

Sports

A&M takes sixth place at NCAA track meet

Heard grabs surprise first in 200; Ag relay team second

By Ken Sury
Sports Editor

National track-power A&M? You bet. Texas A&M, powered by a surprise first-place finish in the 200-meter dash by Floyd Heard and a second in the 400-meter relay, finished sixth at the NCAA Outdoor Track and Field Championships in Indianapolis last weekend.

A&M was one of four SWC schools which finished the meet in the top six. Southern Methodist, despite poor 100- and 200-meter performances by standout freshman Roy "Robot" Martin, won the 400 relay to edge Washington State 53-52.

Texas came in third with 47 points, while Arkansas, the defending champion, and Alabama tied for fourth with 35.

A&M scored 31 points. "With a little luck at all, we really could have been up there," A&M Track Coach Charlie Thomas said.

Part of the luck that didn't go the Aggies' way was a sub-par performance by freshman Randy Barnes in the discus.

Barnes, who holds the year's longest shot put at 71 feet, 9 1/2 inches, dropped out of the shot put competition because of a nagging injury to his right hand.

Although the injury doesn't hinder him when throwing the discus, Thomas said Barnes just didn't have his heart in the discus competition.

His best toss was only 177-10, the shortest of the 17-man field.

"He watched the shot put qualifying the day before," Thomas said, "and it got him fired up. He wanted to be in there with them. It got him down the next day for the discus."

While Barnes had his problems, the rest of the Aggie freshmen, especially the sprint and relay corps, were excelling.

Heard and roommate Stanley Kerr both had won their 200 trials, but it was Heard all the way in the finals to become the first A&M athlete to win an NCAA outdoor sprint title.

He also was the first Aggie to win an NCAA outdoor meet event since 1980 when Randy Hall took the pole vault.

Heard finished with a time of 20.34 seconds, .09 faster than runner-up Atlee Mahorn of California-Berkeley. Kerr was last in the nine-man field with a 20.83.

"I heard them (the other runners) back there," Heard said of the race. "You always hear them. I just kept going those last 50 meters. I couldn't wait to see the (finish) line."

Just over an hour after Heard's win, he and Kerr teamed with fellow freshmen Archie Roberts and Lawrence Felton to post a second-place time of 38.63 in the 400 relay behind Texas Christian's national collegiate record of 38.46.

A&M's 38.63 set a school record in addition to

being the fourth fastest clocking in collegiate history. According to experts from *Track and Field News*, it also is the fastest time by an all-freshman squad.

The Aggies' next best finish was a school-record fifth-place 3:03.85 in the 1600-meter relay with the team of Kendrick Wesley, Maurice Holt, Matt Washington and Gary Pervis.

Holt brought the Aggies back into the race on the second leg with a split time of 45.3 after Wesley came off the blocks a bit slow at 46.5.

"After the second corner stagger I was behind," Holt said, "so I felt like I had to make it up."

Holt said A&M would have finished higher except for a couple bad handoffs and a slowed Pervis due to pulled hamstrings.

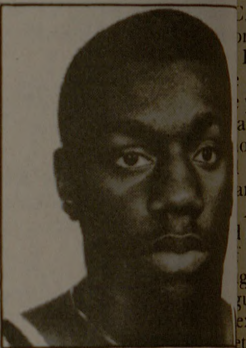
The Aggies also picked up a pair of sixth places as Craig Calk set a school mark of 49.60 in the 400 intermediate hurdles and Heard had a 10.27 in the 100-meter dash. Kerr finished seventh in the 100.

A&M's final point came in the long jump competition as Canadian Ian James leaped to a disappointing eighth-place finish with a 25-8 1/4 effort. Texas' Eric Metcalf won the event with a 27-0 1/2.

A&M senior Francisco Oliveras was three inches shy of finishing eighth in the triple jump as he had a 52-4 1/2. Kansas State's Kenny Harrison edged Houston's Frank Rutherford by 1/2 inch to win the event with a 56-0.



Floyd Heard



Stanley Kerr



Archie Roberts



Lawrence Felton

'Proud' fans soothe Rockets after loss to Celtics

HOUSTON (AP)—The Houston Rockets came home Monday without the NBA championship, but that did not discourage the more than 500 cheering fans who greeted the team at Intercontinental Airport.

"You've been the best fans in the NBA, and next year, we will come back with fire in our eyes and the NBA championship on our minds," reserve center Jim Petersen told the crowd.

The Boston Celtics, heavy favorites from the start of the title series,

won their 16th NBA title Sunday when they defeated the Rockets 114-97 to capture the best-of-seven series, 4-2.

Rockets star Akeem Olajuwon, who had predicted victory in Houston, left the fans with one more forecast.

"We proved this year that we belong, and next year we're going to do it," Olajuwon said. "And we are still unbeatable."

Hundreds of fans jammed the air-

port terminal as the Rockets departed. They shouted Rocket cheers and waved banners of encouragement.

"Boston's getting old and we're getting better," said Bo Farrill, 22, who had waited four hours for the team to arrive. "We've been here since 10:30 this morning and it was well worth the wait."

Mayor Kathy Whitmire and some city council members also were on hand to welcome the team home.

"Here are some people who have

made Houston proud," Whitmire said.

Sunday's blowout followed an emotional Houston victory in the fifth game when the Rockets erupted following a fight between Ralph Sampson and Boston's Jerry Sichting.

But the Rockets were punchless in the finale, with Sampson scoring only eight points.

"When you ain't got it, you ain't got it," Sampson said.

Sampson said the brawl in the fifth

game had nothing to do with the Rockets' sluggish showing Sunday.

"You (media) built up the fight, we didn't," Sampson said. "It didn't have anything to do with what happened."

Sampson was the object of boos at Boston Garden virtually every time he touched the ball.


"We just didn't play our game the way we had to," Sampson said. "I would have preferred to get into the low post early and get into the game as much as I could offensively. But that didn't happen."

Point guard Robert Reid said he'll once again use the game as his inspiration for the next season. The Rockets were eliminated in the first round last year by the Celtics.

"I always use our last game as a memory to take into training camp," Reid said. "I used Utah last year. I'll use this game now, the way they were jumping up and cutting down the net. Houston deserves that, too."

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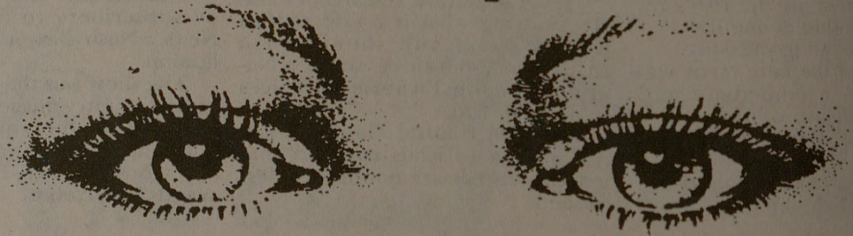
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