

Strong men's tennis team should vie for SWC crown

By Brad Marquardt
Reporter

The 1988 Texas A&M men's tennis team hopes to blend the old with the new in order to be a factor in this year's Southwest Conference race. From all indications, this year's squad should be one of the best ever assembled at A&M.

The team will be led by senior Dean Johnson and holdovers Shaun O'Donovan and Steve Kennedy. The team will be bolstered by newcomers Craig Whitteker, Mike Chambers and Kenny Rylee. The squad will also be improved by the return of Brent Haygarth in the spring.

A&M Coach David Kent said, "We have quality and quantity. We are improved over last year in that we have more depth, and a much more demanding schedule, so that's a real plus."

The Aggies will be challenged by a tough SWC schedule where any team could win the conference. "It's always a challenge to win in the SWC," Kent said. "Four or five of the top 20 teams are usually in the conference. It is probably the second-best tennis conference in the nation."

Johnson is the Aggies' top returning player and team captain. The senior won three straight singles titles

in tournaments this summer, including the Texas A&M 4-Way Singles and Doubles Tournament last weekend. Kent said Johnson played outstanding tennis during the tournament, and beat quality players along the way.

"Dean is one of the best athletes I've ever coached, and he is an outstanding captain and leader," Kent said. "I feel we have the senior leadership in Dean that will take us a long way."

Another returnee is Brent Haygarth, who is the returning SWC No. 4 singles champion. Haygarth is a very good doubles player and can play with any college player in the nation, Kent said.

"He will give us the punch we will need at the top of the lineup," Kent said.

A player that Kent has high hopes for is transfer Craig Whitteker, who came to A&M by way of McLennan Community College. He is a very good doubles player and a national junior-college doubles champion, Kent said.

"Craig plays with a lot of enthusiasm and is a 'never-give-up' type of player," Kent said.

Another transfer is Mike Chambers, who came to A&M after the University of Houston dropped its tennis program. He has shown he

can beat college players, Kent said. "He has an unbelievable amount of talent," Kent said.

Sophomores Steve Kennedy and Shaun O'Donovan combine to make the squad's top doubles team. They have also proved this by winning the A&M 4-Way Tournament doubles title. Kennedy and O'Donovan also have a victory over the Southern Methodist doubles team that included Richey Reneberg, who is now on the professional circuit.

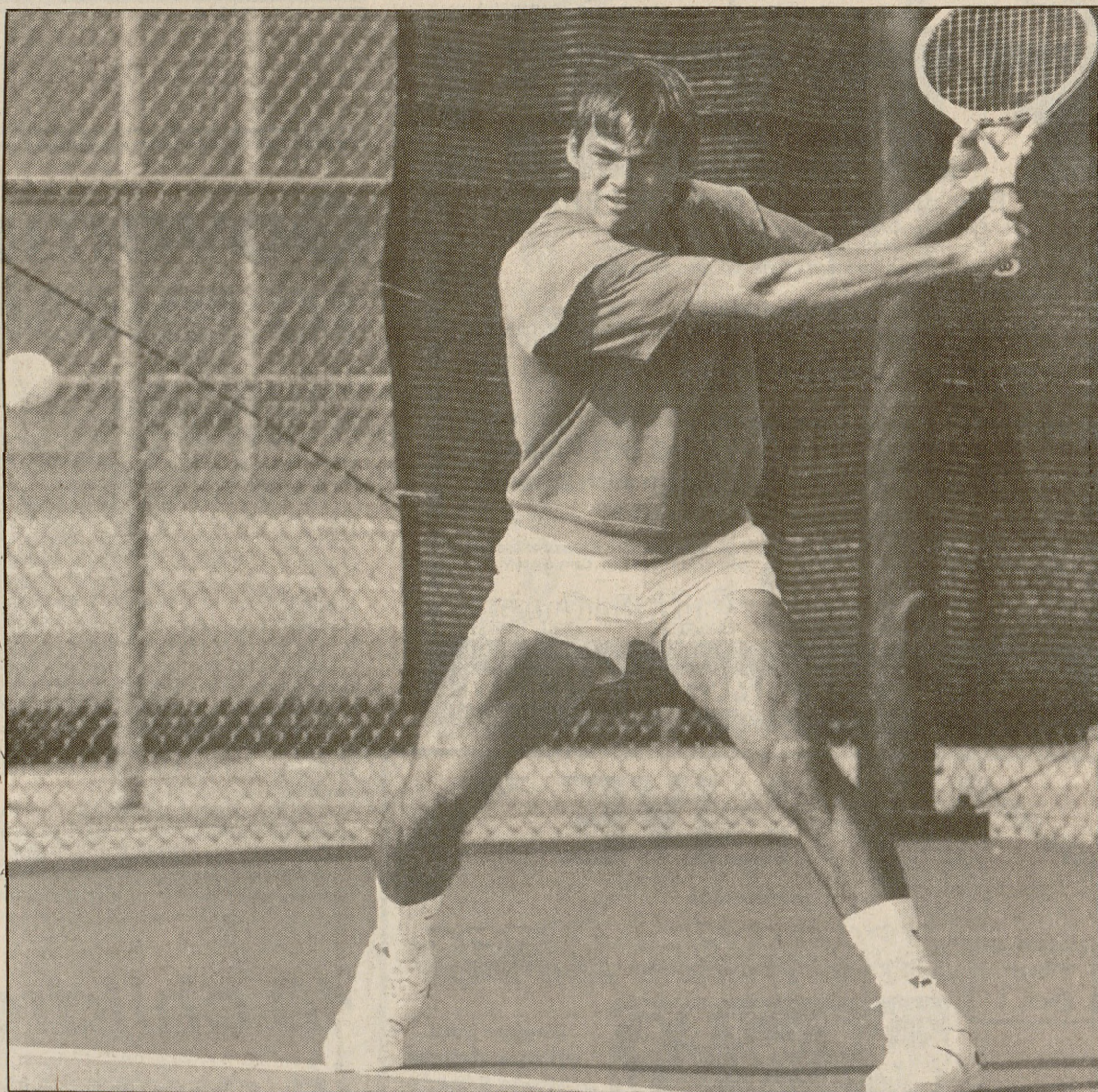
"They can really play tennis and are a tough twosome," Kent said.

The biggest surprise is sophomore Wayne Green, who was a squadsman last season. Kent said Green has improved 130 percent over last year and really dedicated himself to tennis.

"I think he'll be in the top six this year. It will be hard to keep him out," he said.

Adding to the depth of the squad are Kenny Rylee, who transferred from the University of Kentucky and Jeff Livshitz, who is an outstanding player from South Africa.

"The squad will be very strong in doubles, and we have tremendous depth. We have as many good players on our team as we have ever had," Kent said. "I'm looking for a banner year."



Dean Johnson, A&M's top returning men's tennis player, prepares to return a serve during a tennis tournament held last year at the Omar Smith Tennis Center on campus. Coach David Kent says the team should challenge for the 1987-88 Southwest Conference championship with top players like Johnson and Brent Haygarth.

'Dominating' pitching a necessity if Cards are to win NL East — Smith

ST. LOUIS (AP) — With the St. Louis Cardinals having trouble scoring runs, shortstop Ozzie Smith said recently it was imperative that the team get "dominating" pitching down the stretch in order to win the National League East title.

Rookie Joe Magrane and Greg Mathews provided just that in a doubleheader sweep of the Montreal Expos Tuesday night.

The victories put the Cardinals on the verge of the division championship.

Magrane pitched a three-hitter in the first game, which St. Louis won 4-0. Mathews teamed with reliever Todd Worrell for a four-hit, 3-0 victory in the second game.

Magrane, a left-hander with a 9-7 record, acknowledged that his second shutout of the season was the biggest game of his brief major league career. He struggled through

much of July and August, but has allowed only four earned runs in his last 30 innings.

"I don't think there's any better time to get it than now," Magrane said.

The Cardinals haven't been producing many runs, but Magrane said the dry spell prepared him to win Tuesday night with the one run the Cardinals gave him.

"Knowing we've been scuffling for runs has made me a better pitcher," Magrane said.

"I try to stay on every pitch and throw it the best I can. I can't allow a big inning early in the game."

"You always let your defense have a good chance by throwing strikes," Magrane said. "There's nothing magical about that. Nobody likes people who work slow and throw a lot of pitches."

Magrane is known for his wit off

the field, but he didn't allow himself to get caught up in the jubilation as the crowd enjoyed his pitching and the news of the second-place New York Mets' 3-0 loss to the Philadelphia Phillies.

"When I'm off the field, I like to have a sarcastic point of view on things," he said. "But it's very important for us to win now, and I'm glad I was able to give us a lift."

Mathews, along with Worrell, made the most of the Cardinals' three runs in the second game.

It was a welcome change for Mathews, who had given up only two earned runs in his last 22 innings yet lost two games because the Cardinals didn't score.

The two consecutive shutouts were the first by the Cardinals since Joaquin Andujar and Danny Cox did it May 30-31, 1985.

Mize is not comfortable playing on familiar course in tournament

COLUMBUS, Ga. (AP) — Larry Mize will be playing his home course this week in the \$400,000 Southern Open golf tournament, but the Masters champion doesn't consider himself a favorite, nor has he had much success playing here.

"You would think I'd play well here," Mize said Wednesday of the 6,791-yard, par 70 Green Island Country Club course, which lies across the street from his condominium.

"But, I don't know what it is. I

think maybe I press too hard, put too much pressure on myself," said Mize, who won the Masters in April and has earned \$440,316 in 1987, eighth on the tour's money list.

Mize, who finished 19th in this tournament a year ago, said he plays 20-25 rounds on the course a year and generally shoots in the "67-68 range," but "I've never gotten off to a good start here. I hope I can get off to a fast start."

"My objective this week is to relax, have a good time and not press like

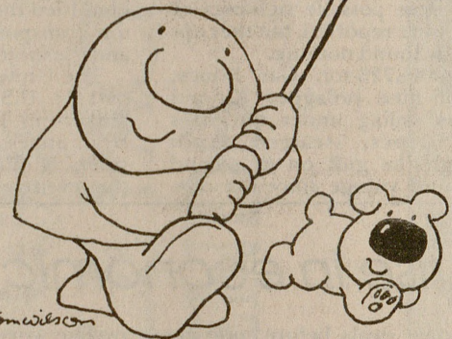
in years past," he said of the 72-hole event which begins Thursday and is worth \$72,000 to the winner.

Mize, 29, who is in his seventh year on the tour and has earned more than \$1.3 million, is tired after playing last week on the U.S. Ryder Cup team, which lost to the Europeans.

Mize, who finished fourth in the U.S. Open and has eight top 10 finishes in 20 events this year, said that winning the Masters has given him "more recognition."

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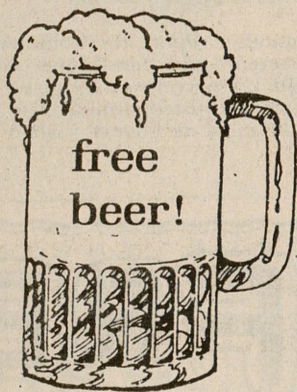
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