

SPORTS

WEDNESDAY
July 10, 1996

A New Tradition

The A&M Judo Club has won the state title six of the last seven years

By Ray Hernandez
THE BATTALION

It was not the top 10 rankings in any of the engineering departments that brought Robert Danin to Texas A&M. Nor was it A&M's reputation as a world-class research institution and National Merit Scholar magnet. Rather, it was the strength of the A&M Judo Team that attracted the native Ecuadorian to Aggieland. "My brother would compete in the United States and tell me about the A&M Judo Team and how good it was," Danin said. "That was what really attracted me to the school — next to the academics." The team's reputation as a winner is

well-earned, as it has been victorious at the Texas State Collegiate Tournament in six of the last seven years. The tournament is comprised of judo teams from various Texas universities, including the University of Texas, UT-Dallas and the University of Houston.

Much of the team's recent success can be attributed to judo coach Bob Perez,

who has worked with the team for about the last 10 years.

Perez, a 1993 graduate of A&M, said his longevity with the team has played a crucial role in its success.

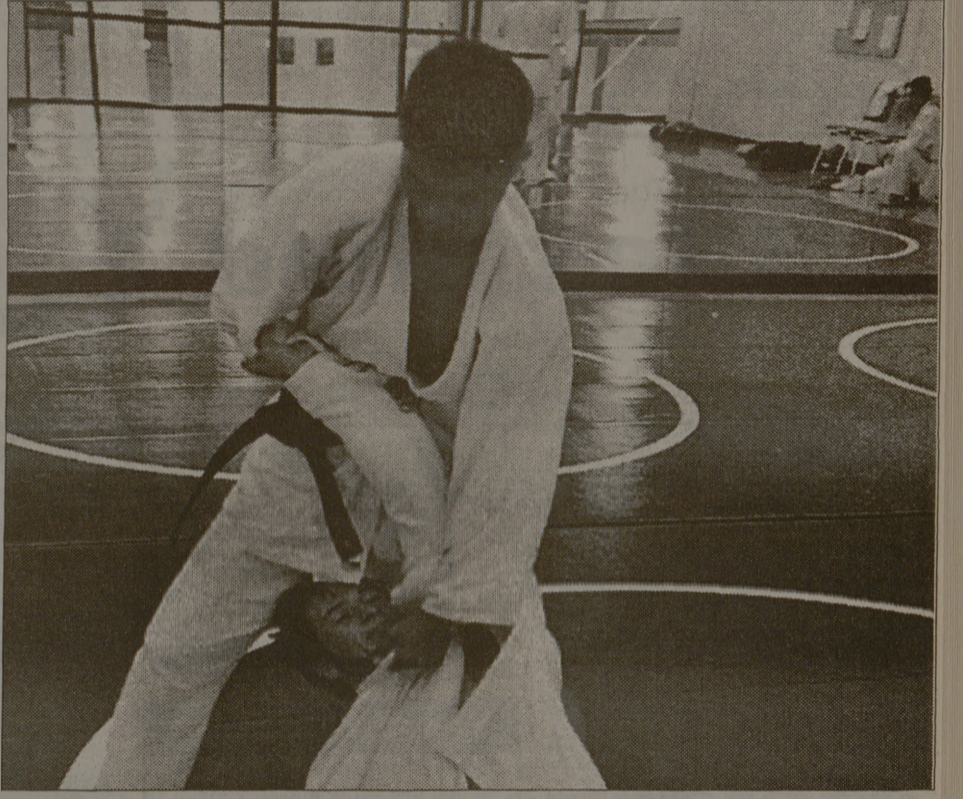
"The University has a high turnover rate — especially with no (judo) scholarships," Perez said. "Someone has to stay around for the team. I think [it] has done well because I've been able to stay around."

Perez can not only brag on the success of his team, but on his own accomplishments as well. He was the only Texas representative on the U.S. team that competed in the Benito Juarez Judo Invitational in Mexico City June 13-17.

Perez finished 7th in the tournament in the 56-kilogram division among competitors from 14 other countries.

Danin, a junior industrial engineering major and second-year team captain, has been a part of the team since his first year at A&M. He recently returned from the Juarez Invitational as well.

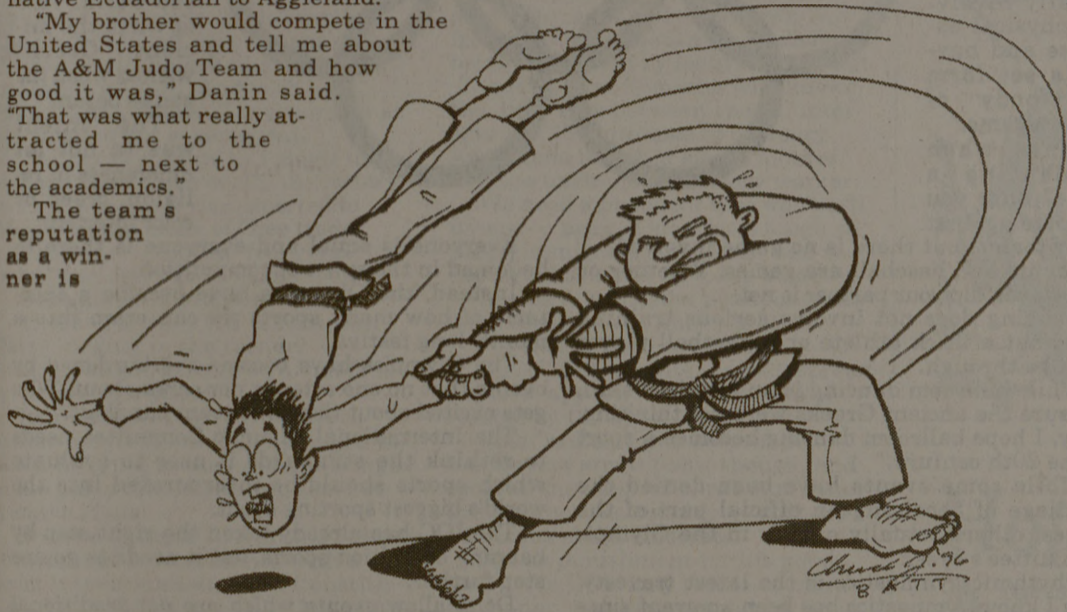
Representing his home country of Ecuador,



Pat James, THE BATTALION

Coach Bob Perez completes a throw that lands Adian Aguirre, a freshman biomedical science major, flat on his back during a practice on Tuesday.

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Road Trip

Next three weeks highlight the basketball recruiting season

By Ross Hecox
THE BATTALION

This summer the Aggie basketball coaching staff is getting a little "R and R." But it is not rest and relaxation the coaches

are getting; rather, it is a rush-and-recruit period.

Making road trips to cities like Indianapolis, Fayetteville, Charlotte and even Las Vegas, the A&M coaches cannot rest at the peak time of the year for recruiting.

Coach Tony Barone and his staff have scattered around the nation to watch top high school basketball prospects perform in numerous NCAA sponsored camps for hundreds of college recruiters.

The next three weeks (July 8-31) is the designated NCAA period for college coaches to leave campus and evaluate high school prospects for recruiting purposes.

Last Monday was also the first day coaches could contact prospects over the phone.

"We've been on the phone non-stop since July 1," coach Porter Moser said. "Up until then, we were talking to all the coaches of the prospects."

Associate head coach Frank Haith said hitting the phone lines is an integral part of landing prime recruits.

"A big part of our job is making a lot of phone calls," Haith said. "You have to make some contact with the kids. We'd love to get a kid to make a verbal commitment (early on)."

Just before the coaches' three-week road trip began, they held a two-week basketball camp at A&M that Haith said brought in many high school players.

"We had 168 (players) the first week and 260 the second," Haith said. "They were from all over Texas. We will recruit nationally, but we make sure we blanket our state first."

With Big 12 conference play scheduled to begin next season, Moser said the league's Texas schools have all received a boost in recruiting. He cited A&M's signing of McDonald's All-American Jerald Brown as a prime example.

"It's been amazing, especially in the state of Texas," Moser said. "Brown is one indication of how much. I find a majority of kids would like to stay at least somewhat close to home."

Haith said A&M will have to

recruit competitively in order to face its Big 12 competition.

"There are no bad teams in the league," Haith said. "To compete in the Big 12, you have to put together a series of great recruiting classes, and we have committed ourselves to going after Big 12 talent."

Despite the intense work involved in recruiting, the coaches try their best to interact with the team's current players.

"Any time spent with the players is valuable time," Moser said. "It is so easy to lose touch. That's why you'll see (head coach Tony) Barone flying back constantly (from other parts of the nation) just to talk with his players."

With so much to do in and out of the season, Haith said he and the A&M coaches never really have an off-season.

"I don't think there really is a relaxed time," Haith said. "Recruiting is an ongoing process. During the summer, [the workload] is probably more intense. My wife has been telling me to take a vacation."

A&M locks up football schedule through 2001

By Philip Leone
THE BATTALION

Texas A&M Athletic Director Wally Groff released the upcoming Aggie football season schedules leading to the year 2001 on Tuesday.

And if you were anticipating a marquee non-conference showdown to go along with A&M's Big 12 schedule, you will have to wait until Sept. 30, 2000.

That is when the Aggies will travel to South Bend, Ind., to take on the Fighting Irish of Notre Dame.

Why the long wait? Why are Louisiana Tech, North Texas, Southwestern Louisiana, Sam Houston State, Southern Mississippi and Tulsa non-conference opponents during the next four seasons?

According to Groff, the formation of the Big 12 Conference voided non-conference games with Colorado and Nebraska and forced A&M to scramble to find other opponents on short notice.

"We just got caught going

into a new conference," Groff said. "We had contracts with Colorado and Nebraska already set up, so we had to go looking for other teams willing to fill those spots. That's a difficult thing to have to do because schedules are usually set eight to 10 years in advance."



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cellation of a home-and-home series contract to run through 1997. The Tigers will pay the A&M Athletic Department a penalty of \$100,000 for each unfulfilled year.

"They switched from six conference games to eight and were looking to lighten their

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