

Sports

Allison, Labonte set to race 41-car field in 9th Annual TROC

By KEN SURY

Sunday, the 9th Annual Texas Race of Champions, with NASCAR racers Bobby Allison and Terry Labonte and one woman among the field, will be held at Texas World Speedway outside College Station.

The Texas Race of Champions (TROC) is the featured event among six races scheduled for the day.

After time trials and practice on Saturday and Sunday morning, the action begins at 11:30 a.m. Sunday with the George Pharis Chevrolet Showroom Stock Car Race. In this race, regular showroom cars without engine or chassis modifications will compete.

All races, except the 3 p.m. TROC, will be 12-lap races on the two-mile Texas World Speedway course.

At noon and 2 p.m., super stock cars, such as Formula IV and V racers, will compete. Judy Parks, one of two women in Sunday's action, will race in the super stock field.

The 12:30 race is the Jay Marks Volkswagen-Yugo Formula Car Race. The cars in this race are mini Indy-type racers with sleek rear engine design, open wheels and an open cockpit.

At 1 p.m. the Bud Ward VW Texas International Driver's Association (TIDA) Pro Sedan Class Race is scheduled. This race features compact International Sedans. Three area racers will compete among the 25 racers expected for this race.

The local racers in the TIDA race are Bill LaBarge of Bryan and Aaron Simon and Gene Evans of College Station.

LaBarge, a former Texas A&M Sports Car Club member, said the TIDA race should be highly competitive. Simon is this year's TIDA Rookie of the Year.

Last year LaBarge finished about two seconds behind winner Bucky Hutchison. LaBarge said this year he hopes a little revenge will help him win.

"But he's (Hutchison) going to be the one to beat," LaBarge said. "He's an excellent driver."

The big race, the Texas Race of Champions is set for a 3 p.m. start. The race is 31 laps long, which is about 100 kilometers.

As of a Thursday noon press conference, race director Neal Upchurch said about 150 cars are expected for the six races. He said 41 cars are entered for the TROC.

The only woman in the TROC is Sherry Blakley of San Antonio. This will be her first TROC in five years of auto racing. Blakley has been out for the last two years to start a family. Her eight-month-old son Jeffrey is an honorary member of the pit crew and her husband Brian is the crew chief.

Labonte won the 1982 TROC and holds the track record for the fastest time trial. He will attempt to tie racers Freddy Fryer's and Jimmy Finger's record of two TROC wins. Fryer, last year's champion, will be shooting for his third win. Labonte's younger brother Bobby will be driving his first TROC.

In addition to Saturday's practices and time trials, a barbecue and chili cookoff contest will be judged at 5 p.m. The judging will be followed by beer drinking and wet T-shirt contests. A Country and Western band will play until midnight.

Connole said the reason they put on the TROC and festivities is to have fun.

"I've never had anybody come to Texas World Speedway and said they haven't enjoyed it," he said.

Ag cagers host exhibition game

By BRANDON BERRY
Sports Writer

When Texas A&M takes to the court against the Athletes In Action at 7:30 p.m. in G. Rollie White Coliseum, this season's edition of the Aggie basketball team will unveil a line-up that is quick and experienced, but is lacking two very large feet to fill two very large shoes.

Contrary to most first impressions, the shoes that need to be filled are not the jump-shooting sneakers of departed guard "Downtown" Kenny Brown.

The player who A&M Coach Shelby Metcalf promises to miss much more is junior forward Winston Crite, who seriously sprained his ankle in a practice on Tuesday.

"I quit crying by Wednesday morning," Metcalf said. "We'd made a move by switching him away from the basket and it was really working. We'd gotten to the point where our starting five was really playing together well — they had a good chemistry."

"We didn't have anybody hitting the outside shot for us, like Kenny did, but we were taking a lot better shots. And Winston was a big part of that. He was shooting 82 percent in our first few scrimmages."

Sophomore walk-on forward Paul Crawford, who saw little action last season, will replace Crite in the starting line-up on Friday night.

"We had a couple of guys that we could have started instead, but, when you have two guys that are about the same, you ask yourself which one is the better competitor," Metcalf said. "And Paul is a real competitor."

Metcalf calls Crawford the team's Maytag repairman.

"Paul's only made three 'B's' in two years, majoring in engineering," he said. "He's so smart, he doesn't have anybody to talk to — not even the coaches. Looking at it realistically, you can't replace a Winston Crite, and Paul will be the first to tell you that."

The Aggies will need all the athletic talent they can muster against the AIA, a team Metcalf said "is just one tick below the NBA."

"They have a guy who played four



Battalion File Photo

Texas A&M's Todd Holloway (right) drives the lane during a victory over the AAU Flyers last year. A&M hosts Athletes In Action to an exhibition game Friday at 7:30 p.m. in G. Rollie White.

years and started in the NBA (Lorenzo Romar), a kid from Notre Dame that everyone liked (Tracy Jackson) and a few others that played professionally for awhile," Metcalf said.

The list of "others" is just as impressive.

The Athletes In Action are led in scoring by Michael Wiley, who played for the San Antonio Spurs and San Diego Clippers in the NBA. Calvin Duncan, an "All-American" at

Virginia Commonwealth, and Reid Gettys the all-time assist leader in the Southwest Conference while at Houston, are familiar names that the Aggies must contend with.

The game with the AIA is an exhibition and, as such, doesn't count in the season standings for A&M.

"They're a great team and they're undefeated (4-0) so far this season," Metcalf said. "It's a shame no one on campus is going to see the game because everyone's already made their

weekend plans. "It's bad for us because we've already paid them money to play us. It's bad for them because they won't have anybody to convert at halftime. I just hope all the students that are in town this weekend come out and support the team."

The AIA are non-denominational and work closely with campus religious groups throughout the coun-

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KHADAFY NABIB BERRIE
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