

State and Local

Support group backing men's varsity

30-loves drafting tennis fans

By KATHERINE GOLLEY
Reporter

The 30-loves are a relatively new organization on campus that really have scored with the Texas A&M Men's Varsity Tennis Team.

"This is the 30-loves' second season, but last year was mainly an organizational period in which we tried to work out some of the kinks in our planning and scheduling procedures," says Allison Seale, the organization's founder and coordinator.

The 30-loves' function is two-fold. "The organization's primary function is to keep score during home matches," Seale says. "Our second, but equally important function is to rally enthusiasm and get as many students and faculty as we can to come to the matches."

"We would like to start some kind of tradition at the tennis matches, something similar to the tradition of A&M fans reading a newspaper when the opposing team players are being introduced," Seale says. "We think this would generate some added interest in the tennis matches."

Of the 40 members on the squad last year, 20 of the most active and enthusiastic were kept for this sea-

son's squad, and 15 new members will be chosen.

"Prospective members will go through an application-interview process," Seale says. "What we will be looking for is enthusiasm for tennis and the tennis team and tennis experience."

Tennis experience and prior knowledge of score keeping is not

participating in the group to be a 30-love.

"In the fall, we mainly just get to know each other and socialize," Walker says. "The spring is when we really get busy. All the matches start at 1 p.m. and last until at least 4:30 — and they are on weekdays, so you have to plan your schedule around those times."

"Last year we went with the team when they played Rice University, but it was a spur-of-the-moment decision and we weren't really organized," Seale says. "But this year we will be better prepared for our trip."

When the team has a big out-of-town match, the 30-loves try to send it off with munchies and support, Seale says.

To promote the tennis team and the 30-loves, the publicity committee has been working on a few projects.

Walker says, "We are working on a feature poster with the tennis team's spring schedule on it similar to that of the Diamond Darlings, the baseball's support group."

To cut down on its busy schedule, the 30-loves won't be calling the women's tennis matches.

"We used to try and keep score for the women's matches as well last year, but the women's coach, Bobby Kleinecke, said it really wasn't necessary," Seale says. "So we won't be working their matches this year."

The applications for a 30-love membership are available through the tennis club, 30-love members or in the MSC, and they must be returned to tennis coach David Kent's office by Nov. 15.

"We would like to start some kind of tradition at the tennis matches."

— Allison Seale, founder of the 30-loves

necessary though, because the organization will hold mandatory training sessions.

"Many of our members have only had beginning tennis and might not be too familiar with score keeping," Seale says. "When our new squad is chosen, we will hold a score keeping workshop so everyone will be familiar with the job they are required to do."

Amy Walker, a second-season member of the 30-loves and avid tennis fan, says that you really have to enjoy tennis and be serious about

Aside from calling matches, the 30-loves also give the tennis team some off-court support.

"The social committee is already planning mixers between the tennis team and the 30-loves," Seale says. "We had several happy hours last year with the team and everyone had lots of fun. Many of the 30-loves and team members have gotten to be really good friends."

The squad does not get to travel with the team for all of its matches, but they do get to attend one out-of-town match.

Stores preparing early for Christmas season

By LORA BEST
Reporter

Now that Halloween has passed it's time for turkey, big meals and family gatherings.

Then why are displays of Santa Claus, reindeer and Christmas trees in the stores?

Stores display these items early to convince shoppers to buy early — two months early to be exact.

In Hallmark stores, displays for Christmas ornaments have been set up since July and the ornaments have been selling, said Lisa Shebilske, a clerk at the Gateway-Hallmark in Post Oak Mall.

"People do buy them," she said. She explained the people who buy the ornaments are usually grandmothers and people who have to mail gifts.

Steffani Doyle, also a clerk at the

store, said she enjoys the Christmas atmosphere in the store.

Both women said they didn't like to see the last minute tensions that shoppers experience and said that, by having merchandise available now, it helps relieve the last minute rush to buy.

Doyle said, "Give, give, give. That's what a lot of people feel Christmas is all about, giving, and they miss the meaning of the holiday."

"It's enjoyable to see those (shoppers) come in here who have the Christmas spirit."

Paul Schultz, a worker at The Home Front, said, "People are going to buy gifts anyway and it's the store's job to give them what they want. That's the point of retail."

But he added that, "it seems like every year they start pushing it (the season) further and further ahead."

The Rev. Mark Wilburn, a minister at St. Thomas Episcopal Church, agrees. He said the reason Thanksgiving Day parades were held in the first place was to herald the beginning of the Christmas season.

He said Madison Avenue marketers realized that if they extended the season by two more weeks they would be able to realize two more weeks of profits.

Society is both secular and religious, he explained citing Christmas stamps as an example of this.

"One of them will always be a very religious picture with Jesus and Mary or maybe Jesus, Mary and Joseph. . . the other one is Frosty the Snowman," he said.

He explained Santa Claus' background.

"Santa Claus is an English corruption of the Dutch St. Nicolas," he said.

St. Nicolas was an eighth century saint who, by tradition, anonymously gave dowries to young, poor women who needed money so they could be married.

"The basis of Santa Claus is very Christian, yet we move it to the point that now Santa Claus has eight reindeer plus Rudolph, and when Rudolph is sick he gets Clyde the Camel," Wilburn explained.

It is important to remember what we are celebrating, he said. It is important to balance Christmas as a time of giving gifts and of celebrating Jesus' birth.

"In the Episcopal church, we are more concerned about who came down upon earth instead of who came down the chimney," he said.

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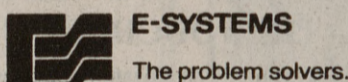
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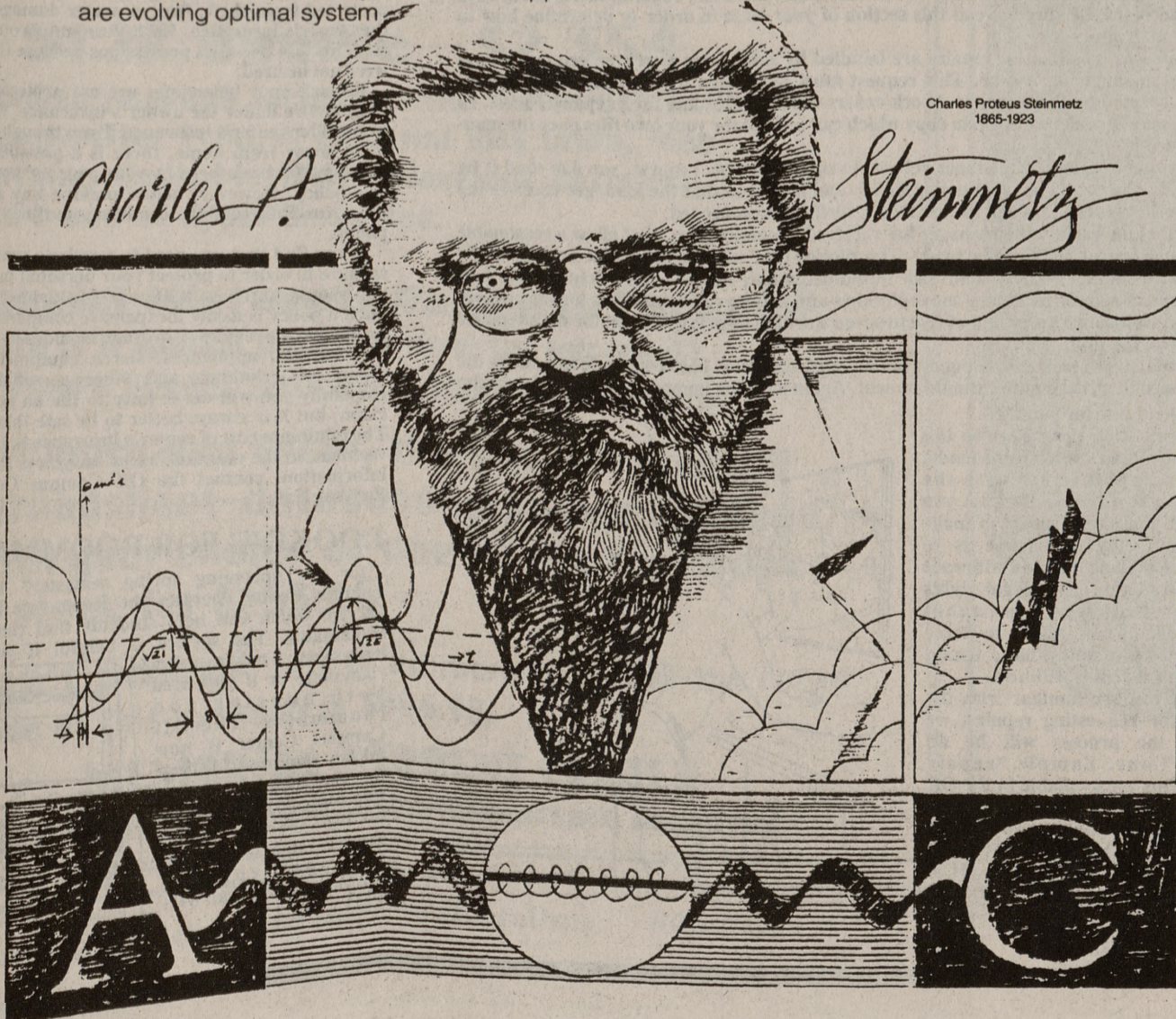
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