

# Taylor, Knoblauch are hits in Taiwan baseball tourney

By Patti Easterling  
Reporter

Two Texas A&M baseball players have returned from the International Harbor Baseball Tournament in Taiwan, bringing with them a list of outstanding achievements. Aggie second baseman Terry Taylor and shortstop Chuck Knoblauch returned Tuesday after being chosen to compete with the 20-player United States team. "I was really surprised when I found out because I wasn't even aware of the tournament," Taylor said. Baseball players from colleges across the United States who were chosen to represent their country. "Getting there a couple of days before the tournament started gave us time to practice and get used to

playing together," Taylor said. The tournament was held from November 25 to December 4. The United States team defeated Mexico, Japan, Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic, Taiwan "A" and the Taiwan "B" team twice, sending them into the championship game against the Taiwan "A" team with a 7-0 record. "We beat the Taiwan 'A' team in the winner's bracket playoff but they played really well in the championship game and won," Taylor said. Both players were honored to get the opportunity to help the United States team capture the silver medal. "It was a real honor to be chosen for the team, but it was an even greater honor when we did so well," Taylor said. A&M Head Baseball Coach Mark

Johnson says the accomplishments of Taylor and Knoblauch provide a boost to the A&M baseball program. "I think it's a great honor for Terry and Chuck to be chosen to represent their country in this tournament," Johnson said. "From the standpoint of both the baseball program and Texas A&M, it makes our program feel really good that two of our players were chosen for this honor." Taylor hit .290 in the tournament highlighted by a grand slam. Knoblauch batted for a .240 average and scored an eighth inning, game-winning run in the first round of the medal round against Puerto Rico. Knoblauch led the Aggies with a .365 batting average last season and Taylor finished the season with an impressive 17 home runs.

# Jeffires hopes future is now

HOUSTON (AP) — Houston Oilers wide receiver Haywood Jeffires would like to get out of the team's future file. "They call me the future here, and I tell everybody I'm not the future, I'm the present, so I'd like to get off the future stuff," Jeffires said. Jeffires will get his chance Sunday when he returns to the active roster against the Cincinnati Bengals. When wide receiver-punt returner Willie Drewrey suffered a dislocated elbow in Sunday's 37-34 loss to Pittsburgh, Jeffires got his chance to get back on the roster. "I'm willing and ready to play," said Jeffires, a first-round selection from North Carolina State in 1987.

"I've been practicing hard on the field, hoping they'd take me off the injury list." "I don't know how much I can do with the type of offense we have and with guys like Drew and Ernest," Jeffires said. Jeffires will be available for the Oilers' "Red Gun" offense that includes four wide receivers. Hill and Givins have been among the most potent receiving duos the past three seasons. Hill has 985 yards and 61 receptions this season and is nearing his third, 1,000-yard season in four years. Givins has 797 yards and 50 catches. "I think they are two of the best things going in the NFL right now," Jeffires said. "Those guys have pro-

ven themselves and they are doing a good job." "I don't come in and say I'm as good as Ernest and Drew, even though in my mind, I think I am," Jeffires said. Jeffires says working against Houston's outstanding secondary gives him confidence, although he has little playing time. "It's hard to get an ankle well because you have to keep working on it," Jeffires said. "I definitely feel I can get past those guys and there's no better defensive backs than these Oilers." The Oilers, 9-5, still have a chance to win their first AFC Central Division title if they defeat Cincinnati and Cleveland and Cincinnati also loses its finale to Washington.

# Lady Aggies host Pan Am

The Texas A&M Lady Aggies will be looking to run their record to 4-2 tonight as they take on a winless Pan American team at 7:30 p.m. in G. Rollie White Coliseum. The Lady Aggies recently returned from a 1-2 road trip in which they defeated Kansas State University but suffered losses to the University of Minnesota and the University of North Texas. The first stop on the road trip for A&M was in Denton, where the Lady Eagles handed a 60-53 loss to the A&M team. Diane Deere came off the bench to add 10 points and grab 14 rebounds. The Lady Aggies bounced back to beat Kansas State 65-62 in the opening round of the Dial Classic held at the University of Minnesota. Freshman Dena Russo set a school record for three-point shots made in a single game, hitting 4-for-4 from the three-point stripe. In the tournament title game against the hosting Minnesota Gophers, A&M watched a 14-point halftime lead disappear as they lost a 79-67 decision. Donna Roper led the Lady Aggies with a season-high 29 points and was named to the all-tournament team. Roper leads the team with an average of 31 points per game. The Pan American Lady Broncos (0-4) will be looking to snap a 33-game losing streak. The Lady Aggies lead the series 20-10. Last year, A&M defeated the Lady Broncos 110-50, breaking the school records along the way. "Pan American isn't the caliber of team that we faced last week," Lady Aggie coach Lynn Hickey said. "But you never want to drop your guard and go into a game thinking you don't have to practice."

# Thomases lead finalists for Lombardi Award

HOUSTON (AP) — Nebraska linebacker Broderick Thomas, a Houston native, is coming home for Christmas and hopes to find a Lombardi Award awaiting him Thursday night. Thomas, the outspoken leader of the Cornhusker defense, is one of the finalists for the award, given annually to the top collegiate linebacker in the nation. The other finalists are defensive tackles Mark Messner of Michigan and Tracy Rucker of Auburn and linebacker Derrick Thomas of Alabama. Rucker was a finalist last year when Ohio State linebacker Chris Spielman won the award. Derrick Thomas earlier was named winner of the Dick Butkus Award as the nation's top linebacker. "From the time I left (home), I always said that one day I'd be back for the Lombardi Award," Broderick Thomas said. "I'll be back home Thursday night. Hopefully, it will be to pick up my trophy." The trophy is named in honor of

Vince Lombardi, the former coach of the Green Bay Packers and Washington Redskins who died of cancer in 1970. The dinner benefits the American Cancer Society. Lombardi was a member of the Fordham line that was called the "Seven Blocks of Granite." The trophy is in the form of a 40-pound block of granite. Broderick Thomas, 6-3, 250, leads the Nebraska defense in nine categories including 98 tackles, 10 quarterback sacks and 17 tackles for losses. Rucker, 6-3, 278, was a finalist for the honor as a junior. He finished with 342 career tackles and 20 quarterback sacks for the Tigers, who will play Florida State in the Sugar Bowl. Rucker was named winner Wednesday of the Outland Trophy, which also honors the nation's outstanding lineman. "Auburn has had more outstanding defensive linemen than any other team in the country the last eight years, and Tracy Rucker may

be the very best," Tennessee Coach John Majors said. Rucker's tackle production is off this season because of the Tigers' efficient offense. Rucker played only eight plays in a 56-7 victory over Kansas. Rucker was the only junior among last season's finalists. He led the Tiger tacklers as a freshman and earned nomination last year despite an injury. Derrick Thomas helped the Alabama Crimson Tide earn a spot in the Sun Bowl against Army on Christmas Eve. "My season started not-so-hot," Derrick Thomas said. "I wasn't very productive against Temple, but starting with the Kentucky game I had a game I couldn't even imagine." "Since then, it's been all downhill. Now teams are having to do things to stop me and my teammates," Messner, 6-3, 244, is Michigan's all-time leader with 69 tackles for losses of 375 yards. He has 36 sacks for 273 yards in losses.

Messner describes his style as all-out. "Hustle compensates a lot for mistakes," he said. "When I was little, my mom was always saying, 'Don't spill the milk. Don't spill the milk.' You naturally made yourself avoid spilling the milk." "Now it's 'Don't lose contain. Don't lose contain.'" Ohio State's Jim Stillwagon won the first award in 1970. Other winners were: Walt Patulski, Notre Dame, 1971; Rich Glover, Nebraska, 1972; John Hicks, Ohio State, 1973; Randy White, Maryland, 1974; Lee Roy Selmon, Oklahoma, 1975; Wilson Whitley, Houston, 1976; Ross Browner, Notre Dame, 1977; Bruce Clark, Penn State, 1978; Brad Budde, Southern California, 1979; Hugh Green, Pittsburgh, 1980; Kenneth Sims, Texas, 1981; Dave Rimington, Nebraska, 1982; Dean Steinkuhler, Nebraska, 1983; Tony Degrate, Texas, 1984; Tony Casillas, Oklahoma, 1985, and Cornelius Bennett, Alabama, 1986.

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