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## Top players to pace A&M at SWC meet

By Jose de Jesus Ortiz  
*The Battalion*

Texas A&M's men's tennis team will try to add to its South-west Conference championship this weekend when it travels to Houston for the conference tournament.

The Aggies, ranked No. 25, surprised two of the nation's top five teams - No. 3 Texas and No. 5 Texas Christian - en route to the championship and the top seed.

But the Aggies' top player Mark Weaver said he expects TCU and Texas to be ready for A&M. Texas was the only SWC team to hand A&M, 20-2 and 5-1 in the SWC, a loss.

"They (SWC opponents) definitely have a lot more respect," he said. "Even Texas has a lot more respect for us."

Weaver and A&M No. 3 player Bernardo Martinez paced A&M to the title, combining to win their second straight doubles championship.

A&M head coach David Kent said players like Martinez and Weaver have been a rarity around Aggieland.

Mark Weaver and Bernardo

Martinez," Kent said, "may be the best doubles players to play at A&M. They are very successful because they get along so well."

"I have never heard any either one of those guys say a bad thing to each other."

Ricardo Rodarte, who, like Martinez, is from Mexico, and Chad Raymond have also helped A&M with their doubles play.

Three of the Aggies' top six competitors are from out of the country. Juniors Martinez and Rodarte, from Mexico, and freshman Robbie Krause, from South Africa have contributed key performances for A&M this season. Krause has the best record on the team.

"I think Robbie made the difference for us this season," Kent said. "He is a freshman who is going to be a key for us in the future."

Blake Arrant is the Aggies' No. 2 man and the star of the future for A&M, Kent said.

Said Kent: "He may be the Mark Weaver of the future."

Eric Horan has also been very successful from his No. 5 slot for the Aggies.

## Rice, TCU, SMU officially join WAC conference for 1996 season

The Associated Press

DENVER — The Western Athletic Conference on Thursday formally announced what has been rumored for several days, that it would add six new members including three leftover members of the Southwest Conference.

Dr. Kenneth P. Mortimer, president of the University of Hawaii and the chair of the WAC Council of Presidents, said the newly aligned conference will include Rice, Southern Methodist and Texas Christian of the Southwest Conference as well as Tulsa, Nevada-Las Vegas and San Jose State.

Former SWC members Texas, Texas Tech, Texas A&M and Baylor have aligned themselves with the Big Eight.

The only other SWC member, Houston, wasn't interested in joining the WAC.

Along with the 10 present members, the WAC will consist of 16 members by 1996. It will cover nine states, four time zones and stretch from Tulsa to Honolulu and Laramie, Wyo., to San Diego.

Current WAC members are Brigham Young, New Mexico, Utah, Wyoming, San Diego State, Colorado State, Air Force, Fresno State, Texas-El Paso and Hawaii.

In a teleconference call, Mortimer said such details as division-

al structure, revenue sharing and scheduling options will be discussed by the Council of Presidents in coming months.

Mortimer said the selection of the six schools was based on each institution's athletic history, academic reputation and television marketability.

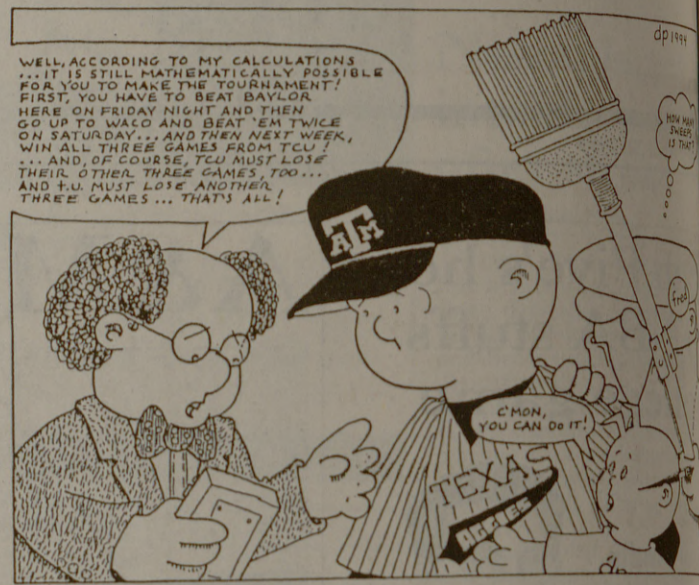
"It's clear when you look at what we've done," he said. "We now have a major presence in Texas, in the San Francisco area, and in Las Vegas that has substantially improved our television presence."

Tulsa, he said, "is almost a pure opportunity for college athletics opposed to professional."

Biggest issues facing the expanded conference, he said, include working out divisional alignments to ensure that regional rivalries will be maintained, working out a possible playoff game between division winners and scheduling.

WAC Commissioner Joe Kearney, who is retiring in July, said a playoff game could be scheduled as early as the end of the season in 1996.

The WAC's current contract with ABC and ESPN contains "a caveat with additional resources available if there is a playoff," he said. "It's a significant sum."



## Fab Five

Continued from Page 5

with being an NBA lottery pick.

They will follow this season's potential Rookie of the Year Chris Webber into the dollar-laden world of the NBA, where rookies have been signing unbelievably huge, long-term contracts without even proving themselves past the college ranks.

The impending stardom of Rose and Howard, and Webber's storming of the NBA following an early departure from his college career reminds me of another great team that was once destined for greatness, but could never reach the top of the mountain.

Three words, sports fans. Phi Slama Jama.

Yes, I'm talking about that fast-breaking fraternity that changed the way the game was played 10 years ago.

Down the road a-ways in Houston, Clyde Drexler, Larry Michael, Michael Young and a young raw center by the name of Akeem Abdul Olajuwon made waves with their high-flying, slam-dunking antics that turned Hofheinz Pavilion into the home of a fantastic circus show for 40 minutes a night.

Two seasons, a 63-8 combined regular season record and two straight appearances in the NCAA Championship game, but nary a title.

But, so what? Drexler and Olajuwon both exploded upon the NBA scene, both have been to the NBA Finals (although neither has garnered a ring as of yet), and both are financially set for, oh say, the next 350 years.

Things have changed in the last 10 years or so of college basketball.

With more and more juniors and even sophomores declaring

themselves eligible for the NBA draft, winning a national championship has taken a back seat to putting up the big numbers that will impress the NBA scouts.

Undoubtedly, performing well in the tournament is a must if a young player wishes to improve his stock in the eyes of the NBA scouts (see Juwan Howard in this year's edition of March Madness).

But the quality of being a "winner" has been replaced by player's vertical prowess, three-point proficiency and defensive intensity.

A prime example of this new breed of player is former California star Jason Kidd.

Kidd, who has been watched by scouts since he was in the eighth grade, has already sold himself to the NBA, despite the Golden Bears' disappointing first-round loss in this year's tournament to lowly Wisconsin-Green Bay.

Kidd, however, led the nation in assists as a sophomore, and as a freshman, won the "Changing of the Guard" marquee matchup in the tournament against graduating point guard Bobby Hurley and defending national champion Duke.

It used to be that the best of the national champion was destined to be the next golden boy of the NBA.

It was that way for Magic Johnson, Isaiah Thomas and Patrick Ewing.

But the best teams are no longer comprised of the best players, but of the best team players.

Just ask Glenn Robinson, Chris Webber or Shaquille O'Neal.

The significance of the national championship is going the way of the Heisman Trophy — a fleeting moment of fame and glory that does not mean a thing once you hit the big leagues.

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