

SPORTS BRIEFS

A&M baseball team signs two recruits

The Texas A&M baseball team announced the signing of shortstop Ryan Matthews and first baseman John Scheshuck, two of the top Houston area high school prospects. Matthews is a two-year starter at Bellaire High School. He was a key member of the 1994 Class 5A state championship team and earned All-State honors. Scheshuck was the District 23-5A MVP for Dobie High School. Scheshuck is currently batting .500 this season. "We're extremely pleased these young men selected Texas A&M University," Texas A&M coach Mark Johnson said. "There's no question both players can come in and contribute."

Gretzky first NHL player to score 2,500

CALGARY, Alberta (AP) — Wayne Gretzky became the first player in NHL history to record 2,500 career points when he set up a power-play goal by Rob Blake on Monday night.

Gretzky is the league's all-time leader with 813 goals, 1,687 assists and 10 scoring titles. The 16-year veteran has 650 more points than runner-up Gordie Howe, who ended his Hall of Fame career in 1980 after 26 NHL seasons.

On the historic point, the Los Angeles Kings superstar passed from the sideboards to Blake at the point. Blake's slap shot hit Flames goaltender Rick Tabaracci in the chest and trickled in at 11:01 of the first period.

The goal tied the game 1-1. Gretzky broke Howe's point-scoring record of 1,850 on Oct. 15, 1989 at Edmonton with a goal against Bill Ranford, and eclipsed Howe's goal-scoring mark of 801 on March 23 of last season at the Los Angeles Forum against Vancouver's Kirk McLean.

Gretzky and Pittsburgh's Mario Lemieux are the only players to average two points per game throughout their NHL careers.

Rockets beat LA Clippers, 121-111

HOUSTON (AP) — Hakeem Olajuwon scored 30 points and didn't miss a field goal until the fourth quarter Monday night as Houston beat the Los Angeles Clippers in The Summit for the 17th straight time, 121-111.

The victory pulled the Rockets, currently in the No. 6 playoff position, within one game of the No. 5 Los Angeles Lakers in the Western Conference.

The Clippers haven't won a game in The Summit since a 104-97 victory on Nov. 6, 1986.

Olajuwon hit his first 11 shots of the game and didn't miss until his first shot in the fourth quarter. He finished 14-for-18 in his third game since recovering from iron-deficiency anemia.

Terry Dehere led the Clippers with 23 points and Eric Piatkowski scored 19.

Dallas Stars tie Canucks 2-2

DALLAS (AP) — The Dallas Stars and Vancouver Canucks finished their regular-season series as equal as two teams can be.

Kevin Hatcher scored with 10:48 to go in regulation and the Stars tied the Canucks 2-2 Monday night in a battle for Western Conference playoff positioning. It was produced the fourth tie in as many meetings between the Stars and Canucks, with each team scoring eight goals. Never in Stars team history has a season series resulted in nothing but ties.

Concentration leads to Mitchell's success



Pitcher Dean Mitchell in his first season at A&M ranks third on the team for strikeouts with 25 and boasts a 3.32 ERA.

□ Transfer student gains confidence with five consecutive wins.

By Kristina Buffin
THE BATTALION

Texas A&M pitcher Dean Mitchell has acquired a nickname in his first season with the Aggies, Forrest Gump. His teammates are not referring to a lack of intelligence but to Mitchell's ability to work hard and go all out.

"He is the hardest worker," Texas A&M pitching coach Jim Lawler said. "He forces the other pitchers to work as hard as he does."

Mitchell transferred to A&M this season after playing at Navarro Junior College for two years. He opted to attend Navarro to build up experience before entering a four-year program.

"I had the opportunity to play straight out of high school when I went to a junior college," Mitchell said. "Playing for a JC, I got to go straight into the rotation. If I went to a four year school I would not have had the chance to play as much."

In his sophomore year, Mitchell helped lead Navarro to the conference championship and was named all-conference.

The transition to A&M was difficult for Mitchell at first, but his early success has given him the confidence needed to become part of the starting rotation.

"I was kind of scared at first because this is such a big

school," Mitchell said. "I wasn't sure if I could pitch at this level, so you could say I wasn't really overconfident. I've gained some confidence but I am still anxious before every game. But now I know that I can get people out instead of hoping I can."

Mitchell is serious about his game and is always working to improve his pitches.

"He has fit in very well," Texas A&M coach Mark Johnson said. "He is real quiet but is a quality player. He is a good competitor who has focus and concentrates. He gives his maximum effort and is not a fly by night player, he is very strong mentally."

Mitchell has entered the rotation with the ability to start or relieve.

"He has done a good job in the last four months, he has definitely gotten better," Lawler said. "He is more relaxed, sometimes he is his own worst enemy. He is learning to trust his stuff. It was a big transition for him but his pitches are good enough, he is throwing more strikes and not walking as many people."

While Mitchell had his problems earlier this season, he has won his last five games and boasts a 3.32 ERA.

"I think we were the culprits earlier this season," Johnson said. "We tried to change too much and he didn't throw as well. But you have to take one step back before you can take two steps forward. His confidence has risen and he has had

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A&M women athletes honored at banquet

By Nick Georgandis
THE BATTALION

Congratulations and honors were plentiful Monday night at the 1995 Texas A&M Women's Athletic Banquet held at the College Station Hilton.

Senior Associate Athletic Director Lynn Hickey gave out compliments to everyone involved in the athletic program.

"Everyone here is responsible for all those wins at those games and meets," Hickey said. "People on the outside don't understand all the work and effort that's put in, they only see the wins and losses."

All seniors regardless of sport received a custom Aggie music box from Roger Books from San Angelo. Besides the honoring of the seniors, most of the coaches gave out their own team awards.

First up was the soccer team which compiled a 15-3-1 record including a 10-0 run to cap the regular season. Head coach G. Guerrieri gave out the Offensive Most Valuable Player award to Kristen Koop, next year's captain and Defensive Most Valuable Player to Allison Buckley, the team's sweeper.

The Texas A&M volleyball team enjoyed a fine season, finishing second in the Southwest Conference and receiving an

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Fond farewell to Montana

□ Many of Joe's friends and colleagues will gather to celebrate his retirement from football.

(AP) - Eddie DeBartolo will be there, ready to cry at the drop of a Super Bowl ring. So will Ronnie Lott, Dwight Clark and a lot of the other San Francisco 49ers who helped Joe Montana bring San Francisco four titles.

Guess who else is likely to show up at Montana's retirement party? Steve Young, the quarterback who forced 49ers owner DeBartolo to ship Joe out of town.

Yes, the same Young who finally established himself in San Francisco when the 49ers won their fifth Super Bowl in January. The same Young who had six touchdown passes in the game to break Montana's record by one.

But Tuesday will be Montana's Day, likely to be far more emotional than the day five summers from now in Canton, Ohio, when Montana's automatic induction into the pro football Hall of Fame is made official.

For in a city where being different is an art form, an ordinary guy named Joe brought the city four NFL titles in nine seasons and is without question its most popular citizen.

And if, in fact, Montana left his heart in San Francisco during his two seasons in Kansas City, it's also true that San Francisco's heart went with him.

"I don't feel weird about Joe's retirement because I was hoping it would come a little sooner. It was so hard to watch him play somewhere else," says Clark, who made "The Catch" after "The Throw" in the 1981 NFC title game to start the 49ers on their Super Bowl run.

While Lott, Clark, Jerry Rice, Roger Craig and many others made major contributions, those first four titles were regarded in the San Francisco area as "property of Joe Montana."

So if various friends and relatives from Montana's first hometown, Monongahela, Pa., will be there along with the brass from the Chiefs, with whom he ended his career, this is San Francisco's treat.

Montana's agents, International Management Group, made that clear when they organized the celebration, leaving Wednesday as the day for a second, lower-key tribute in Kansas City.

The official announcement will come at noon in Justin Herman Square, and among the guests will be mayor Frank Jordan and Huey Lewis, the official rock singer of the 49ers who stopped singing the national anthem before Niners' games about the time Montana left town.

Then comes a luncheon that will include DeBartolo and all those former 49ers' teammates, including, apparently Young, with whom Montana's relations were cool at best during their years together but have warmed up since.

Home team favoritism not for everyone

Usually, when people live in a town which has a professional sports team they root for that team because they represent their city. Especially, when this team wins a championship.

Take for instance all the people who jumped on the Cowboys bandwagon when they won the Super Bowls or on the Rockets carriage when they won the NBA Championship.

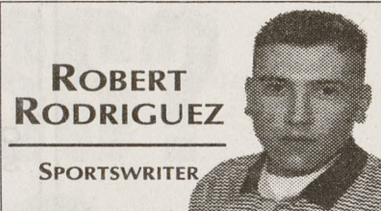
While playing hockey at Reunion Arena last Sunday with some friends someone asked me why I did not like any of the professional sports teams in Dallas, even though I live there. I had many reasons.

Dallas Cowboys - Of all the professional sports teams around, this is the team I root against the most. Don't get me wrong, I like some of the personalities on the team that make them enjoyable to watch.

It's just that there are people in the organization who make them so lovable to hate. I love it when Jerry Jones jacks up the ticket prices to a point where you have to ask for a loan at a bank in order to go watch a game. Or when Leon Lett does his usual bloopers with the football. Like every other Cowboys hater, I like it when the star on the helmet doesn't look so shiny.

Even though the Cowboys are "America's Team," my two favorite football teams are the Chicago Bears and whoever plays "da boys."

Dallas Stars - When the Stars moved to Dallas from Minnesota in 1993, I couldn't wait to go see the games. Not to see the Stars, but just to see hockey. As a product from Chicago, hockey was a major sport and the then Minnesota North Stars were their chief rivals. Even though the location has changed, the rivalry between the Stars and the Blackhawks has intensified to a different level.



ROBERT RODRIGUEZ
SPORTSWRITER

I have to admit I like the Stars' jersey, but that's it. As a Blackhawk fan, I have to root against the Stars. I am glad Dallas has a hockey team, because now I can watch the Blackhawks play the Stars.

Texas Rangers - As a White Sox fan, I used to always go to the Ranger games when they would host the men in black. I did like some of the Rangers last year and the new ballpark. I have always been a fan of Jose Canseco, regardless if the pitcher was Jack McDowell or Alex Fernandez. I liked seeing him tee off on them.

This is another example of a bitter rivalry between two teams. The Rangers and the White Sox are in different divisions, but their rivalry is still bitter even after the Nolan Ryan-Robin Ventura squabble. I have been a White Sox fan ever since the days of Carlton Fisk and Ron Kittle and I will always be one.

Dallas Mavericks - Of the teams in the Dallas/Fort Worth area, this is my favorite team. The Mavericks are going to be a strong team in the years to come and it will be fun watching Jason Kidd dishing the ball off to Jamal Mashburn and Jim Jackson.

Even though I have been a Chicago Bull fan even before the Jordan era, I see the Mavericks as a good prospect to three-peat as World Champions just like the Bulls did. The Mavericks are my favorite basketball team in the Western Conference and I hope someday they will bring an NBA championship to the "Big D."

It's not hard to figure out that I am a Chicago sports freak. I like every professional sports team in Chicago, including the Cubbies. I just live in the wrong city to be rooting for those teams.

Regardless of which team you hate or love, the most important thing is to have fun at the games by rooting for your favorite team. Whether it's the Aggies or the Quebec Nordiques, you should never be ashamed of who you root for, even if it is not the home team.



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