

ORAL ROBERTS COME TO SAVE THE RIO GRANDE VALLEY FROM SATAN

## Fair-weather chess fans make defeat difficult to accept

I remember the first A&M chess meets I went to. They were small affairs, being held in Rudder Theater with only about 15 or 20 people attending. A small chess table was set up on the stage, and the fans would quietly watch, supporting our team, win, stalemate, or lose.

A few years ago, A&M got a few good draft picks and a new coach with a multi-million dollar contract. He went to some high schools and recruited some unknowns with a lot of potential. He got the team into shape and soon A&M was winning chess matches.

The chess seasons came and went, and the team grew better and better, each year inching up in the national polls.

Last year, the season took off like a bullet, A&M losing only one game to Oklahoma State University in their first month of play. More students started coming to the games, and Rudder Theater became noisier as the season progressed.

In March, the Associated Press ranked A&M number one on a national chess poll. Students at A&M and even old Ags started attending the meets in droves. Some people that never knew A&M had a chess team started going to chess matches. When the Theater began selling out, the chess team moved to Rudder Auditorium, and finally to G. Rollie White Coliseum.

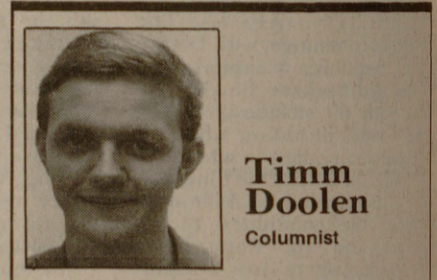
In mid-season there was a serious injury to the top player. He injured his hand by hitting a time clock too fast and was out for a week with a blister. Luckily the team had enough momentum to hang on to the top spot in the nation, despite the absence of their top man.

At the height of the season, the coach formed the Chess Chicks, a dozen of the best-looking Aggie females, who retrieved discarded pieces from the playing board. I wondered whether they really understood the game, or just did it to wear the cute uniforms and appear on calendars.

In April, A&M faced our arch rival, the University of Texas, at the conference chess tournament. ESPN carried two of the matches, which were held at G. Rollie White. The Corps of Cadets marched in for the first time ever at an A&M chess tournament, and all the yell leaders showed up.

A spotlight shone down around the two players in the center of the court and the scoreboard kept a running tally of the pieces taken. Every time one of our men took another player's piece, the crowd would whoop and holler. The yell leaders led some yells, but somehow "Farmer's Fight" just didn't seem appropriate in that setting.

The top man for A&M went up against the top player for Texas. The Texas man won the first game outright. Our man was behind in the second half of the second game and many of the fans left before the Aggie came back to win.



**Timm Doolen**  
Columnist

The third game was stalled at stalemate until at the last second the Aggie pulled through and checkmated the Longhorn.

With victory over Texas at that match came the Southwest Conference title, and later, a national championship. Our team was at its height of popularity with A&M making headlines everywhere as having the best amateur chess team in the world.

During the off season, several members of the team went on a speaking tour of Texas high schools. They told of their rigorous training schedule: up at 5 p.m. for wind sprints and hand and arm exercises; and after classes they're timed on how fast they could checkmate a Queen's gambit setup.

Only one senior of the team graduated, so A&M was ranked number one before the next season started, and attendance was high at the first few games. The team started out strong, then started losing, and finally went into a slump. The pressure on the team was intense, and the stress took its toll on the players. At one game, a fight broke out that cleared the benches for both teams.

A month into the season, the chess coach was charged by the NCAA on 22 recruiting violations. The most serious was of importing a 63-year-old Polish chess player, whom the coach claimed was a freshman for the previous five years.

The coach resigned amidst the controversy, and the team started going downhill. They started losing match after match, and were lucky if they could beat a high school team.

The fans' support started waning. As the season went on, the bleachers emptied and the crowd thinned. They were moved back to Rudder Theater, but by the fifth week of the losing streak, the team couldn't fill the first row.

I still attend the chess meets. There are not too many people around at the matches anymore, but I still have fun when they win, and feel bad when they lose. It's a lot quieter in the stands now, but I know that the few dozen fans that still support the chess team will be with them to the end, and I like it that way.

*Timm Doolen is a sophomore computer science major and a columnist for The Battalion.*

## Mail Call

### Biff, we're low on rum

**EDITOR:**  
For what it is worth, I would like to add a few comments about J. Frank Hernandez's column concerning the Corps. Hey, J. Frank, if you have not figured it out yet, the Corps is a military organization. This explains why they dress alike, walk in straight lines (i.e. march), and do their outfit yells. I fail to see how this constitutes segregation and discrimination. You might as well accuse non-regs of being discriminatory. After all, the Corps can't even eat in Sbisas except for weekends. It would seem that if the Corps wanted to be discriminatory and segregate non-regs, it would ban us non-regs from eating in Duncan at all.

Also, the 6:10 p.m. deadline was not established solely by the Corps. It included food services people and (lo and behold!) non-regs. Go figure.

If you can't eat at Duncan because it's past 6:10 p.m., what is wrong with walking to Sbisas? You walk to your classes, don't you?

I don't ever recall hearing the Corps whine about having to walk to Sbisas last year.

I would also like to address your comments about hazing. Unless you were or are in the Corps (and I don't get that impression), I seriously doubt you are qualified to say what goes on "inside" that organization. Since the hazing law was passed, compare the track record of the Corps to that of fraternities. I've seen more incidents of hazing within the fraternities than in the Corps.

From what you wrote, I gather that your definition of hazing in the Corps is exercise, dressing alike and humping it. I would much rather be hazed in that manner than by having Biff over here pour a liter of rum down my throat because "it's cool."

You indicated you are considering filing a lawsuit for violation of your civil rights.

If you remember, there are thousands of cadets who entered military service and gave their lives in the name of this country to ensure that someone like you will have civil rights, the right to publish a "newspaper" and the right to file idiotic lawsuits.

Stephen P. O'Neill '88

### Playing ostrich

**EDITOR:**  
Carol Landry, Class of '87, wrote a short note in Monday's *Battalion* saying J. Frank Hernandez and anyone else who didn't adhere to Texas A&M's traditions and the Corps should go to another school.

It may come as a surprise to her — and anyone else who foolishly clings to the past — that Texas A&M University's main priority is education, not what used to be. No doubt the military background of the school is accentuated far beyond the number of students who currently are in uniform on campus.

What to me is the highest of ironies is that if Ms. Landry followed her own advice, she would never have attended A&M in the first place. Why not? Of course, she and others like her would know that for almost 100 years Texas A&M was all male.

Don't get me wrong — I'm glad she is an Aggie — or what the military used to call women here, a Maggie. Sadly, she doesn't appreciate the changes at A&M since 1963 or she wouldn't think as she does.

I'm nearly 40 years old and will get a journalism degree this year. All I ever wanted was a speech degree from Texas A&M, but narrow-minded people such as Ms. Landry kept the degree from the curriculum because it was "unnecessary." I cannot tell you the number of times I was told to go to UT to get such a degree, that a real Aggie wouldn't want one.

Happily, I can say A&M does offer a speech degree now, and you cannot imagine how happy it makes an old man feel to know the next student body president here is a speech major.

You see, Ms. Landry, when we keep our heads in the sand, the rest of the world passes us by while we continue to cling to old, outdated concepts. Keep up the writing, though, for Texas A&M does allow dissent to be stated, publicly.

Tim Stanfield

*Letters to the editor should not exceed 300 words in length. The editorial staff reserves the right to edit letters for style and length, but will make every effort to maintain the author's intent. Each letter must be signed and must include the classification, address and telephone number of the writer.*

# Drug war must be fought with actions, not words

Earlier this year, a woman was walking on a main thoroughfare in a suburb north of Chicago. She was going to meet her husband for dinner.

She and her husband have been friends of mine for 30 years. They are two of the most civilized people I've ever known. I never heard either of them say a cruel word about anyone.

The woman didn't reach the restaurant. She was found near an alley, bleeding from severe head wounds. Someone had apparently struck her with a blunt instrument.

She died a few weeks later. Because she never regained consciousness, we can't be certain what happened. But it isn't hard to figure.

Someone probably grabbed for her purse. Out of shock or instinct, she may have resisted. The thief or thieves hit her. It happens often in and around the big cities.

**Mike Royko**  
Columnist

Something else isn't hard to figure. She was walking a short distance from a neighborhood where gangs and drugs are a reality.

So the odds are the blows came from a dopehead needing money for a fix. Few professional criminals ply their trade so stupidly.

It's happening in Chicago, Washington, New York, Cleveland, Detroit, and just about every other middle- to big-size city. It has slopped over from the inner cities to the quieter neighborhoods and out into some suburbs.

And what's being done? Well, in Washington, the center of America's journalistic-governmental hot air industry, they are fighting with words, President Bush's new drug czar is

harping at the mayor of Washington for not being cooperative about some vague plan for the feds and the locals to get together in a new drug war. The mayor just as vaguely says that isn't true, he'd be happy to cooperate.

More talk. And in the time it takes for them to exchange empty words, another few tons of cocaine move as easily into this country as clouds drift across the sky.

Much of it will be converted into crack. And some crack users, unable to work for a living, will go out with a lead pipe or a bat and hit defenseless women, or blow a hole in a convenience store clerk.

That's all we've been getting from Washington during the years the dope industry has grown — blabber and more blabber.

Queen Nancy urged the nation to "just say no." She could afford so simple-minded a solution. With Se-

cret Service agents front and rear, nobody was going to slap her on the head.

And while Nancy was saying "say no," her husband's administration was playing footsie with the countries that pump the dope into this country. We were giving them financial aid. It's even believed that some of the contra leaders — described by Ron as the moral equivalent of our founding fathers — were in the drug business. Maybe I missed something in history class, but when did George Washington sell cocaine?

Basically, the war on drugs has been, and will continue to be, a fraud. There aren't enough cops in the cities to deal with all the local peddlers and users. There aren't enough jails to house them.

Part of that problem is the federal government doesn't want to waste money on cities. It can put our billions to better use at the Pentagon. We can blow up the Soviet Union 10

times, but D.C. can't spare a few bucks so a woman can safely meet her husband for dinner.

Part of the problem is the people in Washington who make foreign policy and look at the big picture don't want to offend our friends, the drug-dealing nations.

I don't wish harm to anyone, but their attitudes might change if a few White House and State Department wives didn't make it to dinner alive.

And part of the problem is the odd notion that we can't use our military against drug merchants.

I'm not suggesting that we have tanks rolling down Dopeville Street, or Marines storming crack houses.

But, is it unthinkable to have Army troops along the Mexican border? Would it be rude to use the Air Force to chase air drug shipments? Would it be an inconvenience to admirals if the Navy searched out drug boats?

As for the crisis in prison space,

I've never understood why prisons have to be more expensive to build than luxury housing.

And there are wars, no-frill prison camps are built, simple and cheap. Barracks surrounded by high barbed-wire fences, maybe electrified, with armed guard towers, search lights and mean dogs.

We have vast stretches of useless, remote land in this country, perfectly suitable for prison campus. True, inmates might not learn a useful trade or earn a college degree, and visitors might have a long journey. But life is full of tradeoffs. The criminals might be unhappy, but nice people will be safer.

So, if we are going to have a genuine war on drugs, we need a new drug slogan. Why doesn't everyone out there drop a post card to the White House with this slogan on it? "Say No To Bull----!"

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The *Battalion* also serves as a laboratory newspaper for students in reporting, editing and photography classes within the Department of Journalism.

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