

WASHINGTON (AP) — Fruit and vegetable growers are keeping a wary eye on free trade negotiations with Mexico, fearing competition could mean declining profits

## Trade negotiations leave produce growers wary

for U.S. producers. "Anybody who grows (produce), or who works for growers has a considerable stake in this matter," said John McClung of the United Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Association.

Wayne Showers, president of

Griffin and Brand Inc. in Texas' Rio Grande Valley, one of the country's largest produce growers and importers, said "there will be some serious competition here on certain fruits and vegetables."

The industry fears, and a government study confirms, that U.S. growers could face significant competition from Mexican produce, harvested with far cheaper labor, if tariffs and other trade barriers are lifted under a free trade agreement.

But producers of fruits or vegetables not widely grown in Mexico are enthusiastic about opportunities for sales in a country of 85 million people.

"Mexico does represent a market of considerable magnitude, but we just don't know how much," McClung said. "It certainly isn't as

attractive a market as the United States. There are plenty of mouths to feed down there, but you don't have the dollars to make the purchases."

The Bush administration hopes to begin formal negotiations with Mexico this spring and conclude the talks by the end of the year.

Showers, whose company has had operations in Mexico for nearly 40 years, predicted that labor-intensive crops would be most affected by a free trade agreement because a Mexican farm worker earns in one day what a U.S. farm worker earns in 60 to 90 minutes.

U.S. producers, unlike their Mexican counterparts, also must provide workers' compensation insurance and abide by regulations that cut into their profits, Showers said.

Workers' compensation insurance costs for his company have risen from \$250,000 five years ago to \$1.3 million last year, Showers said.

But the cost of doing business in Mexico isn't cheap, he said, noting that freight costs, herbicides and insecticides there are more expensive than in the United States.

A study by the International Trade Commission found that the elimination of trade barriers would generate a significant increase in U.S. imports from Mexico and a moderate increase in U.S. exports to Mexico.

"Mexican producers are able to supply the U.S. market with many of the same products grown or processed in the United States at much lower costs. This is particularly true for citrus crops and

winter vegetables that are usually harvested," the study said.

That would likely mean losses for U.S. growers, particularly those in California, Florida and other warm climate states who compete directly with produce during the same growing season in Mexico, the study said.

And, according to the study, U.S. processors also are expected to suffer losses.

A senior U.S. trade official said recently that it's a "fair assumption" that any free trade agreement would have safeguards to deal with market disruptions when growing seasons on both sides of the border coincide.

"We need to have some way of dealing with that," said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

Recreational Sports  
**TAMU**

# Rec Sports Highlights

sponsored by



**McDonald's** Mickey D's Arcade™

Monday, February 18, 1991

## This Weeks' Game Plan

**Monday, February 18**

- Entries for Horseshoe Singles and Weekend Racquetball Tournament open today at 8:00 a.m. in the Recreational Sports Office.

**Tuesday, February 19**

- Registration closes for Free Throw, 8-Ball Doubles, and Slam Dunk.

**Wednesday, February 20**

- Slam Dunk Preliminaries are tonight at 7:30 on the Main Floor in G. Rollie White.

**Thursday, February 21**

- 8-Ball Doubles brackets posted today at 1:00 p.m.

**Saturday, February 23**

- 8-Ball Doubles Tournament today.



TIM BYRD/Rec Sports

Going for 'three'.

## Next Week...

The following events are **OPENING on Monday, February 25!**

Innertube Water Polo  
Entry Fee: \$20.00

Badminton Singles  
Free!

Outdoor Volleyball Triples  
Entry Fee: 20.00

The following events are **CLOSING on Tuesday, February 26!**

Horseshoe Singles  
Free!

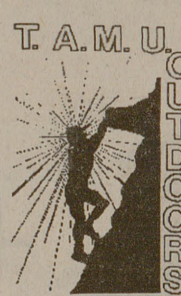
Weekend Racquetball Tournament  
Free!



TIM BYRD/Rec Sports

Pictured above is the 1991 TAMU Judo Team. The Judo Team will represent Texas A&M in the National Collegiate Championship.

## TAMU Outdoors



To sign up for any of the TAMU Outdoor adventures, stop in at the Recreational Sports Office in 159 Read Building. If you have any questions concerning the TAMU Outdoors program, feel free to call Patsy at 845-7826.

**Backpacking:** Registration continues this week for an exciting backpacking adventure! Join TAMU Outdoors in exploring Turkey Hill Wilderness located near the northeastern corner of Angelina National Forest. Enjoy the wild beauty of East Texas, its striking terrain, diverse plant life, and forestland. The \$45 (\$50 for non A&M) fee for this backpacking adventure includes transportation, rental of camping equipment, backpack, food and experienced guides. This trip is geared for the beginning and intermediate backpacker. **Entries close TODAY!**

**Canoeing:** Enjoy paddling the beautiful and scenic San Marcos River! The water remains a constant 72 year-round and this lush, almost tropical environment hosts a wide variety of plants and animals. The \$25 (\$30 for non A&M) fee for this outing includes transportation, rental of canoes, instruction while on the river and experienced guides. This trip is geared to the beginning canoeist and is limited to 12 participants. **Registration ends next Monday!**

**Spring Break Adventure in Colorado:** Enjoy spring break away from it all in the heart of the Rocky Mountains! We will spend the week rock climbing, cross country skiing, mountain biking, and hiking in the Colorado back country. These activities will be geared to various skill levels and instruction is included. No previous experience is required. The lodge at Outpost Wilderness Adventures is situated at 9,000 feet near Lake George, CO and is surrounded by the Pike National Forest and Lost Creek Wilderness. All you need to bring is yourself and a few personal items. For \$395 (\$420 for non-A&M), this adventure includes transportation, lodging, meals, all equipment, instruction, and guides. Registration has already begun and lasts until February 28. This trip is limited to 10 participants so sign up soon in the Recreational Sports Office in 159 Read Building. For more information, please call Patsy at 845-7826.

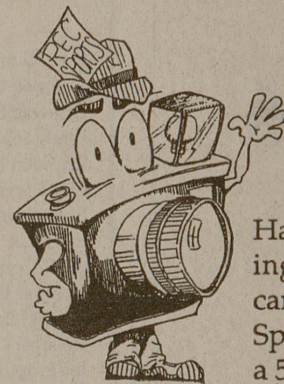


TIM BYRD/RecSports

Annie Godwin and David Walvoord were winners of the First Annual Sweetheart Run. Their combined time was 26:05 which was only .11 off of their predicted time of 26:15. They were awarded Intramural Champion T-shirts, dinner for 2 at Red Lobster, a floral arrangement from University Flowers and a male/female manicure and style from Benefield & Company Hair Design.

## Spring Break Special

TAMU Outdoors is running a special on selected outdoor rental equipment during Spring Break (March 11-15). Outdoor recreation equipment is available to all Texas A&M students, faculty, staff, spouses, and to the Bryan/College Station community. Equipment reservations can be made in person by stopping in at 159 Read Building. Fees must be paid in full at the time of reservation.



## Photographs Available

Have you seen a Rec Sports Photographer taking your picture or seen a picture you like? You can order any photograph on file at the Rec Sports Office in 159 Read Building. The cost for a 5 x 7 is \$2.00 and an 8 x 10 is \$3.00.

## Acknowledgements

McDonald's® Rec Sports Highlights is sponsored by your local McDonald's® Restaurant at University Drive, Manor East Mall, Hwy 21, Texas Ave. at SW Parkway and Post Oak Mall. This ad is a creation of Jason C. Rogers and Judy Steffes. Photographs are by Rec Sports photographers.