

Aggies tumble to Texas in tourney

By Doug Walker
Reporter

Despite being edged in the team standings, the Texas A&M gymnastics team had its best team performance of the year at the Texas Gymnastics Conference (TGC) Championships this weekend at A&M.

Champions were crowned in the open and collegiate divisions for the men and in the open division for the women.

In the men's collegiate team competition, Texas bested A&M by a score of 181.55 to 171.25 by winning the pommel horse and the vault by big margins. The Aggies had higher combined scores on the high bar, parallel bars and the floor exercise. "UT squeaked by us," Ricky Farias, team president said. "We did really well, but they scored an unforseeable total."

David Clubb, a collegiate All-American and NCAA Division II champion in the horizontal bars event, said the Aggies put together their best team performance of the year.

"I really wish we could have beaten Texas, but this was our best team score of the year, he said. "We really came together for this meet."

Teams representing Rice, Stephen F. Austin State and Southwest Texas State joined the Aggies and the Longhorns in the collegiate division.

The Sokol team won the open team title as they nipped the Bryan-College Station team 185.30 to 181.70.

The Juergens team was third and the team representing Southwestern gymnastics was fourth.

In the women's individual collegiate competition, A&M's Alisa Sacash took the all-around title ahead of Amy Jensen of Southwest Texas State.

Sacash also won titles in the vault, the floor exercise and the balance beam to lead a strong showing by the A&M women.

Birgit Irgolic, an independent, won the uneven bars ahead of



Photo by Kathy Haveman

A&M's Alisa Sacash performs her beam routine during the Texas Gymnastics Conference Championships held in the Read Building.

A&M's Jacqueline Catala and Barbara Loudon of SWTSU.

Sharilon Hall took second for A&M in the floor exercise, fourth in the vault and third on the balance beam.

Cheree Chatelain of A&M was second on the balance beam and

fifth in the vault while A&M's Jennifer Hampton placed sixth on the uneven bars and sixth in the vault.

The A&M women's team is young and A&M Head Coach Ernie Kirkham said he expects improvement in the future.

"I look forward to a much better program (men's and women's) next year," he said. "We're hoping to start building on the women's program next year."

Clubb was the top individual Aggie performer in the men's individual events taking second in the all-around competition to Mark Shaffer of Texas.

A&M's Hector Longoria was sixth and Floyd Osborne was ninth for the Aggies. Shaffer also won the rings and the pommel horse titles.

The floor title ended in a tie between A&M's David Bunk and Texas' James Spry.

Other Aggie floor exercise competitors were Clubb and Denny Fulk (tied for fifth) and Esteban Longoria (tied for eighth).

Bunk won the vault ahead of Spry and Fulk.

Clubb was fifth and Longoria tied for fourth for A&M.

The top Aggie performers in the pommel horse were Don Cardinal in fourth place and Steve Rowland in fifth.

Farias finished fifth for A&M in the rings event and Longoria was sixth followed by Terry Villareal in seventh. Clubb took first in the parallel bars while Longoria placed fifth.

Clubb also won the high bar competition with Fulk taking fifth.

J.T. Fletcher, head gymnastics coach at Bryan High and representing the Bryan-College Station team, won the men's open all-around title ahead of Johnathan Conrad of the Sokol team. Javad Khorsandi of the Sokol team was third.

Conrad won the pommel horse, floor exercise, rings and high bar titles in the open individual competition.

Paul Hunter of the Bryan-College Station team won the parallel bars and was second in the vault behind Ross Vines, an independent.

Meet Director Cid Galindo said the event was a success because of the work of the members of the A&M gymnastics club.

Rockets, Mavericks to renew rivalry in playoffs

HOUSTON (AP) — The first round NBA playoff series between the Houston Rockets and Dallas Mavericks already has been tagged the "Interstate 45" series.

Now Rockets guard Robert Reid says it can be termed "heated."

"It's going to be heated because now you're playing for (Texas) bragging rights," Reid said.

"Plus, the team that wins this series will automatically going to be expected to face Los Angeles (Lakers) in the Western Conference finals. That's automatic."

The Rockets and Mavericks,

meeting in the playoffs for the first time, will start their best of five games first-round series at Dallas' Reunion Arena Thursday.

The second game also will be in Dallas on Saturday and games are scheduled Tuesday and May 5 in Houston. A fifth game would return to Dallas May 7.

The Rockets closed out the regular season Sunday with a 127-119 victory over Phoenix, which missed the NBA playoffs for the third straight year.

The Rockets had an 8-13 record over the final 21 games of the sea-

sons and they lost their regular season series with the Mavericks 4-2.

Houston also will take a three-game losing streak against the Mavericks into the series, including Dallas victories in their last two visits to The Summit.

All that now is meaningless, Reid said.

"We've got a lot to prove in the playoffs but at least we won the last game and that will get us going," Reid said. "It's a new season now."

The Mavericks hadn't won a season series against the Rockets since the 1983-84 season but Houston

Coach Bill Fitch says the Mavericks deserved to win this season.

The Mavericks beat the Rockets in The Summit 108-106 on February 25 and 104-96 on April 19.

"Both times they played down here they deserved to win because they played better than we did," Fitch said. "But we got a pretty good victory in Dallas so we know we can win there too."

The Rockets beat the Mavericks 108-92 in Dallas and 117-107 in The Summit this season.

IOC will strengthen drug use penalties

LAUSANNE, Switzerland (AP) — Armed with new penalties against substance-using athletes and unethical laboratories, the International Olympic Committee is honing its attack on doping in sports to make sure this summer's Games are as drug-free as possible.

"Last year, IOC-accredited labs around the world tested more than 37,000 samples, and 854 came back positive," Prince Alexandre de Merode, chairman of the IOC's medical commission, said.

Anabolic steroids were the most abused drug, showing positive in 521 cases. Steroids add to muscle bulk, but have been shown to carry serious side effects such as liver damage. Amphetamines and other stimulants were next, with 301 cases.

The labs also found 24 cases where athletes used probenecid, a "masking agent," to try to hide

the presence of other illegal drugs.

On Sunday, Merode urged the federations that govern the summer Olympic sports to adopt uniform drug penalties, suggesting a multi-tier plan similar to one the IOC is using for the first time this year.

Under it, athletes who take drugs only to enhance performance are dealt with differently than those who might take them accidentally as part of a legitimate medication. There also are stiffer penalties awaiting repeat offenders, ranging up to a life ban in both cases.

In addition, Merode said, the IOC is considering long-term suspensions from the Games for athletes found using drugs during Olympic competition. Presently, an athlete who tests positive is thrown out of those Games but can be reinstated for the next.

Rangers relief pitcher suspended for fighting

TULSA, Okla. (AP) — Relief pitcher Mitch Williams was suspended for two games by the American League Monday for his part in triggering a brawl between Texas and the Boston Red Sox earlier this month and the Rangers said they plan to appeal the ruling.

Manager Bobby Valentine, in Tulsa for an exhibition between the Rangers and their Class AA affiliate the Tulsa Drillers, said an appeal hearing is scheduled for Friday in New York.

"It was a boys will be boys situation," Valentine said. "Suspensions are usually when it's something out of the ordinary. This was basically an ordinary, emotional situation where a little pushing occurred."

"The appeal will be mainly to find out if this is a precedent that will remain intact the entire year," he said. "It's one of those things, if the suspension holds up, that we'll have to live with it and go from there."

Williams, a 23-year-old left-hander, exchanged punches with Boston's Marty Barrett after Barrett scored in the ninth inning of a game on April 8.

"I figured it'd be a fine. I didn't figure on a two-game suspension," Williams said. "It's something I hadn't counted on, but it's something we'll have to deal with."

Williams said he wants to appeal the ruling "because I don't feel I should be the only one punished."

"I realize I was the one who threw the first punch... and I know I was wrong for that," he said. "But the Boston players were wrong for doing what they did. I just feel that if action was taken against both clubs, then it would be resolved."

Williams clashed with the Red Sox last season after hitting Jim Rice with a pitch and had another run-in with Boston this spring during exhibition play.

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