

SPORTS BRIEFS

Sampras dethroned Agassi now No. 1

(AP) — Andre Agassi's push to the top began last July at the Canadian Open when he was stuck at No. 20, an aging 4,061 points behind leader Sampras.

Agassi won that tournament, finishing off a sensational stretch which he won six more events in the next eight months, including two Slams — the U.S. Open and Australian Open.

On Monday, Agassi got the payoff, winning past Sampras to claim the No. 1 ranking on the ATP computer for the first time in his career. He comes just the 12th player in the year history of men's computer rankings to hold No. 1 and ends Sampras' 82-week grip on the top spot. Sampras held it for 101 of the 104 weeks, his string interrupted by Jim Courier for three weeks (Aug. 23-Sept. 13, 1993).

Maxwell, Olajuwon cleared to play

(HOUSTON AP) — A Houston Rockets team doctor on Monday cleared Hakeem Olajuwon and Ron Maxwell "medically safe" to return to action Tuesday night against Dallas, but said neither was at full strength.

Team physician James Muntz said latest blood tests showed the two had not yet fully recovered from iron-deficiency anemia.

"They are medically safe, but the results of their blood tests indicate they are not at full strength," Rockets spokeswoman Rose Przak said.

The club said whether Olajuwon or Maxwell return for Tuesday's home game against the Mavericks is up to them and depends on how they feel beforehand. Both practiced with the team Monday.

Houston also plays at home Wednesday against Portland and Thursday against Sacramento.

Drexler named NBA Player of the Week

(NEW YORK AP) — Houston's Clyde Drexler, whose 31.8-point scoring average was the highest in the NBA last week, was selected as the Player of the Week on Monday.

Drexler, who took up the Rockets' scoring slack in the absence of ailing center Hakeem Olajuwon, also averaged 8.3 rebounds, 4.5 assists and 2.5 steals in four games. He shot 48 percent from the field (43-for-90) and .744 from the foul line (32-for-43).

Lawler has an eye for talent

□ Since arriving at A&M, Jim Lawler has instructed six All-American pitchers.

By Robert Rodriguez
THE BATTALION

In the era of aluminum bats, pitching at the collegiate level is of great importance. For the Texas A&M baseball pitching staff, this responsibility rides on the arms of pitching coach Jim Lawler.

Lawler has also served as the assistant coach and the recruiting coordinator for the Aggies since 1985. A former head coach at University of Texas-El Paso, Lawler said the A&M opportunity was too good to pass up.

"I felt the assistant job at Texas A&M was better than the head job I had at the time," Lawler said. "I thought there was a better chance to get into a good program at the time and it has proven that to be very true."

What Lawler has done for the pitching staffs at A&M has been nothing short of spectacular. Since he has been the pitching coach, A&M has had six All-American pitchers and three pitchers selected in the first round of the major league baseball amateur draft.

In three of the last four years, the Aggie pitching staff has had a combined earned run average of less than four runs a

See Lawler, Page 10



Roger Hsieh/THE BATTALION
Pitching coach Jim Lawler watches the action during one of this weekend's games against Dallas Baptist.

Richards filling the void left in middle of field

□ Despite replacing an All-American, transfer Kendall Richards is putting up impressive statistics.

By Kristina Buffin
THE BATTALION

Kendall Richards has some pretty big shoes to fill.

Richards, a junior transfer from the University of California at Berkeley, has the unenviable task of replacing All-American shortstop Jennifer McFalls this season.

"She is playing exactly how she was when I first saw her play in Bakersfield," Texas A&M softball coach Bob Brock said. "She is a powerful hitter and a good defensive player. It is hard to follow an All-American but she is doing fine."

After two seasons playing for the Golden Bears, Richards decided that she did not want to continue her college career at

Berkeley and opted to transfer to Texas A&M.

"I was looking for a change," Richards said. "My coach in my summer league was very pro-A&M. It's a new environment and new mentality, a complete opposite of Berkeley."

The adjustment from California to Texas has been part of the struggle for Richards during the season.

"In a transition there will always be a slow start," Brock said. "She did well in California (last weekend). She has made the adjustment from Oregon (her home state) and is continuing to do well."

"It's a new environment and new mentality, a complete opposite of Berkeley."

— Junior Kendall Richards

Richards is leading the Lady Aggies with a .404 batting aver-

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Loss to Warriors doesn't help Mavericks' chances

□ Dallas falls 2 1/2 games back for the last playoff spot.

(DALLAS AP) — Latrell Sprewell scored 30 points and Chris Mullin added 26, half of them in the third quarter, as the Golden State Warriors hurt the Dallas Mavericks' playoff chances with a 123-112 decision Monday night.

Dallas fell 2 1/2 games behind the Denver Nuggets in the race for the eighth and final Western Conference playoff spot. Denver took sole possession of eighth place with a 114-107 victory over Minnesota.

Jamal Mashburn had 29 points and Popeye Jones added 21 to pace the Mavericks, who

won eight of their previous 11 and five of their last six at home to move into playoff contention. Dallas' Lorenzo Williams contributed 14 points and a career-high 19 rebounds.

Clifford Rozier had 20 points and 12 rebounds for the Warriors.

Mashburn connected on 3-pointers on three consecutive possessions and Jones added a 3-pointer the next time Dallas had the ball, moving the Mavericks to 115-104 with 3:30 to play. That was as close as they got.

The Warriors shot 67 percent and hit seven 3-pointers in the third quarter, three by Mullin, to build a 93-80 lead entering the final quarter. Mullin's 5-for-6 shooting in the third quarter led the Warriors, who were 7-for-10 from 3-point range.

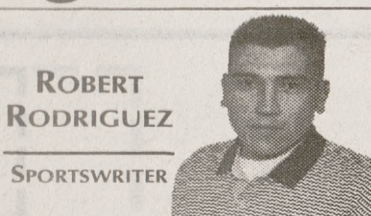
Rodney Dangerfields of baseball

With the baseball season two weeks away, the talk has been about the return of the major league players and the free agents. Little has been said though about the replacement players.

Some will ask why should we care about the replacement players since they were a bunch of jokers trying to play the American pastime. I was thinking that same thought until last weekend.

While in Garland last weekend, I saw a friend of mine who I have not seen since the baseball strike began. Javan Reagans, was a "scab" for the Pittsburgh Pirates organization and was given his release papers when the strike was over.

He told me about all the looks he would get from fans because he was a replacement player.



ROBERT RODRIGUEZ
SPORTSWRITER

The countless jeers from the coaching staff because they wanted to get rid of the "scabs" and the feelings of being back on the baseball diamond.

Reagans was not just a bum who got off the couch one night and decided to tryout for a baseball team. He was drafted by the Montreal Expos in the mid 1980s out of Dallas Baptist University and has fond memories of teeing off on Aggie pitchers at Olsen Field. He reached as far as the Class AAA level before being released by the Expos.

He was working various jobs before being contacted by the Pirates when the strike happened. When the strike ended, the Pirates said they

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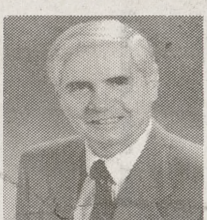
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