

**David Leahy**  
Sportswriter

## Waterski club 'wakes up' A&M

*Editor's Note: The following article is part of an ongoing series examining the various club sports that operate at Texas A&M.*

By Jayme Blaschke  
The Battalion

While many students use summer as a chance to relax and unwind, the Texas A&M Waterski Club can be found hard at work, practicing for fall competition.

Brandon Wyrick, a senior finance major from Spring, said the nature of the organization makes it one of the most entertaining groups around.

"It's a really laid back, social group," Wyrick said. "Out at the lake we usually have an average of eight to ten skiers, plus we have a volleyball court and horse shoes, so something's always going on."

"One person can go out on the lake and get in a set, then come in, and someone else'll be ready to go out," he said. "It's a great way to meet new friends."

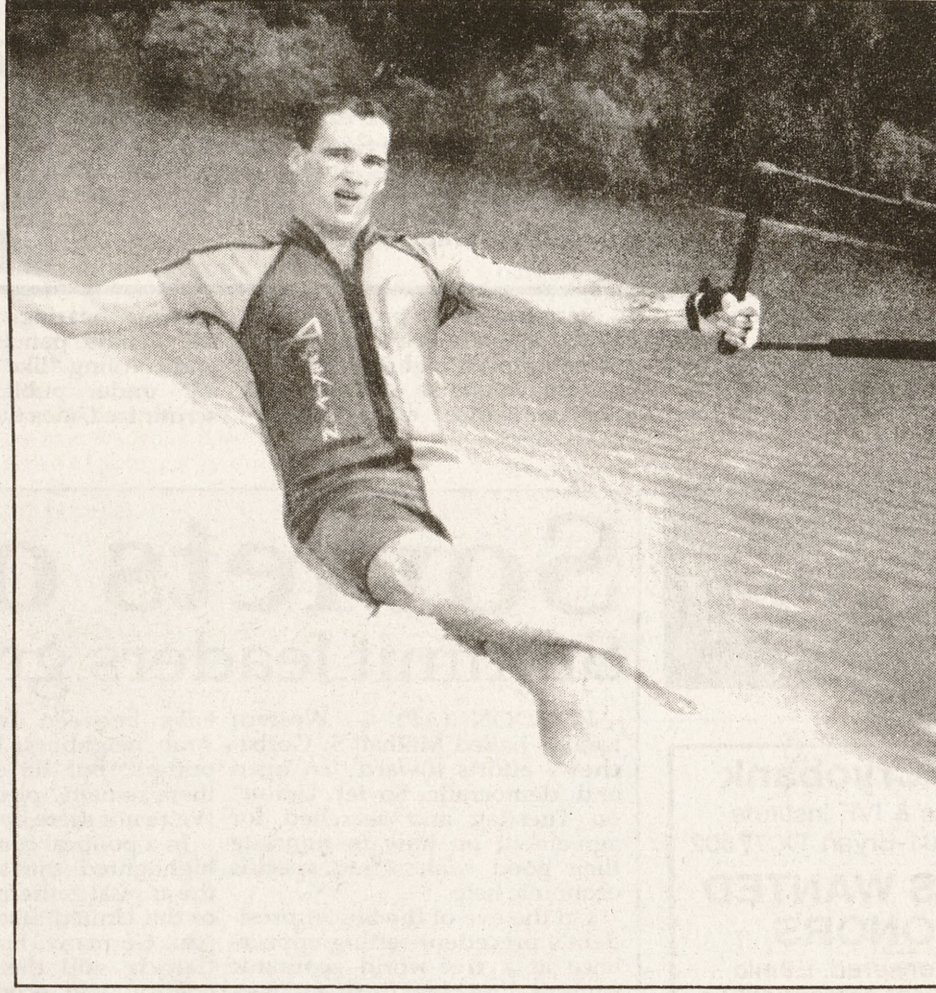
Despite the emphasis on fun, Wyrick is quick to point out the club takes competition seriously.

The A&M waterski team is chosen from the members of the club, and competes in the 14 member South-Central Conference, Wyrick said. The club pays for trips to tournaments held throughout Texas and Louisiana, and supplies members with training equipment.

"This past year we had three people go to the All-Stars competition in Groveland, Florida, and Kevin Teichman came in fifth in jump," he said. "The women's team has had an outstanding year as well."

"We go to three or four tournaments a semester at UT, Stephen F. Austin, Louisiana Tech as well as other places," Wyrick said. "In the spring we host our own waterski tournament, the Polar Bear Tournament. It's held in March, and the water's usually cold, but it's still a lot of fun."

The club, with membership ranging from around 50 in the summer to over 100 in the fall and spring, practices on a private lake outside of College Station owned by Richard and Tami Ameen, said



The Texas A&M Waterski Club practices on a private lake outside College Station. Club members use the lake to practice for fall and spring tournament competition.

Wyrick. The Ameen's assistance to the club is one of the reasons behind successful membership drives.

"Normally the people that join are people who ski at home, or who haven't skied in years and want to get back into it," he said. "Many of our new members are beginning skiers, and join the club to learn."

Wyrick said the club's main concern

now is replacing graduation losses.

"We're training hard, but have lost a lot of good upperclassmen," he said. "We especially need more women to try out. We've got plenty of women in the club, we just need more that can compete."

"We still have some good underclassmen, and are looking forward to a strong fall," Wyrick said.

## Cowboys open training camp in Austin

AUSTIN (AP) — Coach Jimmy Johnson celebrated his 48th birthday Tuesday doing the thing he loves best: sending his Dallas Cowboys through two hard practices in near 100-degree conditions in full pads.

"It was a great first workout," Johnson said. "It was hot and there was a lot of enthusiasm. You didn't see a lot of lollygagging around. Everybody worked."

Few players knew it was Johnson's birthday as the Cowboys began their first official fall drill at St. Edward's University.

Offensive tackle Nate Newton shouted at Johnson: "Happy birthday, coach. That's all I can give you."

Johnson admitted the opening of practice was the biggest birthday gift of all.

"This is the best time of year for me," Johnson said. "I'll celebrate tonight by going to staff meetings. That will be my party."

The Cowboys, who drew more than 100,000 fans to practices last year in their first season at St. Edward's, were besieged by another large crowd despite the heat index which made a rapid climb to 100.

Hawkers sold parking places and cold beverages nearby in a scene not unlike the circus coming to town.

"Great receptions, just a great reception," said Johnson, the NFL's 1990 coach of the year after turning the Cowboys around from a one-victory season to a 7-9 record.

One of the presents Johnson had for his players was his "middle drill," which involves a running back hurtling himself into tacklers.

"Anybody who knows me knows my adrenalin starts pumping when we have a little contact," Johnson said. "It helps a player get ready both mentally and physically for the season."

"We have all the rookies signed here and that makes me feel great," Johnson said. "We're working on getting the veterans here but they are getting behind."

## Oiler rookies report to camp; Carlson unsigned

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — The Houston Oilers agreed to contract terms Tuesday with fourth round draft choices defensive tackle David Rocker of Auburn and cornerback Marcus Robertson of Iowa State.

Rookies and first year players held their first workouts on the Trinity University campus Tuesday. Veterans will begin drills on Friday.

The Oilers also signed four free agents: tackle Barry Voorhees, from Barcelona of the WLA; guard Mike Kiselak, of the WLA; San Antonio Riders; cornerback John Lewis, Sul Ross and quarterback Mike Norseth, formerly with the Cincinnati Bengals.

Backup quarterback Cody Carlson, a holdout last year, and starting cornerback Cris Dishman, linebacker Johnny Meads and defensive end Sean Jones and running back Lorenzo White are among the unsigned veterans.

Wide receiver Haywood Jeffries has agreed to contract terms but has not signed his contract.

The three players the Oilers chose in the second round of the 191 NFL draft, safety Mike Dumas of Indiana, cornerback Darryll Lewis of Arizona and center John Flannery of Syracuse, remained unsigned.

## Breukink withdraws; LeMond unchallenged

ST. HERBLAIN, France (AP) — Their numbers reduced by fever, Dutch cyclist Erik Breukink and his PDM team withdrew Tuesday from the Tour de France, leaving leader Greg LeMond in a powerful position entering the Pyrenees Mountains.

Breukink pulled out before the start of the 11th stage with a bacterial infection that dropped him from second to third and forced five of his PDM teammates to withdraw on Monday.

"It's an infection due to the drinks in the bottles and maybe some food," PDM director Jan Gisbers said. "But I'm relieved to know that it's a bacterial disease, because you can cure it easier than if it would have been a virus."

Breukink had been second overall behind LeMond on Monday, but struggled to finish the 10th stage as he rode with a fever of 100 degrees.

"I'm shocked about what happened to the team," said LeMond, who kept the overall lead for the fourth straight day. "It's going to be mentally hard for Breukink, because he was going well."

LeMond finished 22nd in the 11th stage and his lead shrank to 51 seconds over Djamilidine Abdoujaparov of the Soviet Union.

The cyclists have their only day off Wednesday, traveling by plane to Pau before two stages in the Pyrenees. The mountain stretches are one of LeMond's strongest points.

In 1986, LeMond made up four minutes in the Pyrenees on leader Bernard Hinault of France. Last year, the American chopped nine minutes off the margin of Italian Claudio Chiappucci in the mountain stages.

LeMond said he'll keep an eye over his shoulder on the Bannesto team because of its two good climbers, Indurain and 1988 winner Pedro Delgado.

"I'm not going to attack, although I'm sure that Bannesto will attack," LeMond said. "In that case, I feel strong enough to follow."

## Palmero fights back from gunshot wound

DALLAS (AP) — Although the exact damage of American League umpire Steve Palermo's gunshot wound has not been determined, a spinal cord specialist said Tuesday the baseball official's recovery appears good.

Palermo, who was shot earlier this month while aiding two robbery victims, underwent more tests Tuesday at the Dallas Rehabilitation Institute, where he was transferred Monday from Parkland Memorial Hospital.

"Although the exact extent of recovery cannot be predicted, initial assessments indicated a very optimistic prognosis," Dr. John Milani, medical director of the institute's Spinal Cord Unit, said in a prepared release issued Tuesday.

Milani said Palermo will need several months of rehabilitation.

Palermo was wounded in the lower section of the spinal cord region. Palermo would immediately begin therapy to improve his physical functioning and mobility, the doctor said.

A news conference at the institute is scheduled for 11:30 a.m. Wednesday. Milani will provide an update on Palermo's condition, though Palermo will not be present at the meeting.

Palermo is reported in good spirits and fair condition despite suffering some "leg immobility," Milani said.

Palermo and former Southern Methodist University defensive tackle Terence Mann were shot July 7 while chasing four robbery suspects.

The two were at a local restaurant when the suspects tried to rob two waitresses in the eatery's parking lot.

Mann, who was shot in the neck, abdomen and arm, was released after being hospitalized for several days. Palermo was shot once in the back.

## Fay Vincent a poor excuse for commissioner

I recently read in Sports Illustrated that Commissioner Fay Vincent of Major League Baseball strongly supports the National League (NL).

I also read that he is working to eliminate the designated hitter (DH) from the American League (AL).

Therein lies baseball's problem. It is not that players are overpaid (well, maybe they are), but that baseball needs a new commissioner.

Since the inception of the DH in 1973, intense debate has continued to increase over which league is better. The answer, of course, is the American League.

There seems to be a misconception that the National League is more in line with the traditions of baseball. For example, the NL is often called the 'Senior Circuit' (more because they play like senior citizens).

When one thinks of baseball, names such as Ruth, Berra, Williams, Gehrig, Dimaggio, and Mantle quickly come to mind. Greats who all played in the AL.

In addition to this, the more traditional ballparks (with grass) are in the AL. With the exception of Wrigley Field and Candlestick Park, most of the NL ballparks are modern and six contain AstroTurf.

On the AL side, only four ballparks have AstroTurf (all four home to the expansion teams of 1969 and 1976), and the older stadiums are in the AL: Yankee Stadium, Fenway Park, Tiger Stadium, and Memorial Stadium.

American League baseball is more exciting than National League baseball. Why? Because of the DH rule. Most fans like to see high-scoring ballgames, not 1-0 affairs. The high-scoring ballgames occur in the AL. Case in point: just two days ago, four AL teams scored 10 or more runs in their games. One game had nine home runs hit in it.

In the case of the DH, what is more exciting, watching a pitcher bat (although this is funny) or watching a regular player bat (such as Harold Baines)? I think it's self-evident.

Another problem with the NL is the constant double-switching of players, and the intentional walking of the #8 hitters to pitch to the pitcher. SI pointed out that last year Jose Lind of the Pittsburgh Pirates (who normally batted eighth) was intentionally walked 19 times. This to a player who's 5'7" and hit one home run.

For the comparison of the players in each league, here is a list from SI on the potential Hall of Famers in each league. For the NL: Sandberg, Dawson, Murray, Ozzie Smith, Gooden, Gwynn, and Dale Murphy. That's 7.

For the AL: Cal Ripken Jr., Puckett, Ryan, Fisk, Brett, Parker, Winfield, Boggs, Clemens, Trammell, Yount, Mattingly, Eckersley, and Rickey Henderson. That's 14.

After looking at the facts, it's plain to see that Commissioner Vincent needs to keep his mouth shut, or begin working toward a political career.

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