

Kicking with confidence

Aggie finds strength, discipline in martial art

By JENNIFER SALCE
The Battalion

He is not a karate kid and he is not Bruce Lee, but Eric Richard Pechacek knows his tae kwon do.

Pechacek, an A&M sophomore kinesiology major from Boerne, Texas, volunteers his time and efforts as a trainee instructor at Brian Roger's Tae Kwon Do USA in Bryan. Pechacek teaches Songahm Tae Kwon Do, a style of tae kwon do with nine degrees of black belt.

Pechacek said what makes tae kwon do different from other martial arts is the unique style of kicks performed. He said the kicks are more powerful and sometimes considered flashy.

When Pechacek entered his first tae kwon do class four years ago, he said his main goal was to gain the physical benefits of the art. Pechacek said that he, along with many other students, wanted to be more flexible, stronger, have a higher heart endurance and be able to defend himself.

"Now, having achieved those physical goals, I have learned and value highly that the mental attributes of tae kwon do are very important," Pechacek said.

He said becoming actively involved in tae kwon do can give you a higher level of mental awareness. Pechacek said the art will increase your self-confidence and self-discipline.

"Tae kwon do teaches you to have self-control," Pechacek said. "The sensation of being able to control your entire body is really a great feeling."

Pechacek said the art is very aerobic and does not require a

tremendous amount of strength to be effective for self-defense. He said the techniques will become second nature.

"If you know the movement and technique, you are maximizing your strength and reducing your opponent's strength," Pechacek said.

Pechacek, a member of the American Tae Kwon Do Association (ATA), attended an ATA state tournament last September in College Station. He won first place in sparring and second place in form. Sparring in martial arts refers to fighting with no intent to kill.

Chief instructor at Tae Kwon Do USA Brian Roger said, "Eric is very talented as far as his training goes." In 1991, Pechacek had the honor to attend the ATA World Championship in Little Rock, Arkansas. He received first place in form and second place in sparring.

Pechacek said he believes his learning has accelerated because of his commitment and ambition. After a year and half of tae kwon do classes, he received his first-degree black belt. Last week, he received his second-degree black belt.

Pechacek said he has dedicated part of his life to learning the art. He has acquired approximately half the hours needed to attend certified instructor camp.

Rogers said, "He is like a natural and will make a good instructor one day."

Although A&M pulls him in many directions, he still sets high goals for himself.

"I want to be a third-degree black belt certified instructor by the time I graduate," Pechacek said. "It is going to be hard, but I think I can do it."

Tae kwon do's history

By JENNIFER SALCE
The Battalion

Tae Kwon Do, an ancient martial art that originated in Korea, focuses on the use of the hands and feet.

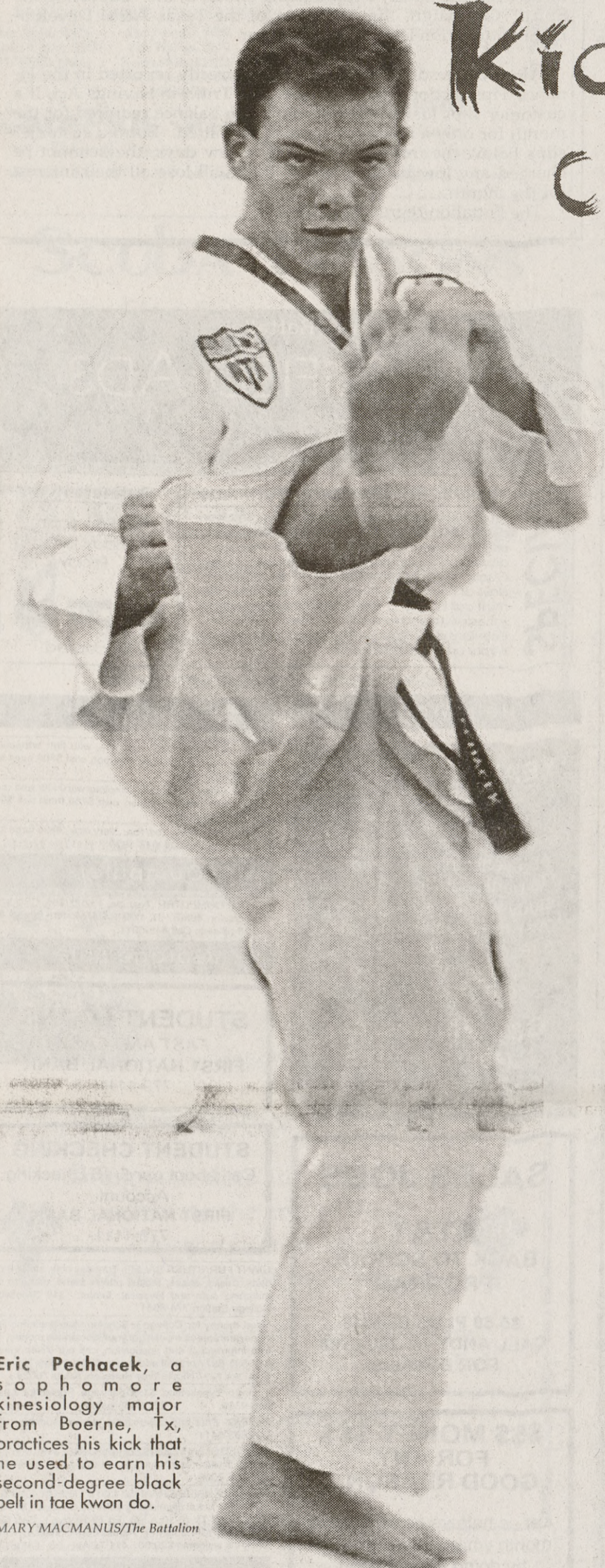
Chief instructor at Tae Kwon Do USA Brian Rogers said the style of instruction he teaches is called Songahm Tae Kwon Do. It was founded in 1983 by grand master H.U. Lee, who holds a

ninth-degree black belt.

Rogers said the lower level students concentrate on the use of the hands and feet. Upper level students focus on weapons training, which requires a great amount of coordination.

Rogers said the Songahm style uses modern training teaching methods.

"We try to focus on positive reinforcement, rather than the punishment techniques that is practiced in Korea," Rogers said.



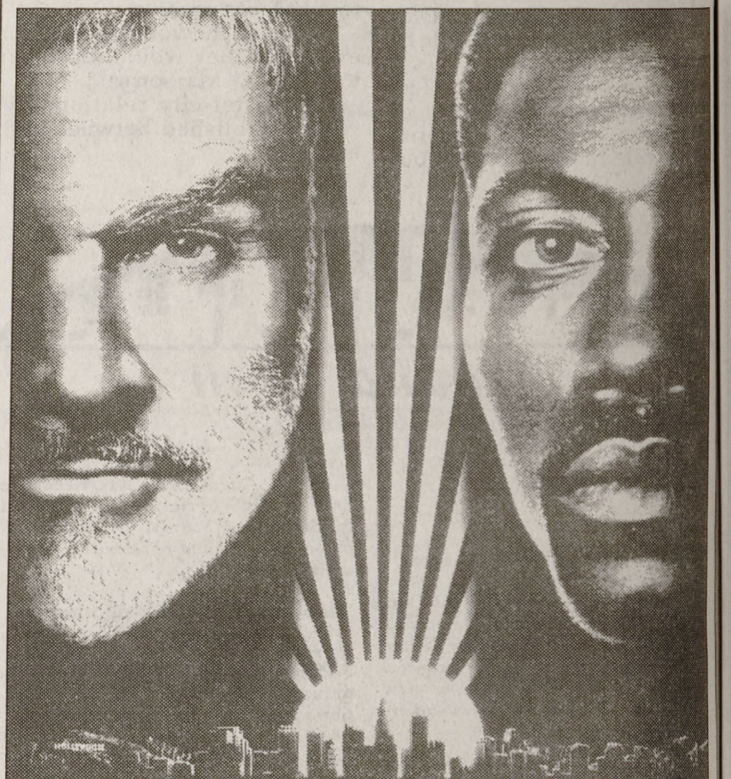
Eric Pechacek, a sophomore kinesiology major from Boerne, Tx, practices his kick that he used to earn his second-degree black belt in tae kwon do.

MARY MACMANUS/The Battalion

FILM REVIEWS

The land of the 'Rising Sun' comes to L.A.

A new perspective on cop thrillers



Sean Connery (John Connor, left) and Wesley Snipes as Web Smith in "Rising Sun," an action thriller set in L.A.

By JACQUELINE AYOTTE
The Battalion

"Rising Sun" Starring Sean Connery and Wesley Snipes Directed by Philip Kaufman Rated R Playing at Cinema III

"Rising Sun" definitely rises above the norm of cop murder-mystery movies. Amazingly, this movie entertains without cheap violence.

What makes this film different is that it explores the distinctive business world between the United States and Japan.

Sean Connery stars in the film and also serves as the executive producer. Connery said, "The story has all the things I find interesting in a movie; strong characters, a culture clash and a topic that is significant."

"Rising Sun" provides a new twist on mystery, a new twist on culture clashes, with a dash of sex in the beginning that plants the seed of mystery.

Police Lt. Web Smith (Wesley Snipes), a liaison officer with the Los Angeles Police Department investigates the murder of a woman in the board-

room of a Japanese corporation in L.A. Smith is paired up with the strange and intelligent Detective John Connor (Sean Connery) who is rumored to be under the influence of the Japanese.

Smith and Connor clash in personality and culture. Nevertheless, they make one heck of a team. As each scene unravels, Connery and Snipes display riveting performances.

Connery plays the perfect intellect who knows how to handle the Japanese. While Smith may handle the game differently, Snipes' flawless performance enables the tough guy routine to shine through impressively.

As they get closer to solving the mystery, they continue to learn secrets from both sides of the business world. Whether it's learning the powerful ancient Japanese mysteries of the past or discovering technological secrets of the future, the secrets eventually close in on them.

With Connery "cast" as the role of John Connor in Michael Crichton's novel and Snipes' energetic way of acting, "Rising Sun" leaves all other cop movies in the dark.

Mel Brooks' 'Robin Hood - Men In Tights...' Elwes' English accent isn't enough



Cary Elwes stars as Robin Hood in Mel Brooks' "Robin Hood."

By JOHN BAYLESS
The Battalion

"Robin Hood - Men In Tights" Starring Cary Elwes, Richard Lewis and Roger Rees Directed by Mel Brooks Rated PG-13 Playing at Manor East III

Mel Brooks has missed the mark again with his latest comedy, "Robin Hood - Men In Tights." Sometime in the past several years, Brooks lost his knack for creating truly hilarious films. The result is mediocre work like "Men In Tights," — good for a few laughs, but lacking the punch of his other works like "Blazing Saddles" or "History of the World Part I."

Brooks pulls out all the stops in his parody of the Robin Hood legend. His Robin Hood (Cary Elwes) swims back from the Crusades just in time to see the King's men repossess his manor house and tow it away. But Brooks isn't done putting his own spin on the story yet. Robin's merry men include a Muslim exchange student named Ahchoo (Dave Chap-

pelle) and a blind man (Mark Blankfield), in addition to the regulars Little John (Eric Allan Kramer) and Will Scarlett (Matthew Porretta).

Richard Lewis stars as Prince John, and performs quite well as the sniveling, vain usurper. Roger Rees, better known as Robin Colcourt in "Cheers," is hysterical in his role as the tongue-tied sheriff of Nottingham.

Some parts of this film were really amusing — the parts that were in the previews. While a few other scenes are hilarious, many fall completely flat. In one scene, Brooks spoofs "The Godfather" with Dom DeLuise in a cameo appearance. Although DeLuise's mumbling speech was identical to that of Brando, the scene dragged on far too long.

Maybe someday Brooks will be able to match the success of "History of the World Part I" or "Blazing Saddles," but not with "Men In Tights." Even though Cary Elwes, unlike some other Robin Hoods, "can speak with an English accent," it still isn't enough to save the film.

Austin, San Antonio launch festival weekend to celebrate state's diversity

By MARGARET CLAUGHTON
The Battalion

This weekend is a festive one for central Texas. Both the Texas Folklife Festival in San Antonio and the Austin Aqua Festival will occur this Thursday thru Sunday August 5-8.

The Texas Folklife Festival, sponsored by the Institute of Texan Cultures, has celebrated Texas' cultural heritage for over 20 years. More than 30 ethnic and cultural groups from all over the state are represented displaying their unique foods, crafts, music and stories. The Texas Folklife Festival offers an educational and fun cultural exchange to all its patrons. In the process, proceeds from the festival go to support the individual ethnic groups and the Institute. In fact, the individual groups receive 77 percent of the profits from food and beverage sales.

Entertainment at the festival includes a two-man Irish instrumental and vocal combination from Fort Worth, "Celt 'n' Stuff," Gulf Coast Scandinavian Dancers from Angleton, and cowboy musician Dusty Britches. Crafts ranging from woodcarving to beekeeping will be on display as well.

The Texas Folklife festival is held on The University of Texas Institute of Texan Cultures at San Antonio's Hemisfair Park in downtown San Antonio.

Admission to the festival is \$6 in advance and \$8 at the gate. However, Friday, August 6, from 12-1 p.m. a special price of \$2 will be charged. Children 12 and under will be admitted free.

The festival will run from 5-11 p.m. Thursday, August 5, noon-midnight Friday, August 6 and Saturday, August 7, and noon-9 p.m. on Sunday, August 8.

The 1993 Austin Aqua Festival will also be held August 5-8 and 11-14.

- Daily attractions include:
- August 5 - Aqua Festival Land Parade at 6 p.m. beginning at Austin Highschool and marching down 1st Street.
 - August 5-8 and 11-14 - Captain Barton's Cove, a creative environment of story telling, magic and puppeteering for children ages 12 and under.
 - August 6 - Aqua Smash, a dance for teens under 18 at the City Coliseum beginning at 7 p.m.
 - August 7 - Texas Triple Threat, competition for cyclists, runners, and rowers. Amateurs and professionals are welcome to participate. For more information cyclists call (512) 335-3829, runners call (512) 472-3254, and rowers call (512) 472-0700.
 - Small Fry Fishing Derby, Children can fish in the waters off Festival beach.
 - August 8 - Bass Fishing Tournament, top 10 teams compete on Town Lake for the City Championship beginning at 6 a.m.
 - August 12 - Austin children's choir will



The Korean Folk Dance will perform at the Texas Folklife Festival, to celebrate the state's diverse cultural heritage.

perform at Concordia Lutheran College beginning at 4:30 p.m.

• August 13 - Aztec Mask Exhibition, a display of the works of elementary students at Las Manitas Cafe beginning at 6 p.m.

• August 14 - Zilker Park Criterium, an amateur cyclist race over 1.3 miles. For entry fees and registration call (512) 454-7400 or 331-1266 evenings.

Aqua fest Archery tournament, located at Austin Archery Club Range beginning at 8 a.m.

Much of the festival will focus on live music, building on Austin's reputation as a national live music center. Over 70 live acts will perform this year as part of the nightly musical themes featuring rock, rhythm and blues, jazz, country and gospel.

Theme nights include:

- August 5 - Hometown Heroes, featuring Austin's local talent.
- August 6 - Lone Star Ladies, featuring top women performers in Texas.
- August 7 - Lone Star Stars, featuring Texas based artists.

August 8 - The Gospel according to Texas, gospel music from Texas.

• August 11 - Texas unplugged, featuring acoustic acts.

• August 12 - Axes and Saxes, featuring instrumental standouts.

• August 13 - Texas Homecoming, featuring artists who have left Texas.

• August 14 - Lone Star Legends, the truly great Texas artists.

The Aqua Fest Fireworks Extravaganza will be held Saturday night over Town Lake.

Admission is \$7 for adults, \$1 for children August 5,8,11, and 12. Adult tickets will cost \$8 on August 6,7,13,14. College students showing a 1993 Student I.D. from any Texas College or University will receive \$2 off admission.