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Tournament hoops could force football to SWC back burner

DALLAS (AP) — They are joking now that there are only two sports in the Southwest Conference: regular season basketball and tournament basketball.

With Texas and Arkansas making the NCAA tournament final eight, spring football was a back burner topic around SWC sports circles.

What would D.X. Bible, Homer Norton, and Abe Martin think? Suddenly the commissioner of the SWC, Fred Jacoby, is facing problems that former commissioners Howard Grubbs and Cliff Speegle wouldn't have dreamed possible. It's giving Jacoby hoopmares.

How about the demands for a full-time supervisor of officials for basketball, for example?

There will be an SWC officiating committee meeting in May to discuss the matter.

Texas coach Tom Penders has criticized part-time supervisor Paul Galvan, who also supervises the Southland Conference when he isn't busy as a principal for a Fort Worth junior high school.

"I don't have anything against Paul," Penders said. "I just think you can't be a big-time basketball league until you have a full-time supervisor of officials. I tried to call him three times and he never got back to me."

Jacoby is doing his homework. He said that of the 30 automatic qualifiers in the NCAA tournament, only five leagues have full-time officials. They are the Atlantic Coast Conference (which has two Final Four teams), the Southeast Conference, the Big 10, the Big Eight, and a fifth that Jacoby wasn't sure of. The Big 10 and Big Eight just went to a full-time official this last season.

Jacoby said he wants to present the total picture at the May meeting and "if the conference wants to hire one, we'll hire one."

Jacoby wants to make three points

about officiating: — "As long as you've got a and a loser you will have officiating problems."

— "You can't remove emphasis from a coach's evaluation."

— "The officiating problem is more than an official. It's the players, game administrators, all have to work with the problem."

He added, "There's no problem hiring somebody. The problem is getting somebody who is qualified who wants to give up a good job."

Jacoby is looking into a system that would provide a region where officials could be drawn from the Big Eight, SEC, etc. He said of the problems is familiar to SWC, the league has a 2-plus-2.

"We try to prevent overlap between an official and a school," Jacoby said. "We try to see to it that referees no more than two games home and two on the road. A school shouldn't see an official four or a 28-game season."

Jacoby said he doesn't see SWC officiating as any better or worse than any other conference.

Speaking of Penders, Jacoby said he will wait until after the Final Four to have something to say about Penders' outbursts against SWC officiating during the recent tournament. The once-reprimanded Penders could be taken out of a coach's box for a game next season.

"Anything we do will have to be until next season," Jacoby said.

Such are the problems now plaguing the administration of "basketball conference."

Grubbs and Speegle never knew what they were going to miss.

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Ag tracksters try to qualify for NCAA

By NADJA SABAWALA Of The Battalion Staff

The Texas A&M track and field squad will try to qualify more athletes for the NCAA Outdoor Championship this weekend when they travel to Dallas to compete in Saturday's SMU Relay Festival.

Morrison-Bell Track Stadium will play host to a field of 10 teams, including Southwest Conference rivals A&M, Texas Christian, Baylor and Texas.

"This should be a good meet for us since we'll be going against some of the better teams in our conference," head coach Charlie Thomas said.

Some Aggies already have qualified for the NCAA Outdoor Championships including pole vaulter Greg West, decathlete Steve Peregory and high hurdler Richard Bucknor.

NCAA indoor champion shotputter Mike Stulce, who holds the record 70-6 1/4 throw which is a personal best as well as the longest recorded throw in the world so far this year, will sit out this weekend because of an elbow injury sustained in the indoor championship meet.

Junior College All-American shotputter Steve Collier, discus thrower Henrik Ramstad, high hurdler Greg Williams and high jumper Wally Reid hope to qualify this weekend.

The 400-meter relay team of seniors Richard Bucknor and Derrick Florence, and juniors Andre Cason and Steve Lofton missed qualifying last weekend by a .02 margin at the College Station Relays with a time of 39.67 and look forward to improving their time.

"We'll really concentrate on our relays and hopefully we'll be able to qualify some people," Thomas said.

The 400-meter team also must concentrate on defeating the NCAA title-holding TCU Horned Frog relay team who beat Aggies by .3 a year ago.

A&M's 1600-meter relay team of junior Brandon Williams, sophomore Ray Griffiths, Florence and Lofton will be defending their NCAA title against the Baylor Bears who posted a world-leading time last spring. This year's team set a school record with a time of 3:08.57.

Lady Ags look for sunny skies

By VINCE SNYDER Of The Battalion Staff

Despite a little rain, Texas A&M Lady Aggie softball team is hoping to play their game against Sam Houston State University today.

A&M will travel to SHSU. The rain allows, with the first pitch of the doubleheader set for 3 p.m.

The Lady Aggies' doubleheader against Kent State on Wednesday was canceled because of rain, and will not be made up.

The rain could be a blessing in disguise for A&M, especially coming off back-to-back tournaments the past two weeks.

The Lady Aggies are on a streak winning 22 of their last 24 games, with a 29-8 overall record.

Sam Houston State is currently 10-22. The Lady Ags were forced to forfeit nine games this season when junior All-American outfielder Shonta Garr was ruled academically ineligible.

A&M coach Bob Brock, SHSU graduate, feels that his squad is way ahead of where they thought they would be for the time of the year.

"I'm really excited about the team," Brock said. "I couldn't be happier with the way our defense is playing right now, along with the good pitching from Miss Young and Dana Mitchell."

Young's record for the year is 17-5 with a 0.47 Earned Run Average. Mitchell is 12-2 and sporting a 0.95 ERA.

Thomas

(Continued from page 7)

in high school," Thomas said. "I'd never seen a real good slider until I came here."

"It's definitely a big step up. College pitchers know where to pitch it, and they can usually put it where they want it."

Thomas has been where he wants to be lately — in the outfield. But taking over for the injured Dan Robinson wasn't the way that Thomas wanted to break into the outfield.

"Everybody wants to get in and

play, but not in that circumstance," Thomas said.

When Thomas isn't playing baseball, he likes to be outdoors. He likes skiing and hunting.

"Being out walking around in the snow has to be the best thing in the world ... besides baseball and golf," he said.

In one month, Thomas has gone from bench warmer to hero for Aggies.

"I'm happy and I thank God for giving me a chance to play this year," Thomas said.

And Aggie fans are glad to hear Thomas calls Olsen Field home.

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