

dp 1988



# No apologies to be found here

## News includes bad news, even in Aggieland

I was talking to one of A&M's hotshot young wide receivers last week. He asked me if I was the writer who shellacked Alex "Just Call Me Toast" Morris after the Texas Tech game. I admitted that I was. He followed with a typical athlete's request: "Why can't you all just write good stuff about us?" I could understand him saying that. I mean, he doesn't like seeing his teammates and friends slammed in front of 23,000 *Battalion* readers. Who would?

The trouble is, I'm seeing more and more of that type of reaction recently, and not just from athletes. It's all part of the strange (to me,



**Hal L. Hammons**  
Sports viewpoint

that is) aversion this country has to media and media representatives in general. The most flagrant example of media hatred of which I am aware was the last Elephant Walk.

Jackie Sherrill said something about the media — I can't remember what, but it wasn't flattering — and the crowd joined in, whoops and all. One red-pot even yelled, "Beat the hell outta the media!" That, too, got its share of audience support.

Well, I can understand Sherrill's dislike for the media in general, and even the *Battalion* in particular. Our sector of the work force has focused its share of grief in Mr. Sherrill's general direction, and he is noticeably gun-shy. Usually he treats our ilk with somewhat less than gushing enthusiasm. That doesn't bother me that much.

It's the others. We haven't done anything to harm the student populace, unless printing the painful truth about the Aggies can be construed as offensive.

I guess people as a rule think we in the media like to specialize in nit-picking, gripe-aring, and general abuse.

Speaking for myself, as a frequent practitioner of the abusive art, I deny that allegation. I just state the facts as I see them.

I don't understand people. I really don't. It seems to me that fans — Aggie fans in particular — would rather hear a misleading "They gave it a good run" than an accurate "They reeked."

I like writing pleasant things. I enjoy giving an appropriate accolade. But I do not feel comfortable or honest whitewashing the truth with feel-good nonsense.

Most Sundays for the past month or so, *Battalion* sports readers have seen my picture inset into a column filled with not-so-nice stuff about the Texas A&M basketball team. That's not because I hate A&M basketball — I don't. It's because the A&M basketball team played those particular weekends, and their performances — good or bad, and generally they were bad — were fresh in my memory.

Is it really the popular opinion that bad news should be presented in rose-colored adjectives, or even ignored completely? If so, I'm sorry

to tell you, you're reading the wrong newspaper.

I'm proud of this sports staff, as well as the entire *Battalion* staff, for this one of many reasons: we aren't afraid to tell the truth.

I'm elated that Jackie Sherrill is A&M's head coach and athletic director. I think he's one of the best, if not the best, at each of his positions. The Aggie fan in me (and believe me, I'm as big an Aggie fan as any of you) hopes desperately that he stays for a long, long time.

But the fact is, if we stumbled upon a story that would result in Sherrill's dismissal or resignation, we'd run it in a minute. Front page, banner headline.

That's the essence of news — give the readership what's important that they know about, not just the candy coating.

That's not because we enjoy muck-raking. That's because we are dedicated to our profession and our readership. So you, the reader, are going to get the truth in this column, this section and this newspaper. Like it or not.

# Alysheba nips field in Santa Anita race

ARCADIA, Calif. (AP) — Alysheba held off Ferdinand in a battle of the last two Kentucky Derby champions to win the \$1 million Santa Anita Handicap by a half-length Sunday and moved into third place on thoroughbred racing's all-time money-winning list.

A 4-year-old son of Alydar, Alysheba won the 1987 Kentucky Derby and was an Eclipse Award winner as the year's top 3-year-old. He took the lead entering the final turn and never trailed after that.

The victory, before a crowd of 70,432, was the sixth in 19 lifetime starts for Alysheba and was worth \$550,000, raising the colt's career earnings to \$3,695,642.

Alysheba, ridden by Chris McCarron and carrying 126 pounds, went off as the even-money favorite and paid \$4 and \$2.60. Alysheba is owned by Dorothy and Pamela Scharbauer of Midland, and trained by Jack Van Berg.

Ferdinand, who crossed the finish line 2½ lengths in front of Super Diamond, returned \$2.80. Ferdinand, ridden by Bill Shoemaker and carrying high weight of 127 pounds, is owned by Mrs. Howard B. Keck of Los Angeles and trained by Charlie Whittingham.

Second place was worth \$200,000, raising Ferdinand's career earnings to \$3,595,478 and moving him into fourth place on the earnings list behind John Henry (\$6,597,947), Spend A Buck (\$4,220,689) and Alysheba.

The winning time for the 1¼ miles on a fast track in the 51st running of the "Big Cap" was 1:59 4-5, well off the stakes record of 1:58 3-5 set by Affirmed in 1979.

Super Diamond earned \$150,000, while Judge Angelucci, who finished fourth, collected \$75,000. Because there were only

four entries, there was no show wagering. The \$5 exacta paid \$18.

Judge Angelucci took the lead at the start of the race but never opened up a significant advantage. Super Diamond moved into first place on the first turn.

There was less than a half-length separating the four horses as they entered the final turn, when Alysheba went ahead for good.

Ferdinand, a 5-year-old son of Nijinsky II, and Alysheba were racing against each other for the second time. Ferdinand prevailed by a nose in the \$3 million Breeders' Cup Classic, also a 1¼-mile race, at Hollywood Park last Nov. 21. Judge Angelucci finished third in that race after leading most of the way.

Ferdinand and Alysheba had each raced once since then before Sunday. Alysheba won the \$500,000 Charles H. Strub Stakes by three lengths on Feb. 7, while Ferdinand finished second, 3½ lengths behind Judge Angelucci, in the \$250,000-added San Antonio Handicap a week later.

Temperate Sil, who is also trained by Whittingham, as is Super Diamond, was scratched several hours before the race. A 4-year-old, Temperate Sil, was listed at odds of 15-1 on the morning line.

Shoemaker was riding in his 34th Santa Anita Handicap. Previously, the 56-year-old jockey had 11 wins, seven seconds and two thirds. Shoemaker was aboard Ferdinand when the horse finished second, a nose behind Broad Brush, last year.

Only once previously, in 1950, had two Kentucky Derby winners run in the Santa Anita Handicap. Citation, the 1948 Triple Crown winner, finished second, while 1949 Kentucky Derby winner Ponder was fourth. The race was won by Noor.

# Valenzuela pitches L.A. past Houston

VERO BEACH, Fla. (AP) — Left-hander Fernando Valenzuela hurled three perfect innings to lead the Los Angeles Dodgers to a 2-1 exhibition baseball victory over the Houston Astros Sunday.

The Dodgers raised their Grapefruit League record to 3-0, not including a victory in an international exhibition against the Chunichi Dragons of Japan, as Valenzuela scattered two hits and struck out five.

The loss was Houston's first in three spring contests.

Right-hander Tim Lary followed Valenzuela with three scoreless innings, allowing one hit, while walking one and striking out two.

Rookie right-hander Tim Crews pitched out of trouble in the ninth inning to record his first save of the spring.

Houston left-hander Bob Knepper scattered two hits and allowed but one run in his three innings, while rookie right-hander Jose Cano pitched two scoreless innings.

Outfielder Cameron Davis came off the bench to collect a pair of hits that sparked the Astros' attack, while Ty Gaine drove in Houston's only run.

Outfielders Kirk Gibson and Mike Marshall had a pair of hits each to pace the Los Angeles offense.

Marshall also combined with second baseman Steve Sax to throw a runner out at the plate in the first inning and made a game-saving catch in the ninth.

Left-hander Fernando Valenzuela has been a slow starter in the spring. However, the Dodger southpaw was uncharacteristically sharp in his first spring start, particularly when he struck out the side in the third inning.

Valenzuela credits an offseason weight program, which he said allows him to get loose quicker and throw freer.

"I think the weights have helped me a lot," Valenzuela said. "They make me looser, especially the shoulder. I can get looser, quicker now."

# Rangers batter Bucs 11-1 behind third-inning rally

PORT CHARLOTTE, Fla. (AP) — Pete Incaviglia doubled to drive in one run and scored another, keying a third-inning rally as the Texas Rangers beat the Pittsburgh Pirates 11-1 Sunday night, splitting a day-night, home-away doubleheader with the Pirates.

Felix Fermin singled home two runs to key a five-run eighth inning which rallied Pittsburgh to a 6-1 victory against the Rangers in Bradenton, Fla., Sunday afternoon. Mitch Williams gave up all five runs on five hits and a walk.

Incaviglia's double in the second game put the Rangers on top 4-1,

and Incaviglia then scored the final run of the five-run rally against Brian Fisher on a double by non-roster outfielder Steve Kemp, the only player who played both games in their entirety.

Chad Kreuter, who came into the game as a pinch-hitter in the fifth inning, finished up with three RBIs for the Rangers. He capped a three-run fifth inning with a single off John Smiley, tripled to drive in one run and scored another in a two-run seventh against Mike York and drove in the Rangers final run with an eighth-inning single off Bret Gideon.

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