

SPORTS BRIEFS

Barone gets second signee this spring

The Texas A&M men's basketball team signed Derrick Hart of Lon Morris Junior College to a national letter-of-intent yesterday.

Hart, a 5-8, 185-pound guard earned all-conference honors averaging 23.5 points, 7.6 assists and 3.1 per steals. He made 160 three-pointers, connecting on 46.1 percent, leading Lon Morris to a 22-10 record and the conference title.

"One of the things we set out to do was bring in what we considered a couple of combination guards," Barone said. "We want to get away from describing our guards as point guards."

Hart is the second player signed by A&M in the spring signing period.

Transfer joins Lady Ag basketball team

The Texas A&M women's basketball team signed Melissa Rollerson to a national letter-of-intent yesterday. Rollerson averaged 17.5 points and 9 rebounds a game for Trinity Valley Community College.

"Melissa will make an immediate impact on our basketball team at the small forward position," Harvey said. "She is a very well-rounded player who can put the ball on the floor and drive or shoot the three-pointer."

Rollerson played two seasons at Trinity, leading the Lady Cardinals to a 66-3 record and the 1994 NJCAA championship and a second-place finish at the 1995 national tournament.

Allen invited to join USA Baseball camp

Texas A&M outfielder Chad Allen was one of an additional six players to receive invitations to the USA Baseball spring camp which begins June 7. Last year Allen participated in the 1994 Fall Trials in Homestead, Fla.

From the 40 players invited to the camp, the top 26 will be chosen to represent the USA Baseball team. This summer, the team will play a 36-game, 15-city tour in preparation for the 1996 Olympic Games in the Atlanta.

Lady Aggies go out in style with sweep of SFA



Tim Moog/THE BATTALION

Senior Beth Gerken nails a Lady Lumberjack runner who tries to slide in underneath the tag.

□ The softball team wins its last two home games as they attempt to make the NCAA Regional Playoffs.

By Jim Anderson
THE BATTALION

Going out in style. That's what the Texas A&M softball team did as they concluded their regular season home schedule with a sweep of Stephen F. Austin. The Lady Aggies shut out the Lady Lumberjacks 7-0 in the first game and took the nightcap 6-1 before 303 at the Texas A&M softball complex.

The victories pushed the Lady Aggies record to 28-20 and improved their overall record against SFA to 21-4. SFA fell to 24-27.

Texas A&M softball coach Bob Brock believed the victories came at the right time for the team as it fights to make the NCAA Regional Playoffs.

"As the season comes to a close, we are starting to peak in

our play," Brock said. "We can always improve but I'm very pleased with the overall team effort that we showed tonight against a scrappy SFA team."

Junior Erin Field picked up the victory in the first game, upping her record to 14-13. She helped her own cause at the plate with three hits and two RBI, including an RBI double in a game-breaking three run fourth inning.

"Hitting wise I feel that I had a good day," Field said. "I was putting the bat on the ball, hitting it hard, and fortunately they were falling in for me tonight."

The second game saw the Lady Aggies go ahead early with a big three run first inning, highlighted by run scoring hits by Field and Beth Gerken. That was more than enough for sophomore pitcher Heather Hayden, who scattered six hits in allowing one run. The win improved her overall record to 5-3.

"Heather pitched well tonight," said Brock. "We got two solid pitching performances."

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Rangers fall to Yankees in season opener

□ Cy Young runner-up Jimmy Key is now 6-0 on opening day.

NEW YORK (AP) — Other than a few empty upper-deck seats and an umpire wearing an old-fashioned chest protector, things looked pretty normal for the New York Yankees on opening day.

Jimmy Key was on the mound, the other team couldn't put much together against him and New York won 8-6 over Texas on Wednesday.

Key won his third straight

opening day start for New York and improved his career record in openers to 6-0. The Yankees won at home in their season debut for the sixth straight time.

Danny Tartabull homered and drove in three runs, Bernie Williams hit a solo homer and Pat Kelly went 3-for-4 for New York, the pre-season favorite to win the tough AL East.

A crowd of 50,245, about 6,500 fewer than last year's record attendance figure, watched the game on a warm spring afternoon. The replacement umpires included Bill Deegan, who called balls and strikes in the majors from 1970-80. He

was back on the job Wednesday and once again wore the bulky, balloon outside chest protector.

Key, the runner-up in American League Cy Young award voting last season, lasted five-plus innings and gave up seven hits, but Texas wasn't able to put together a rally against him until the sixth inning. By that time, New York had a 5-1 lead.

Tartabull's homer made it 1-0 in the second, and he drew a bases-loaded walk to make it 2-0 an inning later. Don Mattingly had an RBI groundout and Mike Stanley singled to shortstop to drive in a run before the inning ended.

Peaks of performance just a moment away

There are mountain tops and valleys in life. I bet you've heard this somewhere before. If not, you already know this through firsthand experience.

The sports world represents life with a mountain top of highs that come with playing the game.

In running, it's the runner's high that is the peak that pushes a runner to their best. My own experience gives testimony to this fact. As a distance runner, I noticed around the fourth of fifth mile that the "second wind" would come and a new burst of energy would push me through to finish the race I started.

Other sports have "highs" that keep the competitors fighting for victory.

Three years ago during the 1992 NBA final, Michael Jordan hit 35 points before halftime against Portland. That 35 points included six, three-pointers in a row. That's a performance that will not be forgotten in the near future.

Michael Jordan's pre-retirement days proved that the "zone" was real. He could slam, lay-up, hit from the top of the key and even behind the three-point arc. He couldn't miss.

Football's "high" is the hair mary pass. Many fans remember the elation they felt when Troy Aikman laid up a pass to Alvin Harper in the last two NFC championship games against the San Francisco 49ers. The passes should have been uncatchable. He never missed.

In golf, the hole-in-one is the "high."

Golfers throughout the years have attempted to make a hole-in-one for money or other incentives, like a car. These



SHELLY HALL
SPORTSWRITER

golfers have made the weekly highlight reels of the sports news shows across the nation.

Soccer has a "high" that Pele made famous.

The bicycle kick is a rare phenomenon that few athletes have mastered. The player is facing their goal and they kick the ball back over their head into their opponents' goal, landing on their back or completely flipping over.

In baseball, the grand slam would be considered the "high" of the game. With the bases loaded, two outs and two strikes, the batter hits the ball out of the park.

Aggie baseball fans are familiar with this scene. Remember last Sunday?

Most people I've talked to will not soon forget Jeff Bailey's last-minute heroics with his grand slam against Texas Tech to put the fightin' Texas Aggies past the Red Raiders at Olsen Field.

That grand slam gave the Aggies the tie for the lead in the Southwest Conference with Rice. That's a high the baseball team and fans will ride the rest of the season and one that will be played over and over again in the minds of Aggie fans in years to come.

Highs in sports come few and far between because of the athletic ability it takes to master them.

When athletes get into the zone and can't miss, memories are made.

The history making performances that mark mountain top performances throughout the years are re-runs in the hearts and minds of sports fans everywhere.

They make the valleys worth the effort.

Superstitious Arrant taking up the slack

□ The number one singles player will not be without his long hair and bandannas.

By Kristina Buffin
THE BATTALION

He refuses to play with short hair and without his lucky bandanna. junior tennis player Blake Arrant never plays without one of his wide variety of bandannas that includes a Harley Davidson and a Speed Racer.

"I started wearing bandannas a long time ago," Arrant said. "It has become a superstition now, if I cut my hair short, I play terrible. I cut it right before nationals and I couldn't put the ball in the court."

Arrant came to A&M from Nacogdoches High School where he earned All-Region honors as a junior and All-State honors as a senior.

"In Nacogdoches I just hit with my brother," Arrant said. "When I came to school here I played as the number five and six seed. There were better guys on the team who I could hit with and it helped a lot."

After Aggie ace Mark Weaver graduated last year, Arrant was promoted to the number one singles spot after his success at the number two spot.

"He (Blake) has done an outstanding job filling shoes that were tough to fill," coach David Kent said. "He has won more and

competed more than I thought. I am proud of him and his record. He doesn't have Weaver's record yet but he does have one more year."

Arrant said he is a player that likes to play and performs well under pressure.

"Playing under pressure is fun," Arrant said. "High pressure is what you want. I remember when we played Tulane and it was tied 3-3. I was playing in the last match and was serving for the match at 5-4. When you win it is the best feeling to clinch the match. The pressure makes the match."

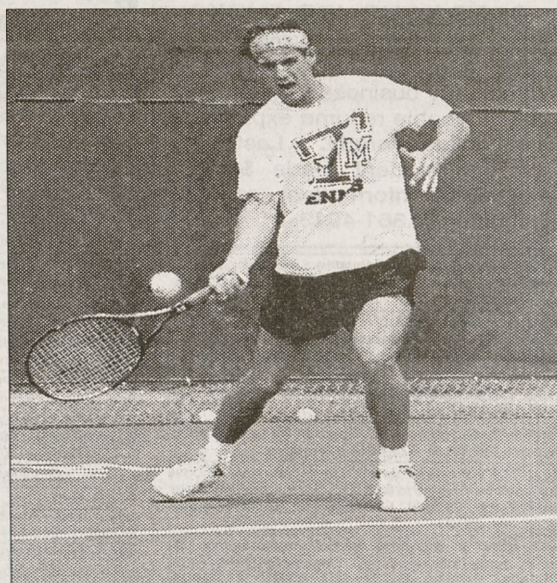
This season, Arrant has a good record but said that he lost some close matches that he should not have.

"I have had a good season," Arrant said. "The first seven matches that I lost this season were all in the third set. I could have been 10-1 but I lost a couple of points that could have turned it around."

"The close matches make me play better. I come out saying that I will play my best and give in 100 percent."

Arrant has steadily improved since his freshman year. Kent said that this improvement is a result of his hard work and determination.

"He has gotten better," Kent said. "The last few matches he has played against top players and has been right there. I can't ask him to win every match, just compete. At the regionals I'm excited because I know he will



Bart Mitchell/THE BATTALION

Junior Blake Arrant hits a forehand back to his opponent during a recent practice.

rise to the occasion."

Part of Arrant's success is also attributable to the support of his family. Arrant's father comes to every tournament to see Blake play no matter how far away the tournament.

"His dad is his best fan," Kent said. "He doesn't butt in and he goes with Blake everywhere. It is a fine tribute to Blake and

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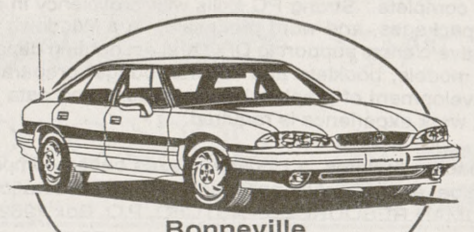
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