

Monday, September 18, 1989

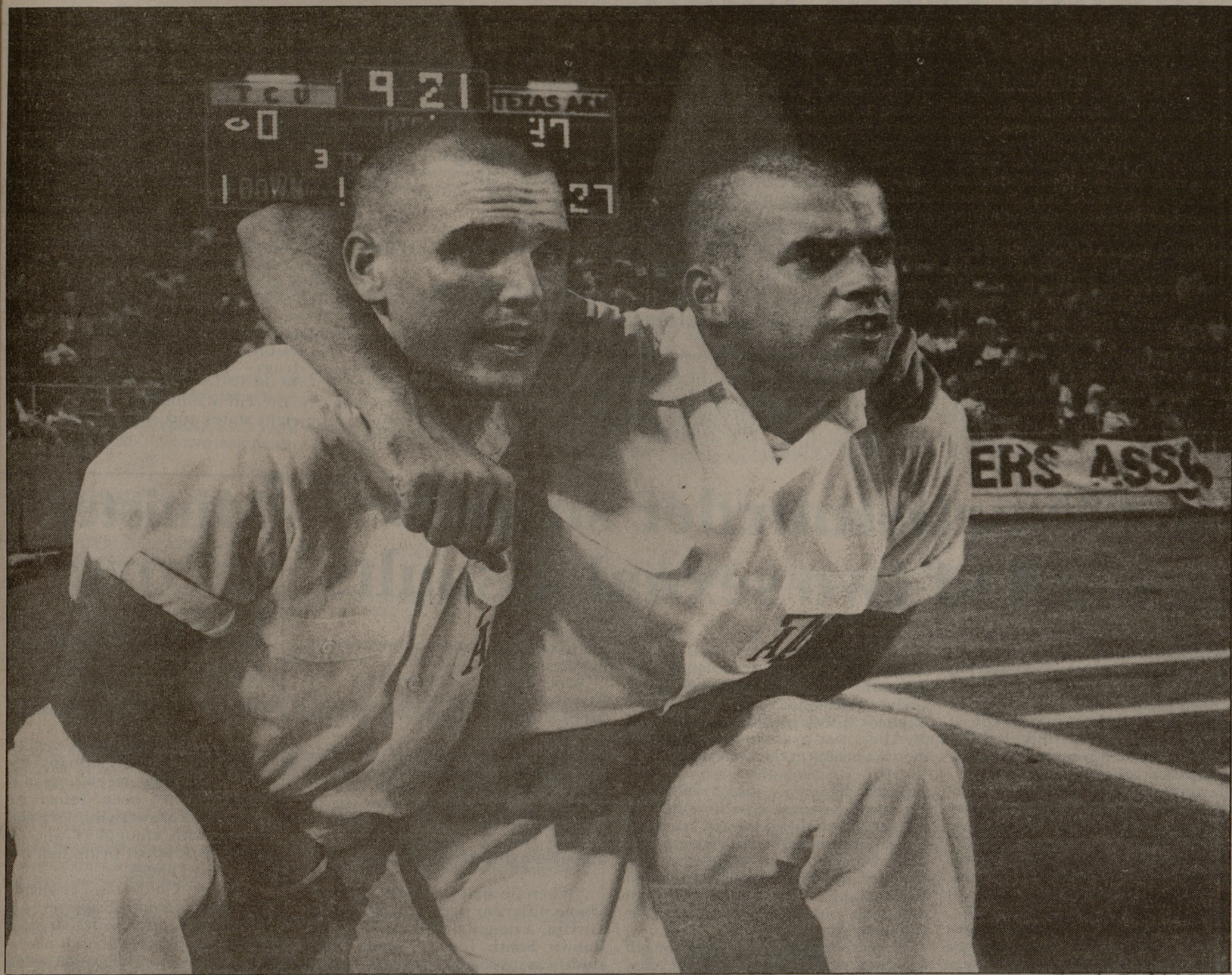


Photo by Fredrick D. Joe

Squeeze, army!

Junior yell leaders Kevin Fitzgerald(left) and Brant Ince(right) watch moments before TCU scores its only touchdown of Saturday's game. The touchdown only made a small dent for the Horned Frogs who were beaten by the Aggies, 44-7.

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Salt levels increase in Colorado River reservoirs

AUSTIN (AP) — Colorado River reservoirs are slowly being infiltrated with a heavy concentration of salt that is being washed out of an ancient natural West Texas lake after two years of heavy rains.

Although most of the saltwater is trapped in E.V. Spence Reservoir, 315 river-miles from Lake Buchanan, it has started to increase the salinity of reservoirs farther upstream in the Highland Lakes chain, the *Austin American-Statesman* reported.

High salinity can produce bad-tasting drinking water and interfere with reproduction of fish. But

Lower Colorado River Authority officials monitoring the problem don't think it will get that serious.

"I think it's a non-recurring phenomenon that's going to wash itself out over a few years," S. David Freeman, LCRA general manager said.

Still, water samples taken from Lake Buchanan since the salt began trickling downstream have shown the presence of chlorides, a measure of salt content, consistently between 250 and 300 parts per million, the newspaper reported.

State health officials recommend that drinking water contain no more than 300 parts per million of chlo-

rides. However, no action is taken against water systems delivering drinking water with higher chloride content.

Only one sample from Lake Buchanan has exceeded the recommended limit. Water from Inks Lake, the next in the Highland Lakes chain, also has consistently tested near the suggested limit.

But Lake Buchanan and Inks Lake provide drinking water only for marinas, lodges, Inks Lake State Park and lakeside homeowners.

The next two lakes in the chain — Lakes LBJ and Marble Falls — provide water for municipal supply sys-

tems. LCRA statistics show the chloride levels on both lakes have increased substantially.

"We've been tracking it and planning for it," Ron Bond, acting director of the city's water and waste water department said. "If and when it gets here and affects our water, we want to be able to deliver water that's still acceptable."

Natural Dam Lake at Big Spring, whose earthen dam was possibly formed by glacial deposits, is the culprit in the salt story.

The salt concentration in the lake increased over the years through evaporation. Also, high-saline water occurring during periods of low flow in the Colorado was pumped into Natural Dam Lake to keep it out of Spence Reservoir.

The lake received as much as 90 inches of rain in 1986 and 1987, according to J.R. Lewis, assistant manager of the Colorado River Municipal Water District.

Chloride readings in Spence Reservoir shot up from 700 parts per million before the spill to as high as 2,400 afterward. The water now being released from Spence contains 1,100 parts per million of chlorides, according to the LCRA.

The higher saline content of Spence Reservoir, however, has had no impact on fish, according to Billy Follis, a fisheries biologist with the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department in San Angelo.

Communities feel economy crunch; compete with each other for prisons

AUSTIN (AP) — When oil and dollars swirled aplenty nine years ago, state officials looking for a new Texas prison site were jeered out of town and city alike.

Now, particularly in small towns, they're being greeted with a reverence ordinarily reserved for the local high school football team.

Many of the 46 communities yearning for the boon of a state prison in their back yards have seen industries move on, jobs vanish and plywood replace downtown store fronts.

And many rural residents say they no longer can afford to be snobbish about having a prison in town.

"Right now, it's the most important thing happening in this community and five others around us," James

Driver, chairman of the Childress prison committee said. "It could be life or death."

The winners of the "prison derby" will be announced by the Texas Board of Criminal Justice in November. At stake are six facilities — three maximum security to house 2,500 inmates each, and three minimum security for 1,000 inmates each. Four of those prisons are included in a \$500 million bond proposal that goes before voters Nov. 7.

The larger facilities translate into 800 new jobs with a \$16.8 million annual payroll, and the smaller prisons mean 260 new jobs and \$6 million new consumer dollars.

U.S. supermarket awed Soviet official as much as NASA

HOUSTON (AP) — Soviet politician Boris Yeltsin wrapped up a meeting with NASA officials about possible U.S.-Soviet space links with an eye-opening event: a visit to a local grocery store.

"Even the Politburo doesn't have this choice," Yeltsin said, as he looked over fish and meat at Randall's Supermarket in Clear Lake, near the Johnson Space Center. "Not even Mr. Gorbachev."

Yeltsin, 58, who arrived in the United States on Sept. 9 for an eight-day stay, visited Houston on Saturday to tour the space center and get a first-hand look at Mission Control and a mock up of the planned space station, Freedom.

Houston was included among the Yeltsin's tour of several U.S. cities as a favor to Soviet cosmonauts.

"In the USSR, I've been in favor of cutting back on the space program because we can't afford it," Yeltsin said through an interpreter. He said cosmonauts are "nervous about the situation" so they requested he visit the space center.

Yeltsin, former chief of the Moscow Communist Party and newly elected to the revamped Soviet parliament and the Supreme Soviet, said he favors a more cooperative arrangement between the two superpowers when it comes to space exploration.

"I am opposed to us competing with each other in this way," Yeltsin said.

"We're spending more money on space exploration because we are competing, he said.

"The more joint flights there are to Mars or to the moon, or to a space station, the better it will be," Yeltsin said. "The Soviet Union has some advantages in flight, and the U.S. has some advantages."

Yeltsin has said the Soviet Union should cut space spending to use the money to improve its economy.

"Sometimes I wish one of you would come over and whisper in my ear which of the space programs we could easily get rid of," Yeltsin told Aaron Cohen, director of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's Johnson Space Center.

Yeltsin, who has an engineering background, asked many detailed questions about the programs, including the Freedom space station that is scheduled to be constructed beginning in 1995.

He called the Houston center a "national resource" and praised officials for their openness with him.

"We still have a spy mania in our country," he said.

A&M sailing team glides to victory at Rice opener

By Bob Krenek

Of The Battalion Staff

With the wind at their backs, the A&M Sailing Team opened the season with a victory at the Rice Invitational Sept. 9.

The Sailing Team is a group of students that competes in sailing regattas against teams from schools around the region and country.

After finishing third place in their district last year and narrowly missing an opportunity to advance to the national championships, the team is looking forward to the upcoming season, Tom Welch, president of the team, said.

"We are confident we will end up at the nationals," he said.

The team will continue its quest for a spot in the nationals next weekend when it competes in the McCarthy Cup Regatta at the University of Texas.

Various members of the group compete in about 15 regattas per semester, Welch said. The team competes in the Southeastern Intercollegiate Sailing Association along with other schools from around the region. Team standings are calculated at the end of the season on the basis of race finishes and the top two teams in the district advance to the nationals in May.

"We finished third by two points last year," Welch said, "and the last few regattas were cancelled because of bad weather, so we were really disappointed that we didn't have a chance to come back."

The boats used by the team are two-man dinghy sailboats, Welch said, that do not differ from traditional sailboats at all. The races are conducted on short, triangle-shaped courses and are usually completed in 15 minutes.

"The races are highly competitive and very tactical," Welch said. About six boats compete in each heat and they begin in a starting zone 15 to 25 yards long.

"The boats are given a three-minute starting sequence," Welch said. "As they approach the start line there is a lot of jockeying for the best position. The idea is to hit the start line when the clock is at zero."

Once the race is underway, Welch said, the keys are keeping boat speed up, watching the other boats and looking for wind shifts.

"You have to consider all these things to know where to put the boat," he said. "With all the tactics involved, it's a lot like chess."

The team practices at the Bryan Utilities Lake five days a week for four to five hours.

"We have a wide range of skill levels, from very skilled to very beginning level people," Welch said. "It's a lot of work but almost everyone who participates gets to sail in a regatta. We will let everyone compete."

The club is a self-supporting organization that depends on donations and fund-raisers to finance its activities. Although the club has become a part of the Recreation and Sports program at Texas A&M, the club will not receive any financial help for another year.

"We are trying to raise money by working with alumni," Welch said. "We have had a tremendous amount of support from them. We are trying to raise enough money so we can travel around the country a couple of times each semester to compete in top regattas."

"We want to build a program that will be ranked nationally in the next ten years."

The club meets every Wednesday night at 8 p.m. in 104 Zachry.



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