

Wednesday, June 21, 1989

## A&M baseball signs 12 players to letters of intent

Texas A&M head baseball coach Mark Johnson on Tuesday released a list of 12 players who have signed national letters of intent with the baseball program.

Four of the 12 signees are transfers from a strong San Jacinto Junior College baseball program and include outfielder Chad Broussard, a 5-11, 180-pound junior from Houston; right-hand pitcher Jason Bullard, a 6-1, 180-pound junior from Sweeney; left-hand pitcher Rich Robertson, a 6-3, 170-pound junior from Waller and outfielder Dan Robinson, a 6-2, 175-pound junior from Spring.

Other signees included: infielder Sean Drinkwater, a 6-3, 175-pound freshman from El Toro High School in El Toro, Calif.; catcher Billy Harlan, a 6-1, 180-pound freshman from Corsicana; Bryan native and right-hand pitcher Brian Harrison, a junior transfer from Northwood Institute; right-hand pitcher

Chris Messick, a 6-1, 165-pound freshman from Plano and catcher David Rollen, a 6-0, 185-pound junior transfer from Panola Junior College.

Record-setting Brenham right-hander Jon Peters has brought smiles to the faces of many Aggie baseball faithful with his choice to attend A&M while coach Johnson also secured two other prospects from outside the state in signing junior right-hander Bo Sibezy from Des Moines, Iowa and outfielder Brian Thomas, a freshman from Portland, Ore.

"We are pleased with this recruiting class," Johnson said. "Several of these players will be able to step in and compete for starting positions next season."

"I consider this a regrouping year, not a rebuilding year," Johnson said. "We are looking to continue the winning tradition that has been established at Texas A&M and I feel these players will help us maintain that tradition."

## Gibbs inherits what Switzer left behind

### Vows to remove cloud that has hung over OU football program

NORMAN, Okla. (AP) — Gary Gibbs, a player and then a defensive coordinator under Barry Switzer, was designated to succeed Switzer as Oklahoma's head football coach Tuesday.

Gibbs, winning the recommendation of the school's interim president and its athletic director, said he would remove the cloud that has hovered over the scandal-plagued football program by "doing it right."

"We've got to remove that cloud, that uncertainty of 'What's going on down there? Who's in control?'" Gibbs said. "We're a bunch of good guys. All we've got to do is the right thing."

Gibbs' appointment must be approved by the university's regents, who meet today.

Switzer quit Monday, after having coached Oklahoma to three national championships and 12 Big Eight Conference titles.

Gibbs would be the third alumnus to hold the job. His only college experience — as a player and as an assistant coach — is at Oklahoma.

Gibbs was born in Beaumont and graduated from Spring Branch High School in Houston in 1970 and received his bachelor's degree in marketing and his master's in business administration from Oklahoma.

He lettered as a linebacker for the Sooners in 1972, 1973 and 1974 and was a starter for the 1974 Oklahoma team that went undefeated and won the national championship.

He joined the Oklahoma staff in August 1975, assisting with the offensive line from 1975 through 1977. He coached defensive ends from 1978 to 1982 and became defensive coordinator in January 1981. He also has coached linebackers.

The 1984 Sooners ranked first in the Big Eight Conference and seventh nationally in total defense.

In 1985, the Sooners defense led the nation in total defense and pass defense and finished second in defense against the rush and scoring defense.

In 1986, the Sooners led the nation in four statistical categories. In 1987, the Sooners led the nation in

total defense, scoring defense and pass defense.

Switzer had recommended that his successor come from the school.

"But I want to tell you that even if we had conducted a national search for our new coach rather than promote from within, I do not believe we could have found a better person for the job," David Swank, the university's interim president, said. "Gary Gibbs is one of the outstanding young coaches in the country."

The change at the top comes six weeks before fall practice begins and just more than two months before the Sooners' Sept. 2 opening game against New Mexico State.

Gibbs fielded questions involving the pressure he would face in following the winningest coach in Oklahoma football.

"I'm Gary Gibbs. I know what I can do," Gibbs said. "Your comparison is your comparison. We're going to go forward and make this thing happen."

Gibbs, 36, was chosen over two

other assistant coaches — Merv Johnson, 53, and Jim Donnan, 34.

"OU has a history of young coaches rising to the top," Athletic Director Donnie Duncan said. "In the years to come you'll understand why I made the recommendation to name Gary Gibbs as head football coach."

Switzer was 35 when he was named head coach in 1973. Chuck Fairbanks, whom Switzer succeeded, became head coach at Oklahoma in 1967 at age 33.

Switzer became head coach while Oklahoma was serving a two-year NCAA probation. He leaves the program in the first year of a three-year probation, mostly for recruiting violations.

The program's woes were compounded, however, when five players were charged with felonies involving drugs, guns and sexual assault in a two-month period after the probation was handed down in December.

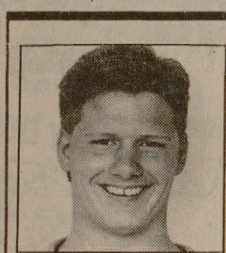
## Building through the draft a key to NBA expansion success

The party's over for Rick Mahorn. One day he's a champion, the next he's a chump. The Minnesota Timberwolves chose Mahorn in last week's NBA expansion draft.

Is it fair? Sure it is. Detroit was just too deep not to lose a good player. Sure, Mahorn has a lot to be upset about, but there's nothing he can do about it. It's the kind of move that reminds us that the NBA is a business.

But Minnesota needs to be careful not to make too many bad "business deals" in their first few years of NBA infancy. What an expansion team does in its first few years will have a big impact on their success in the next 15 to 20 years.

The Orlando Magic, who will join the Timberwolves in the NBA this year, has the same problem. The trades, draft picks and players these two teams deal with in the first



**Robbie Scichili**  
Sports Writer

few years could literally make or break them.

The key to success in the NBA is building a quality team from the draft. If a team decides to trade players and draft picks for other players, they are blowing their future to maybe win today.

A smart team will attempt to stockpile

their draft picks so that they can grow their own players. Doing this allows the players to form a chemistry over the years that will make them more dangerous. A team can have all the talent in the world, but if there is no chemistry between the players, it won't work.

The Atlanta Hawks are a good example of this. Last year, they had a good number of proven scorers who were used to being the focus of the offense. They would have been great had they been allowed to play with five basketballs.

Coaches and General Managers know that good teams aren't built overnight. There is no such thing as a quick fix. If Minnesota and Orlando did their homework and looked for a good example to follow, they need not look any farther than 1980.

The expansion Dallas Mavericks felt that

if they traded away a few of their expansion players for draft picks, their future could be a bright one. How right they were. They made trades that year that brought them draft picks which they used to select Rolando Blackman, Sam Perkins, Roy "the rebound" Tarpley and Derek Harper.

A team looking for a quick fix could find life in the NBA a nightmare for a few years. The Cleveland Cavaliers traded away their number one draft pick for four straight years to obtain players, hoping for immediate results. The results turned out to be rather ugly. Cleveland was always at the bottom of the standings, and they had no chance of improving because they had no draft picks to deal with.

The Miami Heat, who entered the NBA last year, has followed Dallas' example and are beginning to stockpile draft picks. They have the fourth pick in this year's draft, and

have spent some cold hard cash to make sure they pick the right man. The Heat has hired private investigators to research a few of their top choices to make sure there is no history of drug or alcohol abuse in their past.

The Heat also feels that drafting a proven winner instead of proven scorers will give them an even better player. Not a bad philosophy. Larry Bird was doubted by a number of pro scouts that he could play in the NBA. The Celtics knew he was a winner and would make the players around him better. They were exactly right.

These new expansion teams could be the teams of the 90's. They could dominate the NBA like the Lakers and Celtics used to. The World Champion Minnesota Timberwolves - sounds funny, doesn't it? If they play their cards right, they may be the ones laughing someday.

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