

A&M swimmers train rigorously for spring action

By KEN SURY
Assistant Sports Editor

While most Aggies were home enjoying mom's cooking, watching television and gaining weight during the holidays, the Texas A&M swim teams were training hard for this spring's meets.

A&M Coach Mel Nash said when his teams came back Jan. 2 for what's termed "Christmas training," he put his swimmers through the heaviest workouts any team has received in his seven years at A&M.

Those workouts consisted of two-a-day workouts Monday through Saturday, Nash said, which amounted to 8-10 miles of swimming each day. He added that although swimming is less stressful on the body than running, those 10 miles of swimming equal a 30-mile effort by a runner.

But now that classes have resumed, he said, the number of workouts has decreased from 12 a week to nine, but the training will be as intense as the presemester workouts.

The Aggies swam in the All-American meet in Austin Jan. 10-11, which featured swimmers from SMU, Texas, Georgia, Kansas, Southern Illinois and several high school swimmers. But Nash said the team did not go to the meet hoping to win, since to successfully compete the swimmers would have to be somewhat rested before the meet.

"Our swimmers were just exhausted," Nash said. "We hoped to just hold our own against high schoolers. Some of the times on our swims were just horrible."

"But there were some bright spots, and we did better than expected. But team points weren't used, so we don't know where we stood. It was a nice cross-section of competition."

All that preparation will begin to come into play today as the women's team travels to Houston for a 4 p.m. contest with the Cougars. The team is still thin on depth, and Nash expects only five to six women to swim for this spring's meets, including the Southwest Conference Championships in Austin Feb. 27-March 1.

"The girls we have are top competitors," Nash said. "They will probably score more points per person than the other SWC teams, but as a team we can't win a meet. They should do well at Nationals (the NCAA Championships). For our meets, we'll just be looking for (good) individual swims."

While the women's team has a lack of depth, the men's team has an abundance of it.

"Our men's team is the strongest team we've ever had," Nash said. "They're progressing well, and we're almost three-(men) deep in distance and strokes. Only Texas has better overall depth (in the SWC), so we have a lot of balance."

That depth and balance probably will be tested when UT visits here Feb. 15 for a dual meet with A&M. The only other dual meet scheduled for the spring is a Feb. 8 matchup here with Rice. That meet originally was scheduled for Saturday, but the date was changed due to a conflict with The Aggie Open Swim Meet being held this weekend.

After those meets, the men have one month to prepare for the SWC Championships held in Austin March 15. Nash said the top two men's teams in the conference already are locked up.

"Texas will definitely win and SMU will come in second," Nash said. "We beat SMU in the SWC Relays last semester, but the relays are our strength. I think the most interesting competition will be for third place between us and Arkansas."

"Both of us have added people this semester to help us. Arkansas now has a top recruit in Mike Nufel, one of the top two sprinters in the country. We have Mike Kozlina from my hometown of Pittsburgh. He looked very strong in the All-American meet."

Kozlina was a High School All-American in the 100-yard butterfly and the 100-yard backstroke with times of 49.3 and 51.4 seconds.

The NCAA Championships for the women will be held March 20-22 in Fayetteville, Ark., and April 3-5 in Indianapolis, Ind. for the men.

Lady Ags hope to end skid

By DOUG HALL
Sports Writer

The third week in January was not a good one for Texas A&M Women's Basketball Coach Lynn Hickey and her Lady Aggies.

Prior to that week, the Lady Ags owned a 9-5 overall record and started Southwest Conference play with three straight victories.

However, three straight losses to Texas, Texas Tech and Houston have left Hickey and her team desperately searching for a SWC win.

Rice, which brings its 4-11 record to College Station Saturday evening for a 5:15 tipoff, would appear to be just the opponent A&M needs to play in order to halt its losing skid.

But Hickey knows games in the SWC are never as easy as they appear.

"Rice doesn't have a good record (0-6 in the SWC)," Hickey said, "but they're always tough to beat. They have a very scrappy team."

"It won't be a runaway. They have one of the best centers in the conference in Holly Jones (who is the second-leading scorer in the SWC, averaging 18.6 points a game) and a very good guard in DeDe Brantley."

Standing 9-8 overall, with only two conference opponents left in the first round of play — Rice on Saturday and Arkansas Jan. 28 — Hickey said the Lady Ags are still not performing up to their capability.

"We are still searching for the chemistry and the one lineup that will work," Hickey said. "Right now, the biggest thing we are lacking is leadership on the floor. That comes from the lack of experience."

Hickey said although she has been pleased with her offense, which has scored at least 75 points in all but one of its SWC games, she is disappointed with the team's overall defensive performance.

"Our offense is good," she said, "but the defensive pressure was maybe good for 10 minutes last night (in Wednesday's 80-75 loss to UH). After that, they were having no problems getting through our pressure."

"For us to win, we have to run with the ball, get the steals and apply defensive pressure. One night, we are going to get both



Photo by DEAN SAITO

A&M's Evelyn Sanders (23) eyes the basket as she drives past Houston's Sonya Watkins during the

Lady Aggies' 80-75 loss Wednesday. A&M hosts Rice Saturday at 5:15 p.m. in G. Rollie White.

(offense and defense) together." Hickey, who last year guided A&M to its first .500 record (14-14) since the '79-80 season, said she will probably go to a pressure defense for the whole game against Rice.

"Last week was the toughest and most difficult of our schedule," Hickey said. "We were really hoping Houston would be one of the upsets that would help us finish in the top three (in the SWC)."

"Now, we have to protect our home court advantage and maybe upset Arkansas at Arkansas. That will be tough."

The SWC's top six teams will face each other March 5-9 in Dallas' Moody Coliseum for the conference tourney.



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