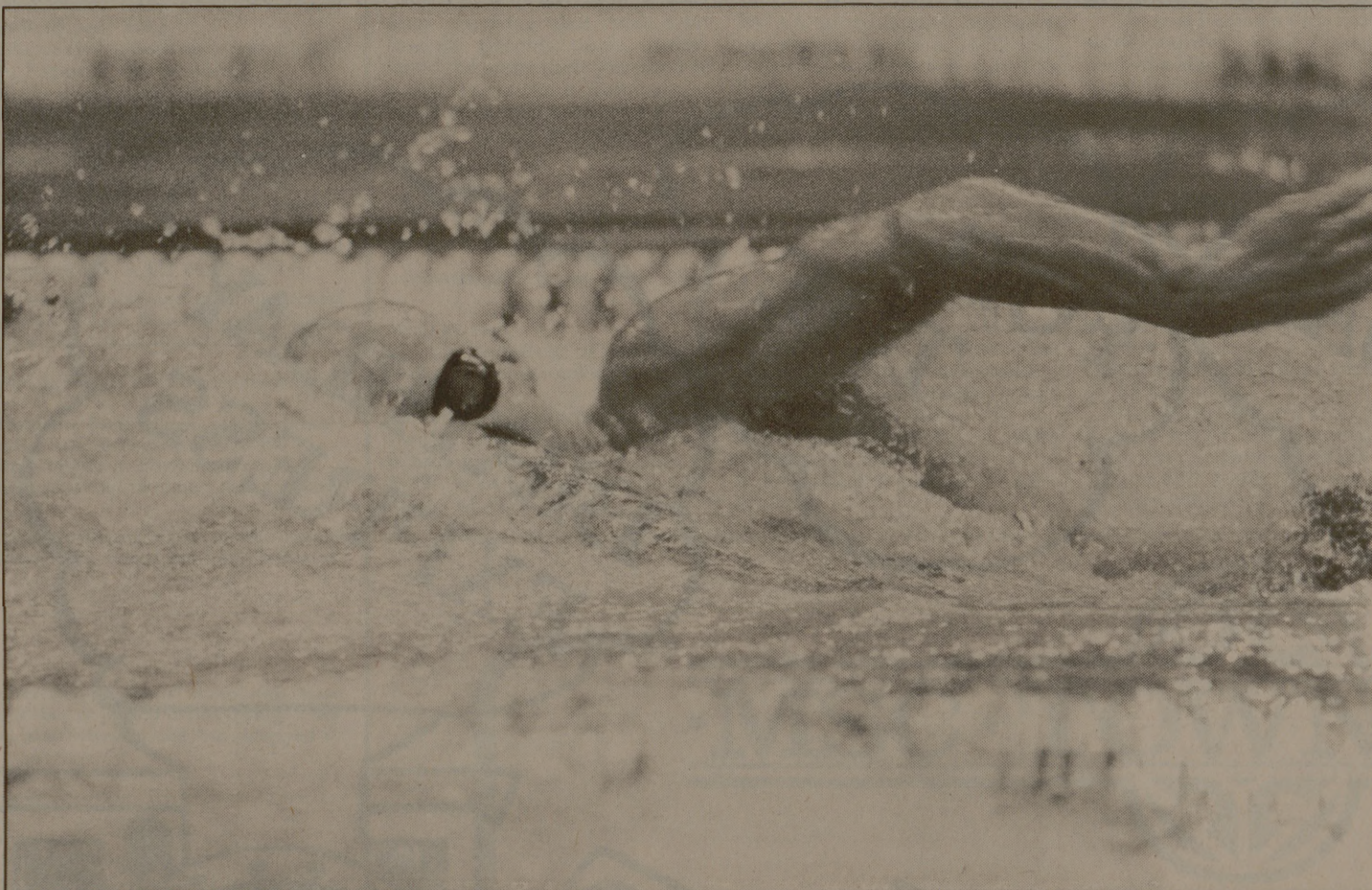


photo by Peter Rocha

Texas A&M swimmer Rick Walker, shown here during the SWC meet, and 17 other Aggie swimmers are in

Indianapolis, Ind., this week for the U.S. Swimming Championships. The meet begins today.

ate swimmers in the nation.

"There is always a psychological letdown that you have to be prepared for after the NCAAs. That's our job to prepare them for it, to face up to it, and to overcome it," Nash said.

Freshman Chris O'Neil earned all-America honors with his sixth-place finish in the 100-

yard butterfly at the NCAAs. He is the first all-America swimmer at Texas A&M in 26 years. O'Neil will swim in the 100- and 200-yard butterfly events for the Aggies.

Senior co-captain Rick Walker will be competing in the final swimming events of his career. Walker will swim the 200-, 500-

and 1000-yard freestyle events along with the 400-yard individual medley.

"I've been swimming for a long time and I would like to go out in style," Walker said. "Right now I have mixed emotions. I'm sorry to see it end, but I have gotten so much out of the sport."

"My career at A&M has been very rewarding. It's been very satisfying to be part of a team that is building into a national power. It will be nice to look back and say that I contributed and helped build a good team,"

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Aggie golf team among 'friends' at A&MII tourney

by Frank L. Christlieb
Battalion Staff

By this point in the college golf season, several nationally ranked teams have gotten to know each other like next-door neighbors.

Week in and week out this spring, these squads have come together to compete in golf tournaments in and out of the country. The teams — five in number — have learned both the strengths and weaknesses of their "neighbors" as a result of the similar tournaments they've played in.

Somehow, Texas A&M, Texas, Houston, Oklahoma State and Oklahoma nearly always wind up in the same tourneys, no matter where they're played.

For example, at the Columbia Lakes Intercollegiate in West Columbia on Feb. 6-7, Texas won, Houston finished second, Texas A&M was third and Oklahoma was fourth. At the Pan American Intercollegiate in Monterrey, Mexico on Feb. 10-12, Texas won, OSU placed second and Texas A&M was fourth.

And at the Henry Homberg Intercollegiate on Feb. 25-27, Texas won, UH was second, Texas A&M finished fourth, Oklahoma was fifth and Oklahoma State wound up sixth.

Get the picture? If not, then take a look at the field of the 29th annual All-America Intercollegiate Invitational golf tournament, which starts today at Houston's Bear Creek Golf World.

The 30-team field includes five of the nation's top six teams, according to the most recent poll released by the Golf Coaches Association of America. The five schools, in order of their ranking, aren't difficult to guess: No. 1 Texas, No. 2 OSU, No. 3 Houston, No. 4 Texas A&M and No. 6 Oklahoma.

This year's All-America, which is the final tournament for Texas A&M and its SWC opponents before the conference tourney on April 14-17 at Columbia Lakes, has been billed by Cougar golf coach Dave Williams as "The College Masters." Williams, UH's coach for the past 31 years, says the tournament will be as strong as in the past.

"It's got to be one of the most exciting golf events in the America," Williams said Tuesday. "This year the competition will be strong since we have five of the top six teams in the nation at the tournament."

Bob Ellis, the Aggies' coach, said a strong showing this week will help his squad at the conference tournament.

"We need to play well this weekend in order to be prepared for next weekend's Southwest Conference tournament," Ellis said. "We've been playing good golf but we haven't been very consistent this year."

While the Cougars won last year's national title, the Aggies finished fourth and Oklahoma State was third. Texas, which

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NOW IS THE TIME

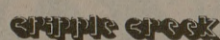
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- July — Games picnic
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- October — Pregame warmup parties
- November — Bonfire bash
- December — Christmas parties & contests



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