



Students spend hours over addictive games of forty-two

Jan Higginbotham
THE BATTALION

When asking A&M students about their favorite sport, many peo- rant-bash- particular answer — playing dominoes.

Domino playing has become another one of those long- standing Aggie traditions, but one knows exactly when it started.

Don Ganter, owner of the Dixie Chicken, said domino playing became popular at his Northgate when it opened in 1974.

"We decided to kind of copy places like Luckenbach, Texas and old country stores where people sit around and play dominoes and drink beer," Ganter said. "We just said we had the dominoes and then stepped aside for the people who were coming to play."

Swarms of A&M students know how to play games involving dominoes before they leave Aggieland.

Karen Nichols, a senior business analysis major, said she didn't start playing dominoes until she came to A&M as a freshman.

"I knew upperclassmen who

taught me how to play," Nichols said. "Now, anytime I go to the Chicken, I play."

Others have learned the game by right of passage in their families.

Ian Hastings, a senior animal science major, learned to play dominoes from his grandfather when he was six, although he didn't learn how to play 42 until high school.

"It's a good clean game that's competitive and fun to play. Some people just eat the game alive, or it eats them alive."

— Don Ganter
owner, Dixie Chicken

Forty-two is a popular domino game similar to the card game Spades.

Hastings said he has become more serious about domino playing since he came to A&M.

"There have been times when my buddies and I would get in at 8:00 at night and play until 6:00 in the morning," he said.

Hastings said by continuously playing, people can become bet-

ter domino players.

"It takes a lot of time and a lot of playing, but you can always get better as a player," he said. "When I play 42 with my buddies, after two or three dominoes have been played, you know what everybody's holding."

But spending the time to become a good player may not be voluntary.

Suzi Manning, a junior math education major, said the game has become addictive.

"I'm always playing dominoes," Manning said. "Even Sunday night when I was camping out with friends for tickets to the A&M-Colorado football game, we were playing."

Ganter said people enjoy playing dominoes because it is a challenging game.

"It's a good, clean game that's competitive and fun to play," Ganter said. "Some people just eat the game alive, or it eats them alive."

The Dixie Chicken has 30 sets of dominoes for patrons to use when they come in, but Ganter said there are never enough.

"There are people who are as rabid about dominoes as they are about the Aggie football team," he said. "I've seen people



Robyn Calloway, THE BATTALION

Kelly Black, a senior kinesiology major, Kelly Baker, a senior agricultural development major, Shelly Huntley, a senior kinesiology major, and Mike Landin, a former business student, play a friendly game of 42 at the Dixie Chicken Tuesday afternoon.

here playing dominoes from the minute we open in the morning until the minute we close."

Hastings said he enjoys dominoes because of the competitiveness of the game.

"I can't stand to lose, and I instill that into my partners," Hastings said. "Dominoes is a

very competitive sport because it is mental, and you can always get better. You can think of ways to harass other people and make them lose."

Nichols said the competitive nature of dominoes makes it hard for players to quit.

"I can play for hours and not

realize the time, because it is so competitive, and you always want to win," she said. "If you lose a game, you want to keep playing so you can win. If you win a game, you want to keep playing and continue winning. You just keep playing and keep getting better."

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