

Now, That's Tradition

Three Aggies took in the sites at the 100th Boston Marathon

By Matt Dickerson
SPECIAL TO THE BATTALION

The 100th running of the Boston Marathon last Monday was an incredible sporting sight — even for an Aggie out of water.

Though I have previously run two other marathons, I did not qualify for the Boston and so had to sit this one out. But what an experience for a change — I got to quaff beers and cheer on a couple of friends from the Texas A&M Roadrunners.

Instead of "hitting the wall," I was hitting my credit limit. I was drawn, moth-like, to the Back-Bay Brew House, which was just a couple of hundred yards down from the finish line and my base of operations.

From there, I was able to join the thousands thronging along Boylston Street to watch the 26.2-mile parade of runners, shop for marathon kitsch, snap rolls of pictures and then retreat back into the security and comfort of the BBBH.

Melissa Kroeger and Karla Hancock, the only members of the A&M Roadrunners to qualify for the Boston, ran the race with gusto. Kroeger, already an experienced marathoner at just 20 years old. She previously won her age division at both the Houston-Tenneco and San Antonio marathons and is a junior kinesiology major from League City.

She is the only A&M undergraduate to run the Boston this year, and finished the race in 3:31:27.

Hancock, a 1985 A&M graduate with a degree in psychology, is also an experienced marathoner — the Boston was her fifth. She qualified for Boston last December at the Dallas White Rock Marathon and ran the Boston in 3:45:00 despite having the flu for days leading up to the race.

Kroeger and Hancock had varying reasons for running the race. Kroeger said that it was the prestige and tradition of the Boston that motivated her.

Hancock likewise referred to the tradition of the Boston Marathon.

"It's the race of the century," Hancock said, "the Olympics of running. While only a few elite athletes are privileged to run in the Olympic games, this is a race all runners can celebrate."

Kroeger, when asked what motivates her to run 26.2 miles in the first place, said the running is actually relaxing.

"At first, it was to say I did it," Kroeger said. "But a marathon isn't

as far as you think; you build up to that distance. And the people along the race route keep you motivated. No, I enjoy training for the marathon — it's my time to think and be alone. Finishing each marathon gives me a sense of accomplishment."

Hancock was a little more philosophical in her explanation.

"I run the marathon for the same reason a mountaineer climbs a mountain, because it's there," Hancock said. "The marathon is the ultimate test of the runner. As long as I can recall, I have loved running and considered myself a runner. I decided to become a long-distance runner as a child."

Both runners have serious tips for anyone wanting to train for a marathon.

"You can't skip your runs," Hancock said. "Do it. Expect to put some time into your running; you're going to have to slowly increase your training distance. It is hard work."

Traditionally run on Patriot's Day, the Boston Marathon is the longest continuously run marathon. The race drew more than 40,000 runners — 37,706 official entrants and some 2,000 illegal runners — from all over the world to celebrate the 100th running.

As a local writer put it, the Bostonians have always known that this race is more a celebration of human-

ity than of running. The wheelchair participants coming in first in marathons, usually posting times of well under two hours.

The crowd roared as the first men came in, the top finishers all from Kenya including first-place winner Moses Tanui.

The star of the race was Germany's Uta Pippig, who actually considered dropping out four miles into the race, but went on to win the women's side of things in 2:27:12.

By the time Pippig got to Boylston Street, the crowd was electric, roaring, "Uta, Uta, Uta!"

We didn't know it at the time, but Pippig had battled several illnesses during the race. She won it, a point of courage.

I saw the father and son wheelchair team of Dick and Rick Hoy. Dick pushed his son Rick's wheelchair to a finish of 2:45.

The city of Boston welcomed us all, spectators and runners, to share their race. As the Kenyans are fond of saying, "To run is to be human."



Kroeger



Hancock

Aggie tennis teams falter in SWC finals

The Aggie Men slipped up against TCU while the women dropped to Texas.

FORT WORTH, Texas (AP) — Texas Christian bagged its third straight Southwest Conference title Sunday with a 4-2 victory over Texas A&M in the 49th and final men's conference tournament.

Texas captured third place in the men's consolation match Sunday with a 4-1 victory over Texas Tech.

Texas A&M's Blake Arrant scored an upset win over the nation's top-ranked Division I

singles player, TCU's Paul Robinson, 6-4, 6-4, but the Horned Frogs rallied to win four other points in singles and doubles and top the Aggies.

TCU ended the scheduled campaign at 21-2 and ranked fourth nationally while the Aggies fell to 19-6 overall.

No. 3 singles man Andres Urencio topped West Virginia transfer Eric Elek 6-6, 7-6 (2), 6-1 in singles and doubled with Gonzalo Corrales at the

No. 3 spot to win 8-2 to give the Frogs' the doubles' point.

Texas advanced to 17-6 overall after its win over Texas Tech in the men's third-place match.

The Red Raiders, seeking an invitation to the eight-team NCAA Men's Region 6 tournament in Austin on May 10-12, dropped to 14-11 with the loss.

Freshman Laura Berendt of Texas won her No. 5 singles match in three sets and then led a charge at No. 3 doubles to put the Lady Longhorns over the top against Texas A&M 5-3 on Sunday.

The victory was Texas' 10th

consecutive SWC tournament title. It was the 14th and final Southwest Conference women's tennis tournament.

In the women's championship match, Texas A&M's No. 6 singles competitor Julia Beahm overcame a 5-2 deficit in the third set to upset Texas' Nomena Rasolomalala 4-6, 6-4, 7-6 (4) to force the teams to advance to doubles to decide the winner.

Berendt then teamed with Melody Falco to outlast the Lady Aggies' Beahm-Vanessa Rooks duo 7-6, 6-4 and clinch the team trophy for the Lady Longhorns, now 21-5.

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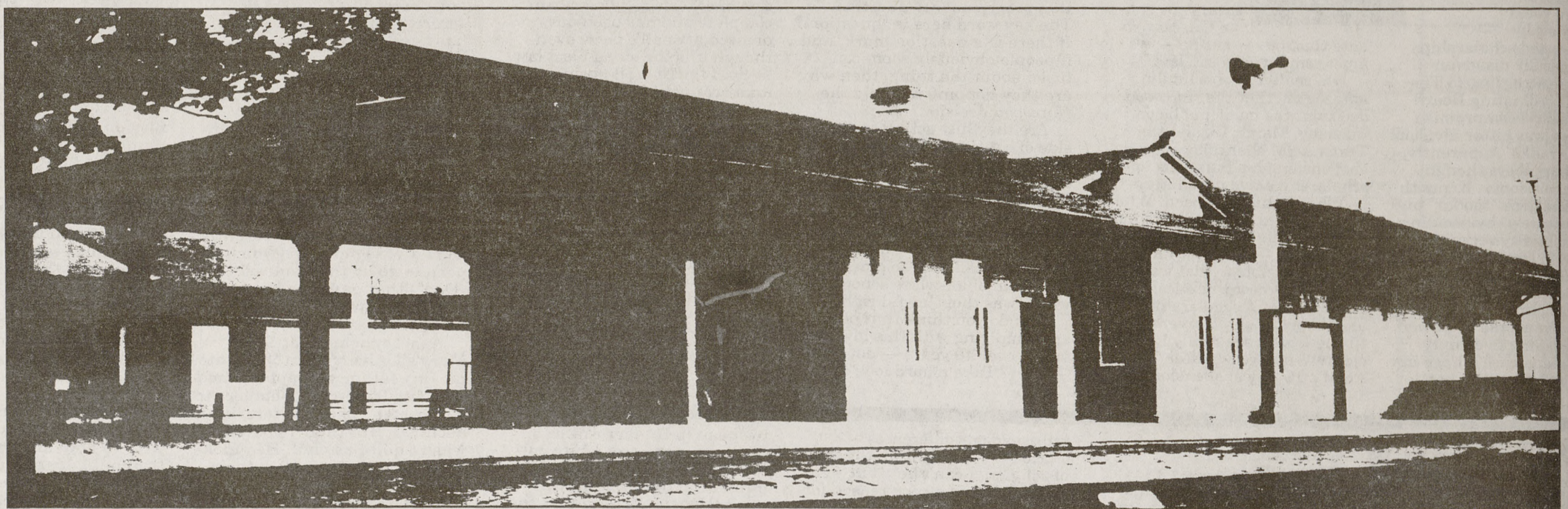
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DATE	EVENT	PLACE	TIME
APRIL 23RD	PARTY ON THE PATIO	WINGS N' MORE Across from campus	7-10 P.M.
APRIL 24TH	OLD ARMY YELL	RUDDER FOUNTAIN	6:30 P.M.
APRIL 25TH	SENIOR BASH	TEXAS HALL OF FAME	8 P.M. - 1 A.M.
APRIL 27TH	SENIOR BANQUET	HILTON HOTEL	6-8 P.M.
	RING DANCE	MSC & RUDDER	9 P.M. - 1 A.M.

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By Courtney
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