

# SPORTS

## A&M swimming split signifies new commitment

□ Mel Nash will continue to coach the men's team while a search is on for a women's coach.

By David Winder  
THE BATTALION

On the one hand, Texas A&M Head Swimming Coach Mel Nash is sad to see the school's swimming and diving team split into separate men's and women's programs. On the other hand, Nash will get to coach the men's team full-time now.

"The way it was before, I was the head coach and Jay Holmes was my assistant," Nash said. "We and the rest of the staff worked with everybody in the program, and we were never able to really concentrate on one team."

Nash said one of the main problems of having to coach both teams was that the two teams' schedules paralleled each other so much that there were never any breaks between events. "The women's Southwest Conference Championships would be one week, and then the men's would be the next," Nash said.

"Then the women's NCAA Championships would be one week and then the men's would be the next. So while we were working with one team, we would be away from another for two out of four weeks during a crucial time period."

Nash said that the move to the new Student Recreational Center would make this the ideal time for the Athletic Department to make the change.

"Since we are moving into the new facility, it

was a good time for the decision to be made," Nash said. "It will help us to make the step into the new conference (the Big 12)."

The natatorium in the new Student Recreational Center will be the host site of the Big 12 Swimming and Diving Championships in 1997. Due to size constraints, A&M's old facility — the P.L. Downs Natatorium — was never able to hold a SWC meet.

"Having a combined team really helped us in the old facility," Nash said. "We had such little space that we had to have a combined team."

"Now that we have twice the pool area, we are going to be able to split the pool in half for each team to practice. The new facility has also helped in our recruiting."

Nash said that having separate men's and women's teams is not for everyone.

"In the top 25 teams in the nation, 60 to 65 percent of the teams have separate programs, so both can be successful," Nash said. "In recruiting, some kids grew up with the club teams and want to go to a school with a combined program. It just depends on the kid's preferences."

Nash said it was hard for him to say goodbye to coaching the women's team.

"I'm glad the athletic department named me the men's coach because I couldn't have made the decision myself," Nash said. "It would have been like having to choose between my two kids."

"There were a few tears shed when the decision was made because of the strong attachments. But, that's part of life."

The athletic department is hoping to name a women's coach by August.



File Photo  
Texas A&M freshman diver Jodi Janssen completes a flip on her way into the Wofford Cain Pool.

**"There were a few tears shed when the decision (to split the teams) was made. But, that's part of life."**

—Mel Nash  
Texas A&M swimming coach

### MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL STANDINGS

#### National League

East Division	W	L	Pct.
Philadelphia	33	17	.660
Atlanta	30	20	.600
Montreal	27	26	.519
New York	19	32	.373
Florida	16	32	.333

#### Central Division

W	L	Pct.	
Cincinnati	31	19	.620
Chicago	25	24	.510
Houston	25	24	.510
St. Louis	22	30	.423
Pittsburgh	19	30	.388

#### West Division

W	L	Pct.	
Colorado	27	23	.540
San Francisco	27	25	.519
Los Angeles	25	24	.510
Los Angeles	25	26	.490

#### Tuesday's Games

Philadelphia 8, New York 2
Pittsburgh 5, San Francisco 3
Houston 7, Montreal 4
Atlanta 10, Cincinnati 2
St. Louis 7, Los Angeles 0
Florida 7, Colorado 2
Chicago 7, San Diego 2

#### Today's Games

Los Angeles at St. Louis, 12:35 p.m.
San Francisco at Pittsburgh, 2:05 p.m.
Chicago at San Diego, 3:05 p.m.
Florida at Colorado, 4:05 p.m.
Houston at Montreal, 5:05 p.m.
Atlanta at Cincinnati, 5:35 p.m.
Philadelphia at New York, 6:40 p.m.

### American League

#### East Division

W	L	Pct.	
Boston	28	21	.571
Detroit	24	28	.462
Baltimore	21	28	.429
Toronto	20	27	.426
New York	20	29	.408

#### Central Division

W	L	Pct.	
Cleveland	36	13	.735
Kansas City	28	20	.583
Milwaukee	23	25	.479
Chicago	17	30	.362
Minnesota	15	36	.294

#### West Division

W	L	Pct.	
California	30	20	.600
Texas	30	21	.588
Oakland	28	24	.538
Seattle	26	24	.520

#### Tuesday's Games

Oakland 5, Minnesota 2
Cleveland 9, Boston 2
Milwaukee 5, Toronto 3
Texas 8, Detroit 6
Seattle 9, Chicago 5
Baltimore 8, New York 7
Kansas City 3, California 2

#### Today's Games

Boston at Cleveland, 6:05 p.m.
Texas at Detroit, 7:05 p.m.
Milwaukee at Toronto, 6:35 p.m.
New York at Baltimore, 6:35 p.m.
Seattle at Chicago, 7:05 p.m.
Oakland at Minnesota, 9:05 p.m.
Kansas City at California, 9:35 p.m.

## Talk with Jordan convinces Lemieux to make comeback

□ The Penguins' star will play 60 to 70 games a season.

PITTSBURGH (AP) — First, Michael Jordan. Now, Mario Lemieux.

Basketball's biggest star made a comeback and hockey's will, too, now that Lemieux has decided to end his one-year medical sabbatical and return to the Pittsburgh Penguins — and to the sport he once dominated.

Lemieux, who led Pittsburgh to the 1991 and 1992 Stanley Cup championships, said Tuesday he plans to play 60 to 70 games, skipping some long road trips to prevent stress on his troublesome back.

Lemieux, who will be 30 in September, was convinced last summer that cancer-related fatigue and the chronic back problems had prematurely ended his

career. But a year to rest, recuperate and reflect on his life away from hockey obviously changed the four-time NHL scoring champion's mind.

"I feel 100 percent better than I did at this time last year," Lemieux said in a hotel ballroom packed with reporters. "I have recuperated from the radiation treatments 100 percent and I also feel like my back has made tremendous progress over the last six months."

Lemieux even discussed his comeback with Jordan, asking basketball's best player how he conditioned himself mentally and physically to return from a prolonged layoff.

"I played golf with Michael a couple of times last week and we talked about him coming back ... and how he wanted to be the best when he came back," Lemieux said.

Just like Lemieux intends to be.

"I'm not coming back to be an average player," he said. "If I can play 60-70 games and get my back in shape, I can be where I was a couple of years ago."

Penguins chairman Howard Baldwin insists he didn't persuade or pressure Lemieux, and that money — Lemieux has four years left on his \$42 million contract — wasn't an issue.

Still, Lemieux will make about \$4 million next season and more than \$10 million in 1996-97, when he collects the first of two \$4 million licensing bonuses.

Barring any more unforeseen medical problems, Baldwin anticipates Lemieux playing not just next season, but for another three to four seasons.

"When a player of Mario's stature does not play, there is a huge void," Baldwin said. "Players like Mario, Michael Jordan, Magic Johnson, Wayne Gretzky are all unique to their profession

in that their gifts are so extraordinary."

But while money wasn't the issue, Lemieux's health was. When he announced his leave of absence last August, Lemieux was convinced he wouldn't step onto the ice again in 1995-96. Or any other season.

"I thought my career was over and I had no plans of coming back," Lemieux said. "This last six months, I started to feel a lot better and a lot stronger and I'm not as fatigued anymore. My back is much better. I started to think I could play this game again."

Lemieux didn't consider playing again until six months ago, when his back improved significantly for the first time in years. He added a gym onto his home and began lifting weights regularly.

With Lemieux often watching from a private box, right wing Jaromir Jagr took advantage of

Lemieux's absence to win his first NHL scoring title. Penguins coach Eddie Johnston said having two exceptional scorers in the same lineup is a coach's dream.

Lemieux won his fourth scoring title in 1992-93, despite missing a quarter of the season to undergo radiation treatment for Hodgkin's disease, a cancer of the lymph nodes.

"If Mario is healthy, I don't think anybody can beat us," Johnston said. "That's what we're here for, to win the Stanley Cup. I have no doubt that if we would have had Mario healthy in the playoffs (in 1994) we would have won it again."

Lemieux, who has scored 1,211 points in 599 regular-season games, will hire a trainer to coordinate a preseason conditioning program, and plans to begin skating regularly in July. The Penguins will open training camp Sept. 10.

## South reflects on 25 years of SWC broadcasting

□ The announcer has covered A&M for 10 years.

By Lee Wright  
THE BATTALION

In 1970, Dave South came to the Southwest Conference as a sports broadcaster for Baylor University. Next year, after a quarter of a century of service, he will bid the conference goodbye when Texas A&M joins the Big 12 Conference.

"I grew up in Texas and listened to Southwest Conference games as a kid," South said. "It pains me to see this conference dissolve, but it has lost some of its stature in recent years."



South

South has been the radio play-by-play announcer for Texas A&M baseball, basketball and football since 1985. He said his most memorable moment at A&M came in 1990 when the Aggie football team met Brigham Young University — led by Heisman Trophy winner Ty Detmer — in the Holiday Bowl.

"The Aggies came into the game as an underdog and came out with a 65-14 romp," South said. "But more importantly, they received a great deal of respect from the people of San Diego after the game."

Southwest Conference Tournament at Reunion Arena in Dallas. During an A&M game, South apparently put his hands to his throat in a choking motion directed at one of the referees. The referee stopped play and ordered arena officials to remove South from the building.

"I regret the ordeal, but I had no right to be thrown out of the arena," South said. "I am a broadcaster, but I am a fan before anything else."

South said he usually tries to stay uninvolved in the games he calls, and never disagrees on the air with the calls made by A&M's coaches.

"I have never coached or played any sport at the collegiate level, therefore I never second-guess the (A&M) coaches and the decisions they make," South said. "I am a firm believer that college athletes are amateur athletes and that they do not deserve the harsh criticism that some commentators give to them."

"My job is to sell Texas A&M athletics and to be fair to the viewers and the players."

This attitude has earned South respect from SWC coaches. "Dave South is far more than an announcer," A&M Head Basketball Coach Tony Barone said. "He is a friend to the players and a tremendous supporter of Texas A&M athletics."

As South looks ahead to the final season of SWC action, he said he is most excited about the A&M football team's chances of achieving its ultimate goal — a national championship.

"They have to remain healthy, use the talent that they have, and having a little bit of luck never hurts either," South said. "Every opponent considers the A&M game to be its bowl game because we are a good team, and have been for a long time."

## U.S. Open needs a boost

This just in: last week's U.S. Open golf championship was one of the most-watched tournaments in years. Of course, it really can't be considered watched since most of the audience fell asleep while viewing it.

In fact, people are just waking up today after channel-surfing past NBC on Sunday afternoon.

There must be a change in golf. Well, at least a change in golf on television.

First, the networks should replace their current commentators with guys who actually have pulses. The current group of announcers whisper so quietly that they actually become louder when the television is muted. When they finally do speak loud enough to be heard, they usually say something so dumb that the TV just has to be turned off.

Last weekend, NBC's Dick Enberg would break into strange soliloquies after every shot, describing the golfers as if they were battle-worn soldiers. After a chip shot by Davis Love III, Enberg actually awarded him the Purple Heart.

Then there was the commentary of Johnny Miller, a former U.S. Open champ, who cried after every thing he said. He talked about the play of Greg Norman, and then he cried.

He congratulated winner Corey Pavin, and then he cried. Commentator Bob Trumpy announced that Tom Lehman would have to make his putt break left, and Miller cried.

What the golf world needs is announcers in the John Mad-

DAVID WINDER  
SPORTSWRITER



den-mold. New announcer (Yelling): "Couples looking at a par three ... Boom! Bam! Ahhh ... it's in the hole."

Second, golf fans need players to root for and players to root against. Why not divide the field of players like they do in professional wrestling and have the good guys versus the bad guys?

Fans would be able to select their favorite golfer based on which side of the law they favored.

Jay Haas and Ben Crenshaw could stand out on the fairway and tell everybody how bad they're going to kick Phil Mickelson and Lee Janzen's butts in the steel-cage death hole.

Greg Norman could rip his shirt off with his bare hands before every tee shot and hand it to someone in the gallery.

Jack Nicklaus could sucker-punch Arnold Palmer just as he was about to putt. All the Professional Golf Association needs is some rock 'n' roll blaring during player introductions, and NBC would have itself a show.

## Houston, McNair not close on deal

JACKSON, Miss. (AP) — Former Alcorn State quarterback Steve "Air" McNair and the Houston Oilers are still a long way apart in contract negotiations.

"We've had lots of discussion and little progress," Bus Cook of Hattiesburg, the agent for Houston's No. 1 draft pick, told The Clarion-Ledger in a column published Tuesday.

McNair, the NCAA career leader in total offense with 16,823 yards, was the third player, and first quarterback, taken in the April 22 draft. Only one of the top 10 picks has signed a contract.

Cook seeks a contract similar to the one former Tennessee standout Heath Shuler signed with the Washington Redskins last year. Shuler got \$19 million over seven years.

"I figure that's a good starting point," Cook said. "Shuler is a quarterback and the third pick in the draft, the same as Steve."

Shuler's contract included what is known as a voidable clause, basically giving him the right to renegotiate after three years if he meets certain statistical goals. The Oilers have balked on allowing McNair such a clause.

The only one of the top 10 draft picks to sign so far is offensive lineman Tony Boselli with Jacksonville. Boselli, the second pick in the draft, got a \$6 million signing bonus and \$11 million more over seven years.

Meanwhile, Cook said he will file an objection with the U.S. Department of Trademarks and Patents to a request by three San Diego men seeking the commercial rights to the "Air McNair" name.