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**Powell enjoys penning dp cartoon**

By Chris Whitley  
The Battalion

Twice a week for 14 years, a cartoon character has appeared in the sports pages of The Battalion. His name is dp.

Actually, dp stands for the name of his creator, Donald Powell. Together, dp and Powell have formed a comic strip that has become a Texas A&M institution.

"I enjoy drawing them," Powell, Class of '56, said. "I've always been a cartoonist. I'd like to draw cartoons all day long, if I could."

However, Powell usually has little time for drawing. He spends most of his time serving as Director of Business Services for the University.

The Department of Business Services oversees all of the businesses connected with Texas A&M, including the bookstore, all of the snack bars, University Center, the Printing Center, and many others.

Even though Powell is a busy man, he always has enough time for his cartoon.

"I've never missed a deadline, ever," Powell said. "I have to be clever sometimes to be able to say that."

"I have been known to bring in a character called Fred, who is the janitor in dp's studio. Fred, occasionally, has to draw the cartoon." Fred's drawings are normally done by Powell's daughter.

dp has always had a positive tone to it. Rarely does it overcriticize the status of Aggie sports. That idea is one Powell takes to heart.

"When I went to school here, that's what we learned — that you support your team, no matter what," Powell said.

"They (the team) always win. They're sometimes outscored, but they always win, so dp always tries to find some positive thing to say, regardless of what's going on."

Powell said that keeping positive has been tough this winter as the basketball team struggles through the conference season.

In the strip, the Aggie basketball player fell beneath the bottom line



Donald Powell



of the cartoon during the team's winless streak.

Several characters lent a hand in pulling the player back into sight. They finally succeeded when the Ags won their first conference game against Texas Tech on February 6.

This is not the first time that dp has portrayed bad times in Aggie-land sports.

One year, when the football team was in a similar predicament, the border of the cartoon was drawn as a zero. The characters had picks and jackhammers to tear down the zero which happened when A&M finally won.

dp also has a serious side. When A&M was under scrutiny from the NCAA during the last months of the Jackie Sherrill regime, Powell drew dp looking out the window into the black night sky saying, "Why does it hurt so much?"

Powell said he received many favorable comments from that cartoon.

Through fourteen years, dp has been a popular feature of The Battalion. Several years ago, dp was even pictured on a T-shirt, with paintbrush in hand, drawing the A&M

logo.

Yet to Powell, dp is a labor of love. When it started in 1977, it filled a void that he had since he was a student.

"Jim Earle, who did 'Cadet Slouch' in The Battalion for many years, and I were both students at the time," Powell said.

"He got to be cartoonist for The Battalion, and I didn't. And so, all those years I felt bad about not being a cartoonist for The Battalion."

Powell got a second chance when he finished graduate school and took a position with the University. "I had an idea for a sports cartoon," said Powell. "And so, I went to the editor of The Battalion and said, 'Here's a couple of samples. I can improve what you have.' And he thought I could, so in 1977, we started the cartoon."

Powell has had a fascination with comic books and cartoons throughout his life. He collected them as a child and said he only stopped buying them recently.

He noted that it felt awkward for him to attend a comic book conven-

tion. In a crowd of mostly young, long-haired spectators, there were turned heads when a middle-aged man in a three piece suit walked by. But Powell doesn't mind.

**"I've always been a cartoonist. I'd like to draw cartoons all day long, if I could. I'll keep doing it as long as the Batt wants it, as long as people enjoy it."**

— Donald Powell

"Sometimes I think I'm a world's authority on comic books," he said.

Powell plans to keep the dp tradition alive as long as possible.

"It's something I can contribute back to the University," Powell said. "I'll keep doing it as long as the Batt wants it, as long as people enjoy it."

**Hickey makes most of his turn in the limelight**

By Anthony Andro  
The Battalion

Most of the preseason spotlights focused upon returning Aggies like Ronnie Allen and Travis Williams. But now, it is Mike Hickey's turn to shine.

The sophomore shortstop-outfielder had a career game Monday against Westmont College.

During the 31-2 rout, Hickey went 6-for-7 with two home runs, 10 RBI and had 21 total bases.

Hickey set school records for most hits in a game, most RBI and

most total bases. The RBI mark was also a South-west Conference record.

Going into this weekend's series against No. 1-ranked Louisiana State, Hickey leads the Aggies in every offensive category with a .472 batting average, three homers and 16 RBI.

Hickey wasn't shocked by his record-setting performance.

"I'm not surprised," he said. "I was playing to the best of my ability to help the team."

The Hickey family should not be too surprised either.

Hickey's mother was a Korean Olympic basketball player in the 1960s and his uncle was a placekicker for the University of Alabama.

The only concern Hickey had was about how he would play to start the season.

"The good start was kind of lucky," Hickey said. "But, I know that I'm going to have both

good and bad days.

"Games like that can really happen to anyone."

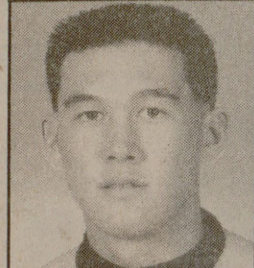
The anyone almost wasn't Hickey. Hickey transferred to A&M after playing his freshman year at the University of Oklahoma, where he hit .312 with five homers.

The reason Hickey said he transferred was because the Oklahoma baseball coaching staff was fired after his freshman year.

"When you go to school, you start to feel comfortable," he said. "Then they go and fire the coach."

After a new coach and staff came to Oklahoma, Hickey said he met with them and they tried to convince him to stay. Hickey said he decided he did not like the new situation and was going to transfer.

See Hickey/Page 8



Mike Hickey



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