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Page 4 • THE BATTALION • Wednesday, June 19, 1996

Aggie Football a year-round job for players and coaches

By Ross Hecox THE BATTALION

The NCAA college football season spans a short fourmonth period every year. Most teams play 11 or 12 games a season, and their fans can only see them play at home just six dates a year.

This is no different for the A&M football program. But contrary to appearance, those involved do not just work from the end of the summer to the start of the new year.

As Aggie coaches, players and officials can attest, football is a year-round sport.

Associate Athletic Director Tim Cassidy said, due to A&M's commitment to playing in the Pigskin Classic in August, this summer has been busier than most for the Aggie coaching staff.

Because of the Brigham Young (BYU) game, everything's been moved up a cou-ple of weeks," Cassidy said. "We are working on recruiting we are working on recruiting and preparing for BYU, as well as preparing the two-a-day schedule." If not preparing for the up-coming season during the

summer months, the Aggie coaches conduct youth instructional camps on the A&M campus or elsewhere in the state.

Last weekend, for instance, the A&M coaches traveled to a football camp in San Angelo where many high school and middle school students were taught how to improve their skills.

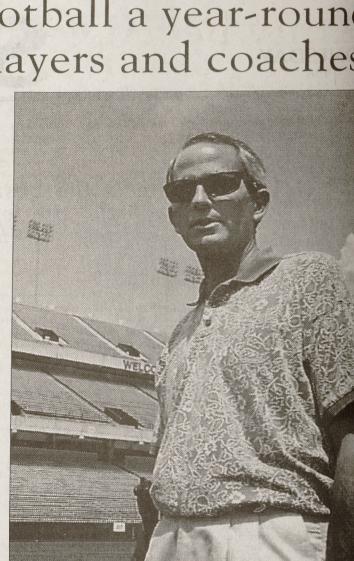
A&M Defensive Coordinator Phil Bennett said running and attending camps aids the program's recruiting cause.

You seem to find out more about recruits when you're in a relaxed environment like that," Bennett said. "You build up a relationship and get them familiar with A&M. It's also a

lot of fun for us." The A&M coaches also go to football clinics, where Defen-sive Line Coach Bill Johnson said they share ideas, philosophies and practice routines with other high school coaches.

When the coaching staff is not traveling somewhere to attend a clinic or camp, it runs all-day meetings setting the two-a-day summer workout schedule or prepares for the the Aug. 24 BYU contest.

"We are trying to concendeadlines and time demands trate on the fact that we are



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Associate Athletic Director of Operations Tim Cassidy has not had much time to soak up rays during Aggie Football's hectic off-season.

starting so early against BYU," Bennett said. "We have aren't as bad." Cassidy said the staff's schedule is radically different broken down every game they played last year. They're a during the summer.

There's not the pressured getting ready for a game every week," Cassidy said. "Now we're basically going from 8 to 5 instead of working from 6 a.m. until the we hours of the night.' (During the season) w

are constantly asking ou selves, 'Are we forgettin something?'" Bennett said "Everything is at a muc faster pace.

Later this summer ever coach will get three weeks vacation. Bennett, who plan to go to Florida with his fam ly, said even there he wi probably not be able to ge

work out of his system. 'I'll still be thinking about football," Bennett said.

Rangers continue mastery of Orioles

good football team.

Although NCAA regulations

state that schools cannot have

mandatory practices for their

players until the start of sum-

mer two-a-days, Bennett said

many Aggie players return

"(Close to) 70 players are here actively working out this

coaching staff must accom-

plish this summer, Johnson

said the atmosphere is relaxed compared to the pressures of

done (during the summer),

Johnson said. "But the best

thing about the summer is the

"A little bit of everything is

Despite the many tasks the

and work out voluntarily.

summer," Bennett said.

the regular season.

BALTIMORE (AP) — The Texas Rangers got the only run they needed 15 minutes into the and they were up by seven runs, game. More than four hours latyet another victory over the Bal- tage, I guess.' imore Orioles The Rangers hit five home runs, including four off Kent Mercker in the first three innings, and Darren Oliver limited Baltimore to five singles in a 7-0 rain-delayed win Tuesday night. Oliver went seven innings and Dennis Cook completed the first shutout against the Orioles this season.

the delay. "I'm sure if the situa-tion would have been reversed they would have called it. What uan Gonza

hander is 3-0 with a 1.41 ER in his last five starts.

We looked for Darrent throw well once, twice ... seems like now he's getting pretty good at it," Texas manag

es sala

er, they finally got to celebrate can you say? Homefield advan-



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Texas is 7-1 against Baltimore this year after losing four of five to the Orioles in 1995.

A heavy rainshower stopped the game with two outs in the top of the eighth and the score. 7-0. Play finally resumed shortly before midnight after a stoppage of 2 hours, 3 minutes.

By that time, there were only around 250 fans remaining from the sellout crowd of 47,318.

lez had a two**n**pl run homer in the first inning and Rene Gonzales and Kevin Elster added solo shots in the second. Dean Palmer

made it 6-0 with a two-run drive in the GONZALEZ third, and Da-

mon Buford led off the fourth with a home run off Jimmy Haynes.

That was more than enough offense for Oliver (6-2), who struck out four and walked two. The rain delay spoiled his bid for his second career complete game and shutout.

"Why wait two hours?" said Oliver, who did not return after ner past second base. The left-

The four home runs allowed was a career-high by Mercke (3-6). Mercker, 1-5 since Apr 24, had his ERA climb to 7.4 after yielding six runs in three innings.

"Obviously, Kent didn't have too much out there today," man ager Davey Johnson said. "It was a rough outing for him. The las two times out he didn't throw nearly as well as he did before."

Gonzalez gave Texas a 2-lead with his 12th home run o the season — the second in two nights and fourth in nine games. Gonzales hit his second and Elster tagged his 12th in the second inning to make it 4-0.

A walk to Gonzalez preceded Palmer's 16th homer, a shot into the left-field seats.

Buford greeted Haynes with his third home run of the year.

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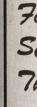
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