

THIS YEAR, SCHOOL DOESN'T END ON MAY 8

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Texas A&M Skydiving Club lands national title

By STEVE O'BRIEN
Of The Battalion Staff

When Brian Q. Bergfield pranced around the airfield draped in a Texas A&M flag, rival teams chased him, trying to steal it.

But at this year's National Collegiate Skydiving Championships in Arizona fellow competitors were chasing Bergfield and his A&M teammates for more than a flag.

The TAMU Skydiving Club ran home with a national championship and two impressive individual performances.

A&M's four-way team, named "Tesseract", scored an NCAA-record 28 points en route to the national title over second place Air Force and the combined third place team from Georgia Tech and Iowa State.

Four-way team members Jon Yonke, Anne Henderson, Bennett Browning and Hanspeter Schaub competed against 13 teams representing 18 universities.

The Aggie divers won the four-way diving part of the meet, in which teams of four divers score points for completing aerobic maneuvers while plummeting toward the ground.

After leaping from the plane, four-way teams have 35 seconds to complete a series of designated maneuvers.

Other competitions are held for accuracy and style jumping.

After the first round of four-way there were three teams tied for first with 11 points and A&M was tied for second with ten points.

But the four A&M jumpers leaped to an eight point score in the second round and were left needing another eight points on their third and final jump sequence to win the title.

The Aggie team was slated to jump last so Browning said there was some added pressure before their third and final jump.

"There's a monitor in the clubhouse to televise it live, so while we

were jumping, all the other competitors were watching us," he said. "The pressure was on."

Yonke said their jump position helped to motivate the team.

"We were team 13 so we had the fortune to go last, and we knew exactly what we needed."

Individually, A&M fared just as well with Bergfield placing second in the advanced style competition and Matthew Burton jumping to a fourth place finish in the novice style competition.

The skydiving team's accomplishments are even more impressive considering that the usually dominant teams from the Air Force Academy and West Point are funded by their schools and are directed by full time coaches.

But the A&M team, like many others, has no coach and must fund itself.

"The big competition is between civilians and the military, because West Point competes and Air Force competes and they're always dominating the competition," Henderson said.

"The only real advantage we have is the want and the desire," Yonke explained.

The club is no stranger to success, they finished third in four-way two years ago and second last year, but the team doesn't solely emphasize the competitive aspect of skydiving.

"One of the main goals for the club is to facilitate skydiving," Browning said.

"We do it for the thrill of skydiving," a club member added.

The club has jumps at Coulter Airfield in Bryan every weekend and will have a recruitment meeting 8:30 p.m. January 24 in room 504 of Rudder. The club will also have a table set up in the MSC for prospective members January 21-24.

Bergfield emphasized how simple it was to get started in skydiving and become part of the club. He said a person can go to the Coulter Airstrip almost any Saturday morning and be jumping the same day.

Sierra, seven other Rangers seek a pay raise through arbitration

ARLINGTON (AP) — The Texas Rangers face eight salary battles next month, and outfielder Ruben Sierra could set an arbitration record with his expected request for about \$2.6 million.

Around the majors, 153 players filed by Tuesday's deadline to have their wages determined by an impartial third party. All arbitration contracts are for one season.

The Rangers who filed are: pitchers Brad Arnsberg, Mike Jeffcoat and Bobby Witt; catcher Mark Parent; infielders Steve Buechele and Rafael Palmeiro; and outfielders Pete Incaviglia and Sierra.

The 153 players who filed join six players who became free agents and returned to their teams by accepting arbitration offers last Dec. 19. The 159 players in arbitration is two short of the record set last year.

The overwhelming majority of players will settle before their cases reach arbitrators. Last year, only 24 cases were heard and players won 14.

Players and clubs will exchange figures on Friday, and arbitrators will hear cases during the first three weeks of February. Since the process began in 1974, clubs have won 164 cases and players have won 139.

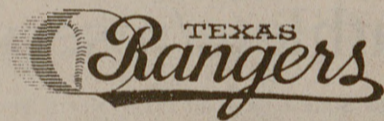
The eight Rangers who filed earned \$4.17 million last season, and the club expects to hand out about \$5 million in raises.

Sierra is expected to ask for \$2.6 million. The largest salary ever determined by an arbitrator is the \$1.975 million given to the Yankees' Don Mattingly in 1987.

"There are some pretty good

names on our team out there," managing general partner George W. Bush said. "All that talk that we're unwilling to spend money should come to a screeching halt. We're prepared to pay the price."

The Rangers also are prepared to let an arbitrator set the price. The owners see arbitration as a tool to be used, not avoided.



"We believe arbitration is set up to settle disputes, not create disputes," Bush said.

The Pittsburgh Pirates, like the Rangers a club that complains of limited financial resources, last year set a precedent for this course. The Pirates had 10 players file for arbitration and took seven to a hearing. The Pirates won four cases and handed out an average 32 percent pay raise to the seven players.

The Pirates won the National League East in 1990 with their arbitration players in the forefront. Pitcher Doug Drabek, who won his case, won the Cy Young Award. Outfielder Barry Bonds, who lost his case, won the Most Valuable Player award, and outfielder Bobby Bonilla, who also lost his case, was runner-up in the MVP balloting.

The Rangers settled with their four arbitration filers before reaching a hearing last year, giving them an average raise of 153 percent.

Spurs edge Mavs

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — David Robinson scored 30 points and Rod Strickland 21 as the surging San Antonio Spurs rallied for a 100-94 victory Wednesday night over the reeling Dallas Mavericks, who scored just nine fourth-quarter points.

Dallas led by as many as 19 points late in the third quarter on 90-percent shooting in the period. But San Antonio, winning for the 16th time in 20 games, held Dallas without a basket for the first 6:11 of the final quarter

during a 16-1 surge to tie the game at 86.

A subsequent 8-0 run by the Spurs, iced the game. Afterward, Dallas coach Richie Adubato had to be pulled away by his players for confronting game officials as they attempted to leave the court.

Derek Harper led Dallas with 27 points while Alex English had 21 and Rodney McCray 18. The Mavericks lost their fourth straight game and ninth in 12.

Robinson had 19 points by halftime, helping San Antonio to a 46-43 lead.

War overshadows game

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — San Antonio Spurs fans sat solemn-faced before the team's basketball game against the Dallas Mavericks and watched news reports of the Persian Gulf war on big-screen television in HemisFair Arena.

"I hate to see us go to war, but sometimes it's necessary," said Abe Luna, at the game with his wife and brother.

Arthur Luna, the brother, said the crisis had touched his family.

"I have a nephew down there. My sister is really close to me. She's been crying a lot," he said.

The players huddled around a television set in their lockerroom before the game.

"You have to do what you have to do. To play on a day like this seems kind of" Spurs forward Sean Elliott said, then stopped.

Spurs center David Robinson, a Navy reservist who spent two years in active duty, simply shrugged. The

former Naval Academy star said earlier he would gladly serve if called, but Navy officials said it was unlikely.

Meanwhile, in Houston, the outbreak of war was announced at the Rice University-Texas Tech basketball game. The crowd participated in a moment of silence before the national anthem was played.

In San Antonio, some fans listened to car radios in the parking lot before the game.

Kevin Flanigan, at the game with his family, said he heard the war news on his car radio and immediately noticed rush hour traffic speeding up.

"It was awesome — just the tempo of the traffic," he said. "When it all broke, everybody sped up. They wanted to get home and get in front of their TV and see what's going on. It usually takes me 45 minutes to get home. It took me 30."

Lady 'Horns pound UNLV

AUSTIN (AP) — Vicki Hall hit 13 of 17 field goal attempts, scoring 27 points Wednesday night as No. 19 Texas routed No. 5 Nevada-Las Vegas 89-67, the first loss of the season for the Runnin' Rebels.

The game was interrupted with 7:49 left in the first half, with Texas leading 39-13, and both teams and the crowd of 5,935 stopped to listen to President Bush's speech concerning events in the Persian Gulf.

After a 24-minute delay, both teams went to their locker rooms, then returned to resume play after a warm-up period.

The Lady Longhorns lifted their record to 10-5 on the season. UNLV dropped to 14-1.

Cintra Henderson followed Hall in the scoring column with 24 points, while Edna Campbell chipped in 18. Hall also ripped down 14 rebounds.

Sharon Hargrove led UNLV with 13.

Texas blistered the nets in the first half, hitting 20-of-30 shots and eight of their first 10 for an early 17-4 advantage. Hall and Henderson accounted for 13 of the 17 points during the run.

Two free throws by Campbell gave the Lady Longhorns their biggest lead of the half at 45-16. Texas led 50-28 at the half.

Hall was perfect from the field on eight shots in the half.

UNLV, which came in shooting

SWC games will go on

DALLAS (AP) — Southwest Conference commissioner Fred Jacoby said on Wednesday the games will go on if there is a war in Kuwait.

"We will assess it as developments occur but right now our plan is to continue with our basketball games," Jacoby said.

"We have no idea of the duration if war breaks out. We don't know if it will be one day or one year. We've talked about it but right now we plan to play our games."

Ponies punish Bears 80-63

WACO (AP) — Southern Methodist defeated Baylor 80-63 in a Southwest Conference game Wednesday night behind the 24 points and 13 rebounds of Mike Wilson.

The victory raised the Mustangs' record to 7-8 overall and 2-2 in league play. The Bears fell to 8-6 and 1-4.

SMU trailed, 21-20, with 7:03 left in the first half, but used fast breaks and offensive rebounds to spark a 17-6 run that gave the Mustangs a 37-27 halftime lead. SMU hit more than 60 percent of their shots from the field while Wilson poured in 15 points for the half.

Baylor never got closer than seven points in the second half, despite the heroics of David Wesley, whose 24 points led the Bears. Wesley converted a four-point play with 7:15 left, keeping Baylor within reach.

But as Baylor, behind 61-52 with 4:27 to play, struggled to stay within range, Chad Allen hit two consecutive 3-pointers to help put the game away.

SMU held the Bears to 35.1 percent shooting (20-of-57) for the game.

Tim Mason scored 19 points to aid the Mustang attack, while Tim Schumacher added 10 for the Bears.

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Fri., Jan 18	Billiards with the Boys	Click's Billiards 6:00 pm
Sat., Jan 19	Chili Taste-Off	Sigma Chi Lodge 2:00 pm
*Sun., Jan 20	Sigma Chi Banquet	Ramada Inn 2:00 pm
Tue., Jan 22	Flying Thru Rush!	Invite Only 6:00 pm
**Thurs., Jan 24	Casino Date Party	

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