

SPORTS BRIEFS

Cowboys post season meeting full of no-shows

IRVING, (AP) — The offseason began two weeks earlier than expected and as quietly as possible for the Dallas Cowboys on Monday.

Valley Ranch was silent as very few players found reason to hurry back to the team's training facility a day after a 38-28 loss to the San Francisco 49ers kept them out of a Super Bowl for the first time in three years.

The only official purpose for coming by was to take a season-ending physical, and for most players it could wait. For defensive lineman Charles Haley, it may never come if he's serious about his decision to retire.

His surprising post-game announcement (and whether he's serious about it) and questions about offseason plans were the main topics of conversation among the handful of players who showed up.

Astros begin spring training on Feb. 16

HOUSTON (AP) — The Houston Astros have opened the club's training facilities in the Astrodome for players living in the Houston area.

The players on the 40-man roster may begin workouts in preparation for spring training, the team said Monday.

The Astrodome had been closed to players on the roster, except those receiving treatment for injuries, since the start of the players' strike on Aug. 12.

Spring training for the Astros is scheduled to begin Feb. 16 in Kissimmee, Fla.

Mark Philippoussis shows strength in Australian Open

MELBOURNE, Australia (AP) — He's a kid with teen-age acne and the body of a god, thunderous serves and lightning-bolt volleys, a million dollars in the bank and millions more to be made.

Mark Philippoussis is called the Golden Greek in this city of Greeks, and now the rest of the tennis world knows why. The future of the game may be his for the taking.

Stefan Edberg has seen all the big hitters of the past decade, felt the power of the young Boris Becker and the mature Pete Sampras, yet no one he's faced has slugged with more raw power from all over the court than this 18-year-old with a Greek name and Australian accent.

"He is as powerful as you are going to get," Edberg said after drawing on all his experience to survive their match, 4-6, 6-3, 7-6 (7-1) 7-5, Monday night at the Australian Open.

"He was hitting the ball so hard, I couldn't even react to some of the shots. It's lucky they didn't go through my stomach at some stages."

Aggies hoping to bounce back with Rice win



Amy Browning/The Battalion

Senior Joe Wilbert sets up for a quick move in the Aggies win over Texas Tech last Wednesday in G. Rollie

Aggies are learning from mistakes of Longhorn defeat

By Kristina Buffin
THE BATTALION

With only one day of practice to prepare for tonight's game against the Rice University Owls (6-6, 2-0), the Texas A&M men's basketball team (7-9, 1-1) will try to put Saturday night's loss to the University of Texas behind them and use the knowledge that they gained from that loss to play hard against the Owls at The Summit in Houston.

"We can never wash away what happened after we got our ass beat," head coach Tony Barone said. "But the residuals will be a benefit. Our kids are resilient."

The Aggies will face a much stronger Rice team that is carrying a two game winning streak into tonight's game. The keys for the Aggies will be to create turnovers, rebound well and contain

Rice senior forward Adam Peakes. "Peakes is key," Barone said. "He is an All-American, a great shooter, a leader for the team and he gets the offensive rebounds."

Peakes is averaging 34.3 minutes, 16.6 points, 9.4 rebounds (2.0 offensive) per game. In addition to Peakes, junior guard Tommy McGhee and junior center Kevin Nanney will pose a threat to the Aggies' game plan.

"Last year they focused on one player, so it was easy to create a defense around that player," Barone said. "This season they have a good, solid team that includes McGhee and Nanney who had good games against SMU and Houston."

The Aggies will put their 115-82 loss to UT behind them and concentrate on playing more patiently and trying to not turn the ball over as much.

"Texas played a great game," senior forward Damon Johnson said. "We need to throw it all behind us, control the

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Aggie baseball warming up for spring season

Tough non-conference match-ups prepare Aggies for tough season

By Robert Rodriguez
THE BATTALION

The forecast called for white objects to fall from the sky around Olsen field and the players could not wait for it to happen. It was not snow that greeted the baseball team in unseasonably warm temperatures, but the sight of baseballs that filled the air.

Monday marked the first day of baseball practice for the Aggies. With several key players returning from last year's squad and some new faces filling in, the Aggies feel confident of erasing any doubts people have about this year after a disappointing season last year. Senior infielder and captain Robert Harris believes attitude is the key for the team this year.

"Last year, we thought we could go out on to the field and that was going to win the game, because we were Texas A&M," Harris said. "That didn't work out, so this fall we have been working our butts off, and the attitude is totally different than from last year."

One of the main concerns for the team

this year will be the performance of their pitching staff. Injuries and depth plagued the staff last year and coach Mark Johnson thinks pitching will be one of the keys for the Aggies if they hope to contend for the Southwest Conference baseball crown.

"We have to get our pitching going good this year," Johnson said. "On the mound, we got to have some guys stay healthy and do well for us."

Even though some of the older players are expected to carry the load and lead the team this year, Johnson believes it is not the job of one person to do this, but a job suited for one team.

"We have got some older guys who have been in the hunt before and I'm going to put a little pressure on those guys," Johnson said. "They've been with us in Omaha and have been with us in the downpoints. However, I'm not going to put the load on one person."

The baseball team returns several seniors this year, including Harris, infielder John Curl and outfielder Stephen Claybrook, who went to the College World Series with the team two years ago. However, some of the new faces on the team

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Stew Milne/The Battalion

Spring practice at Pat Olsen field signals the start of the 1995 collegiate baseball season.

NICK GEORGANDIS

SPORTS EDITOR



Lack of spirit hurts Aggie basketball

Low attendance leaves G. Rollie nearly empty

It can't be for the lack of a good product. Both teams are putting proven winners on the court. Both teams went to post-season, with the Lady Aggies advancing all the way to the Sweet 16 before falling to Purdue.

Both teams also field arguably the two best players in the conference, forward Joe Wilbert and guard Lisa Branch. Wilbert overpowered Tech with a career-high 38 points last Wednesday and Branch dissected the Texas defense for 17 points and 10 rebounds on Saturday afternoon.

OK, so it's not the teams, what other

reasons could it be? How about the facilities? Now, granted G. Rollie White is no Alamodome, but it does have seats and restrooms and solid views of the court no matter where you're sitting. Even if you think G. Rollie White is a bit on the depreciable side, come and see the last year of basketball there before A&M's monstrous special events center opens next spring.

OK, so it's not the facilities....that seems to leave a only one option, namely one option made up of over 43,000 people.

Yes, it's your fault. You, the student body are solely to blame for the number of empty seats seen nightly at G. Rollie White. Now before I really get started here, let me make this disclaimer:


If you are a big basketball fan and attend a lot of games and scream your head

off in support of the home team, DON'T write in and tell me that you support the Aggies! I know this, I've been to the games, I know that there are a couple of thousand very loyal fans who support both Tony Barone and Candi Harvey's teams win or lose. I am not addressing you here, so don't get mad and flood my box with hate mail(again).

But for the rest of you, my simple question is: Where are you?


You go to football games, you go to Bonfire, you go to Muster, why not G. Rollie White? Albeit A&M is football country, but if you've ever tried to get a free court at DeWare to shoot some baskets, you know there are plenty of hoops fans on campus.

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