

Fire in Atlanta was sign from baseball gods

Tuesday night's fire at Atlanta's Fulton-County Stadium was no accident, it was a sign from the gods of baseball. The fire that swept through a dozen press boxes should be served as a warning to the Atlanta Braves' Western Division foes: Watch out.



MATTHEW J. RUSH
Sportswriter

Like the phoenix that resurrected from the ashes, so too will the Braves awaken from their early season slump. The Braves, like the phoenix, will rise from the ashes and claim their third straight Western Division title.

"The San Francisco Giants," you say. Unfortunately, recent injuries to two of their prominent pitchers, Bud Black and John Burkett, will take a toll on the Bay Bombers' chance of a division title. Their offense is unquestionably powerful, but it is too bad that Barry Bonds and Will Clark cannot pitch.

The Braves are undaunting in their attack and, not only have a flare for the dramatic, but have compiled astronomical second half records the past two seasons. In fact, in 1991, they found themselves nine games behind Los Angeles Dodgers, only to claim the outright title three days before the end of the season.

The fire was not only symbolic of the resurgence that the Braves will make in the next few months, but is also indicative of their new found scoring machine. Because the Braves have the most dominant pitching staff in all of baseball, they only lacked a true homerun hitter to make them virtually dominant. They have now found one in Fred "The Crime Dog" McGriff who hit over 30 homers in each of his last five seasons and his pres-

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Bates signs \$4.74 million deal with Raiders

By Matthew J. Rush

The Battalion

Former A&M defensive back Patrick Bates signed a multi-year contract late Monday night with the Los Angeles Raiders, estimated to be worth \$4.74 million over five years.

The twelfth pick overall in April's NFL draft, Bates became only one of a few first round draft choices to sign.

Bates, who chose to forgo his senior year at Texas A&M, has signed and reported to the Raiders' training camp where he is eagerly awaiting a chance to force his way into the starting lineup.

"I wanted to get into camp," Bates said. "I've got a lot to get used to, but once I do, I will be more confident that I can make an immediate impact."

AL Locasal, the Executive Assistant for the Raiders, said that Bates' signing was expected and that he believes that Bates has the tools to be a defensive force in the years to come.

"We don't expect many draft choices to be prominent

in their first year," Locasal said. "This is the NFL, but in time we expect great things from him."

Bates, on the other hand, wants to make his presence felt in his first season as a Raider.

"I'm definitely looking forward to making an immediate impact," said Bates. "There is some extra added pressure and higher expectations of a number one choice, but they draft you to make an immediate impact."

"If we draft a person number one, we expect them to wear the Silver and Black," Locasal said. "This is only a part of working to our number one goal which is to be at the top of the division."

Bates is excited to be playing for the Raiders and sees many assets to playing in Los Angeles, including the climate.

"The intangibles are great here," said Bates. "The weather and the atmosphere are similar to Texas."

"I like the intense style of play and I think I fit in," said Bates. "It is exciting to be in a place where you're wanted."



Battalion File Photo

San Antonio hopes torch ignites local economy

By MARK SMITH

The Battalion

The U.S. Olympic Festival '93 gets under way Friday in San Antonio. City officials there expect the event to gain the city a great deal of revenue, but more importantly it will show that the city can host a major event.

Texas A&M will be represented at the festival by several athletes. Donyale Canada, a guard for the Lady Aggie basketball team, will play for the south team, Dana Yarbrough will participate in the race walking event and Ty Sevin, a member of the A&M track team, will throw the javelin in the track and field competition.

Estimates for the festival show that the city could get as much as \$70 million in revenues. If the festival reaches that estimate it would place it as the largest

Three Aggies to compete in U.S. Olympic Festival

event that the city has hosted to date. The National Collegiate Athletic Association's Final Four basketball championship is predicted to bring \$120 million in revenues to the city in 1998.

"We've never had anything like this in San Antonio before," Fern Dillard, business manager for the Alamo, said.

Dillard said she hopes many of the athletes that have come to San Antonio from around the country will take time to visit the city's most famous structure.

San Antonio was denied the 1991 Olympic Festival because the city lacked a major arena. City officials responded by arranging to build the Alamodome. The multi-million dollar facility is suited for a number of functions and is the only facility around that has two regulation ice rinks within its walls.

Joe Krier, president of the Greater San Antonio Chamber of Commerce, told the San Antonio Express-News, "The pure impact of dollars is nice, but what the festival does is leverage us in bringing in future conventions and other events."

stuntmen and world-class figure skaters. Coverage of the festival will be provided on cable television by TNT and Prime Network.

Canada and the South team are scheduled to compete against the West team on Saturday at 2 p.m., the North team on Sunday at noon and the East team on Monday at noon.

Both Sevin and Yarbrough will compete in their respective events on Friday, July 30 at 6:30 p.m.



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