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Company offers class to improve athletes' grades

Associated Press

AUSTIN — A private teaching company has started a class aimed at high school athletes worried that the new no-pass, no-play rule will keep them on the sidelines this football season.

In newspaper advertisements, the company asks athletes: "Do failing grades mean no pass, no play to you? Help yourself stay eligible."

The 15-hour course focuses on advanced reading and study skills, said Don Fehlis, director of the Austin and San Antonio offices of Improved Reading Center and Staff Training Center. The company, which also offers courses for business executives, has other offices in Houston and Dallas.

"Many parents are concerned because their kids don't like to read, and that hurts them academically," Fehlis said.

The ads directed at the no-pass, no-play situation began running over the weekend and the courses begin later this month, Fehlis said Monday.

The rule, which took effect this spring, prohibits students from participating in sports or other extracurricular activities if they are failing any class. The prohibition, which lasts six weeks, will be in effect for the first time during a football season this autumn.

Many coaches and students across the state have complained about the rule, enacted as part of sweeping school reforms adopted by the Legislature last year. Twenty coaches met with Gov. Mark White last week to discuss the rule.

Fehlis said the course is "an enrichment program designed to enhance a student's ability to read and understand what they're reading. We also talk about various study techniques and skills and writing, because that's very important in their work," he said. "In talking to both kids and parents over the years, we've found that many students don't like to read because it's so slow. They get bored with it. When the mind gets bored with something, it shuts down."

He said the \$125 course is offered for three hours daily over five days.

The firm offered the course last year, too, although the no-pass, no-play ads are a new wrinkle this summer, Fehlis said.

"Last summer, we didn't talk about no-pass, no-play, but we did talk about the other parts of the course: academic progress, the ability to read, study concepts," he said. "We've gotten calls from individuals in lots of areas and a variety of backgrounds. We had a coach call us earlier about the idea."

Slouch By Jim Earle



"Next!"

Archeologists unearth relics linked to Alamo

Associated Press

SAN ANTONIO — Military relics dating back to the days of the Alamo have been found at an archeological dig in downtown San Antonio, experts say.

"It was an archeologist's dream come true," said Joe Labadie, a graduate student at the University of Texas at San Antonio.

Labadie directed the dig about 600 yards to the south of the Alamo, scene of a famous 13-day siege in 1836.

Archeologists theorize remaining soldiers after the battle filled in the site of the dig, preserving hundreds

of military and household items. Those participating in the excavation retrieved nearly 10,000 objects.

The location, near the downtown La Villita tourism site, was scored before the historic Fairmount Hotel was moved from its original home at the excavation site.

The hotel was moved four blocks across town to make room at its original location for a downtown mall.

"This has been our most fruitful dig," said Labadie, who earlier said the material was "so significant that his knees were rubbery."

"When we opened up the bag back at the lab, it was like Christmas Day for us."

Baseball attracts 'kids' in Congress

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — He may be way down on the roster of the House Armed Services Committee, but freshman Rep. Mac Sweeney is in the starting lineup on the GOP's congressional baseball team.

"It's the one thing in Congress where I've found youth is an advantage," said Sweeney, a 29-year-old Republican from Wharton, Texas. Many of his teammates are 20 years his senior.

He may be on the right politically, but Sweeney will be out in left field at game time. The 24th annual affair Tuesday night will give Republicans and Democrats a chance to take a few swings at each other — without any hard feelings.

"We're much more organized than the Democrats, just like the differences in legislation," joked Sweeney, after one of the 6:45 a.m. practice sessions. "We're much more organized when we bring bills to the floor and we're much more organized when we go out to play baseball."

"It's all in good fun."

Jack Fields, R-Houston, is the other Texan in the GOP lineup. He will start at third base for the fifth year.

At 33, Field is still a kid, too. Or at least he will be Tuesday night.

"I tell you," Fields said, "you get out there and you get the sand down in your shoes and the sweat pouring out from under your cap and all of a sudden, you're back to your younger days and you expect to go over to the concession stand and buy some bubblegum with baseball card pictures in it and everything."

Though Democrats still are in the majority in the Texas congressional delegation, they are not as well represented as the Republicans in the congressional baseball game.

An aide said Henry B. Gonzalez will suit up for the Democrats, but the 69-year-old San Antonio congressman isn't in the starting lineup.

For Sweeney, who said he hit two homers in practice, there is a chance to shine at the well-attended event which is also televised on the C-Span cable network.

China

(continued from page 1)

Asked whether the two leaders would sign a nuclear cooperation agreement during the visit, Speakes said "some recommendations" were in the White House, but that the matter was still under review.

The spokesman said the pact was being studied by several government agencies to see if it complied with U.S. law involving the transfer of materials used in the manufacture of nuclear power plants.

The initialing of the nuclear pact

was touted as the highlight of Reagan's China trip.

The agreement would allow U.S. companies to sell nuclear power equipment, including radioactive material, to China.

The agreement was shelved because of intelligence information that China may have assisted Pakistan in its efforts to develop a nuclear weapons capability.

Both countries denied the intelligence report.

Administration officials say they now have the necessary assurances from China that it won't help other

nations acquire a nuclear capability, and the accord probably will receive final approval during Li's visit.

A senior State Department official, who insisted on not being identified, said if China failed to abide by U.S. prohibitions against assisting other countries from acquiring nuclear weapons, Washington would terminate the nuclear cooperation.

The official said Reagan and Li would probably focus in their own conversations on broader issues "like basic strategy of how we are both going to approach the Soviet Union."

A cultural exchange agreement, an education accord and a fisheries agreement — preparing the way for Chinese to fish in American waters — also will be signed during Li's visit.

Li arrived in Washington on Monday for his four-day visit after spending a week in Canada. He was greeted by Secretary of State George Shultz.

Reagan planned a quiet day Monday in his private quarters in the White House. He held nearly an hour of discussions with Vice President George Bush.

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