

Hatchell is right man for SWC job

Texas A&M is taking one more step towards national prominence, and it doesn't even have to do the walking. A&M and the rest of the Southwest Conference have only to take the path created by new commissioner Steve Hatchell.



ROY L. CLAY
Sportswriter

Hatchell has come into a conference considered to be on the brink of destruction by most sports experts and brought the ailing SWC back on the road to recovery. The two prominent schools of the SWC, Texas and Texas A&M, were apparently on their way to the greener pastures of the PAC 10 and the Big East Conferences. However, since the hiring of Hatchell, the denials from both schools seem to ring more truthfully.

Both A&M and UT would have been hard put to leave the SWC. The state legislature made it clear that the financial repercussions of their departure would be enormous, but the lack of national media attention resulting from weak conference opponents in football and the idea of the SWC being a basketball laughing stock made leaving a possible option for the two conference flagships. Enter Steve Hatchell.

Coming directly from the front office of the Orange Bowl, Hatchell was playing with the big boys of the collegiate sports. Many of his associates wondered what he was doing taking over a conference considered small fry on the national level. But Hatchell insists that the SWC only needs repairs and it has all the necessary ingredients for national prominence. His association with the conference alone seems to have added a certain amount of legitimacy to the league.

Last week, Hatchell began a phase of his repair work. He hired a Dallas marketing firm to handle the conference and promote the league on a national level. He also solicited sponsorship from Dr Pepper for the SWC basketball tournament which is a change from the tired way the league office has run even its promotions in the past.

In an era when television coverage is vital to sports survival, promotion is the key to success. The commissioner's office announced that the championship game of the SWC basketball tournament will be televised on ESPN. That is one more step towards the national spotlight.

Hatchell has also been trying to change the way the conference views itself. A few months ago, he said that the schools in this league need to stop focusing on beating Texas and Texas A&M, and start focusing on winning national championships. That's a revolutionary idea in SWC football.

Hatchell recognized something that his associates in the highly visible organizations around the nation have missed. The commissioner of

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Bates gears up for Raiders' season

Former A&M defensive back visits Cowboys' training camp, gets into NFL mindset

By KEVIN LINDSTROM

The Battalion

AUSTIN — Former Texas A&M football player Patrick Bates hasn't been signed with the Los Angeles Raiders more than a week and he already has some large shoes to fill.

There are no larger shoes in any NFL secondary than those of Ronnie Lott, who left the Raiders at the end of last season for the New York Jets under the new NFL free agency rules.

The loss of Lott's incredible hitting ability has left a big hole in the Raiders' secondary.



Training Camp
Notebook

Bates, a rookie first round draft choice for the Raiders, is in Austin with the rest of the Raiders at the Dallas Cowboys training camp at Saint Edwards University. Bates said he is anxious to dish out his own version of The Hit.

"I'm excited being in camp, in the NFL, scrimmaging the Cowboys," he said. "And I'm definitely excited about the challenge.

"It's time to compete and I want to bring in some big hits and some excitement," he said.

Raiders coach Art Shell said Bates' size and ability will help him make a contribution.

"He's built like a linebacker," Shell said. "That and his skills are going to make him an outstanding player. He has a lot to learn, but we'll get that done."

Bates agreed that he still has much to learn.

"I have a lot of work to do," he said. "I need to learn this defensive system so I can make the kind of contribution to this team that I want to."

"I'd like to bring some excitement

back to the Raiders."

Bates shrugs off the suggestion that he is anything but Patrick Bates.

"Ronnie is a great player and for people to compare him to me is a good feeling, but there's no pressure on me," Bates said. "I'm going to come out and play my game and do the things that I've always done."

The hardest thing to adjust to in training camp is the mental intensity, Bates said.

"The big difference from college to the pros is the mental aspect," he said. "There are so many little things that you have to do, things you have to read."

A&M tennis player goes national Weaver picked for Junior Davis Cup

FROM STAFF AND WIRE REPORTS

Texas A&M's two-time All-Southwest Conference tennis player Mark Weaver has been selected to represent the Southern region in the Junior Davis Cup competition Aug. 12-15 in Poughkeepsie, New York.

"This is a big honor and a great opportunity for me," Weaver said. "This tournament will be a great confidence builder for me if I can perform well."

Texas A&M head coach David Kent said, "Mark is exceedingly worthy of this honor, and I think he will represent Texas A&M... well in Poughkeepsie."

Weaver, the SWC's Co-Player of the Year in 1993, will team with Bobby Mariencheck of the University of Georgia.

"I've known Bobby for a long time and I've played against him many times, so it will be good to be on the same side for a change," Weaver said. "He won the doubles two years ago (with Chuck Coleman of Notre Dame) and

hopefully we can do the same thing this year."

The tournament will be played on red clay and Weaver said this will be a good opportunity for him to improve his No. 32 and No. 23 rankings.

"Competing in a tournament like this will... give me playing experience against some of the nation's best players," Weaver said.

"A good showing in this tournament could really set me up for the collegiate Grand Slam events this fall," he said.

Weaver finished the 1992-93 season winning the SWC No.1 singles crown with 24-11 singles mark. He beat eight players ranked among the nation's top 70 last year.

In doubles, Weaver teamed with Bernardo Martinez for a 20-6 mark and five wins against Top 30 opponents.

The last players to represent A&M in the Junior Davis Cup were Scott Phillips and Doug Brown in 1991. Phillips and Brown led the Texas Section to a second-place finish.



PHOTO FROM TEXAS A&M MEDIA GUIDE

Weaver

Akers-Stahl leads women's soccer at Olympic Festival

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

SAN ANTONIO — All Michelle Akers-Stahl's mother wanted to do was find a way to channel her daughter's competitiveness and keep her from fighting in the street.

Now look. The scrappy blonde has beaten the world and is taking on the United States.

"For America, the Olympics is the thing. That's what people notice because the World Cup is new here," the superstar of women's soccer said Monday at the U.S. Olympic Festival. "The Olympics is the American dream."

Akers-Stahl, who has won three gold medals and one silver in past festivals and captained the U.S. Women's National Team that won the World Cup in China in 1991, believes women's soccer will be an Olympic event in Atlanta.

But if the United States is just coming around to the sport, the rest of the world has already noticed. And although fame is just beginning to spotlight Akers-Stahl at home, in

other countries kids beg for autographs and parents point her out to their daughters.

Akers-Stahl, 27, of Oviedo, Fla., was the leading scorer at the first Women's World Championship. She has scored 55 goals in 60 international appearances since she became a member of the national team at its inception in 1985. Playing for the South at the festival, Akers-Stahl scored both of her team's goals in their 3-2 loss on Saturday to the West.

"She's one of the best athletes, if not the best, in the world," said David Simeone, who coaches the South. "I tell people, there's one Michael Jordan, one John Elway and right now, there's only one Michelle Akers-Stahl."

Akers-Stahl, 5-foot-10, 150 pounds, has the ability to dominate any game she's in, Simeone said. Her presence alone has made the South the favorite in the festival, despite a loss in its first game, despite severe muscle spasms in her back that have slowed her but will not prevent her

from playing.

"In addition to her athletic ability and mental toughness, she has great problem-solving skills," Simeone said. "To be a great soccer player you have to have that skill."

Akers-Stahl likens it to a chess match — making the moves is important, but knowing where to go is equally essential.

"Great soccer players must be able to envision what will happen two or three steps in advance," Akers-Stahl said. "When a game is over you should be tired from just the thinking you had to do."

Scoreboard

National League

Los Angeles	15	San Francisco	1
Chicago	9	San Diego	6
Cincinnati	6	Houston	1
Atlanta	(late)	Colorado	-



American League

Kansas City	12	Texas	3
Kansas City		Texas	
Detroit	5	New York	2
Chicago	4	Cleveland	3
Milwaukee	3	Boston	2
Oakland	(late)	California	-

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