

SPORTS
BRIEFS

Bidding war for
Leyland escalates

PITTSBURGH (AP) — Jim Leyland is proving that free agency managers can be as rewarding as it for players. The California Angels upped the ante in the bidding for one of baseball's best managers, offering a four-year contract that could approach \$2 million a year, including stock options and other incentives. The Angels' contract includes a base salary of at least \$1.2 million a season and is laden with enticements, including a home during the season, off-season vacation deals, performance bonuses and an option to buy Walt Disney Co. stock. If he accepts the offer, Leyland would become the highest-paid manager in major league history, even if he doesn't, the offer compares what was expected to be a smooth, swift transition to a Florida Marlins' uniform.

Cowboys look to
believe Smith

IRVING (AP) — For at least the rest of the 1996 season, the workload on the Dallas Cowboys' superstar running back Emmitt Smith will be eased. Smith, battered and bruised like never before in a season, can't carry the Cowboys' starting game by himself anymore. Young Sherman Williams, drafted two years ago and left on the bench, could be a big player as Dallas tries defending on pushing a Super Bowl title through October and November and December. The Cowboys gave Williams his big chance in a game that ended in Monday night's 23-19 victory over the Philadelphia Eagles. Williams responded with 27 carries on seven carries, including several big plays while the ailing Smith rested on the sidelines.

Dallas Stars move
Fedyk down to IHL

DALLAS (AP) — The Dallas Stars on Wednesday assigned forward Brent Fedyk to Michigan of the International Hockey League. Fedyk, 29, was acquired last December from Philadelphia. He played in three preseason games for the Stars and recorded no points. Last season, he scored 20 goals and had 14 assists in 65 games. The move left Dallas with 26 players in training camp.

Club Sport Spotlight



Phil Becker, a senior wildlife and fisheries science major, leaps for the ball during an A&M Men's Rugby Team practice Wednesday evening. The Aggies play Baylor on Saturday at 1 p.m. at the Polo Fields.

A&M Rugby Team has lofty goals

BY DENNIS RAMIREZ
THE BATTALION

Nestled away on the corner of campus and often lost in the shadow of varsity sports, a group of Aggie men engage in the rough sport of rugby.

Despite the club sport's lack of recognition at Texas A&M, the rugby team still practices and plays in hope of developing into one of the top sporting interests at the University.

The Texas A&M Rugby Team has been a club sport for 27 years and has represented the University extremely well in the Texas Rugby Union (TRU) Collegiate League.

Traditionally considered a TRU powerhouse, the Aggie Rugby Team has built a reputation for itself.

Team captain Paul Stahls said the team has had much success in the past but has a lot of developing to do in the future.

"There was a time when the team did not lose to another Texas team for 15 years," Stahls said. "Two years ago, we had an excellent team — the best in the state — but 12 players graduated and that meant last year was a rebuilding year."

The team consists of 50 members, but is always open to anyone willing to make the commitment. The team practices three times a week and has games on Saturday afternoons. The team opens its season this Saturday at 1 p.m., hosting

Baylor University at the rugby field adjacent to the Polo Fields.

The Baylor contest is the first of nine cup matches the team will play in the TRU this season. The league consists of the former Southwest Conference teams in Texas and Louisiana State University.

From those nine games, the top four teams advance to the TRU Collegiate Championships. The winner then goes to regionals, and the winner of regionals advances to the national tournament.

The A&M team has a wealth of talent returning from last year's squad. Senior scrum-half Steve Reinhardt said he is looking forward to a great season.

"The team is hoping to be really good," Reinhardt said. "We have three-quarters of the team coming back from last year, and barring any major injuries, we are looking forward to making a good showing at the TRU championships."

Through all its battles on the field, the team has developed a camaraderie that is unmatched in many sports.

"While most sports boast that they are 'team' sports, they really aren't," Reinhardt said. "In this

sport, you must play well as part of the team, otherwise you are simply not going to win. When you have 15 guys from the other team all over you wanting the ball, support from the team is a must."

Rugby can be associated with several other sports.

"It's much like a cross between soccer and football," scrum-half Cecil Lara said. "It has the violence of football coupled with the eloquence of soccer."

Even though rugby is associated more with violence rather than eloquence, Stahls said it does offer some graceful aspects.

"It appeals to the higher aspects of humanity," Stahls said. "Although the violence is there, there are certain understood rules — such as don't take off the other person's head — that are always taken into consideration while playing. Then after the game, we get together with the other team and reminisce on the day and old times."

Most of the A&M players said they play rugby for the enjoyment and they hope to win a championship.

"Our first game is this Saturday, and we are looking forward to seeing some support," Stahls said. "For now, we are out here to have a lot of fun."

"It has the violence of football coupled with the eloquence of soccer."

Cecil Lara
A&M Rugby Player

Louisiana Tech
not ruling out
Kyle Field win

BY ROSS HECOX
THE BATTALION

Louisiana Tech Football Head Coach Gary Crowton knows a little something about upsetting reputable teams.

Crowton was the quarterback coach of a Boston College squad that upset No. 1 ranked Notre Dame in 1993, derailing the Irish's national championship hopes that year.

As he prepares to bring his Bulldog squad to Kyle Field this Saturday to take on the Texas A&M Football Team, Crowton said he understands the unpredictability of college football.

"Anything can happen if you believe in yourself and play correctly," Crowton said. "The ball bounces in funny directions in this game."

As heavy underdogs to the Aggies this weekend, the Louisiana Tech team is bringing this optimistic mentality with it to Aggieland.

The Bulldogs have opened the 1996 season with a 3-2 record in Crowton's first year as a head coach. Bulldog junior safety Eric Starks said the team has responded well under Crowton's leadership.

"We're more relaxed," Starks said. "We have a lot of players who really want to win."

Tech's losses this season came at the hands of Baylor (24-16 on Sept. 7) and Aggie acquaintance Southwestern Louisiana (37-31 last week). Although the contests were closer than some people would have guessed, Crowton is not satisfied.

"I'm disappointed in the two losses," Crowton said. "(Against) Baylor, we came out a little bit flat, but we did good after the first quarter. I wish we were a little better."

Baylor jumped out to a 14-0 first quarter lead over the Bulldogs, but from there Tech was able to outscore the Bears 16-10. Against USL, the Bulldogs took a 28-27 lead into the fourth quarter before the Ragin' Cajuns pulled ahead for the win.

However, Tech has shown itself to be a considerable opponent this season as its 38-23 win over Jackie Sherrill's Mississippi State Bulldogs and 20-0 shutout of Middle Tennessee State University would suggest.

The Tech offense averages 409.2 yards per game, and its 292 passing yards a game ranks 14th in the nation.

Much of the credit for its vaunted passing attack goes to quarterback Jason Martin. The senior ranks 10th in the nation in total offense with 1,444 yards. He is Tech's all-time leading passer — ahead of Matt Dunigan and Terry Bradshaw — with 7,162 career yards.

The Bulldog defense this year is showing improvement after allowing 37.8 points per game in 1995. This season, the Bulldogs are giving up 24.2 points and 361.6 yards per contest.

Starks said this year's schedule has helped prepare the Bulldogs for A&M.

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A&M taps into Peruvian connection

Lady Aggie netter Monica Rebolledo's transition to college and U.S. Tennis was eased by A&M Men's player Carlos Tori.

BY SARA DUESING
THE BATTALION

There is an ever-present determination in her eyes, along with an obvious expression of excitement on her face. Monica Rebolledo, a netter on the Texas A&M Women's Tennis Team, plays the game with a love and a passion that is truly unique.

Just like the NBA motto, "I love this game," Rebolledo competes for enjoyment and for a challenge.

"Monica is such a hard worker," Head Coach Bobby Kleinecke said. "She sets goals for everything she does, and then goes after them at 100 miles per hour."

The junior from Lima, Peru, came to the United States in the spring of 1995 and immediately began playing on the A&M team.

Rebolledo said her transition to the United States was eased by A&M men's tennis player Carlos Tori, who is also from Peru.

"I was looking forward to coming here," Rebolledo said. "I didn't have any problems adjusting, because I had talked to Carlos, so I knew what to expect."

Her freshman season, Rebolledo was 6-1 in the Southwest Conference singles play and 4-1 in doubles, capturing the SWC No. 3 title with partner Julie Beahm.

Last spring, Rebolledo had the most wins in the No. 5 position.

"She has really been improving," Kleinecke said. "She is vital to the team's success."

Rebolledo started playing when she was 8 years old just for fun and leisure. However, when she was 9, she competed in her first national tournament and was immediately hooked.

"I truly love to play tennis," Rebolledo said. "I like to compete in all sports, and I enjoy success, both in athletics and with my studies."

Rebolledo said a positive attitude and a daily training regimen have helped her to stay on top of her game.

"I really focus in practice," Rebolledo said. "I pretend that I'm in an actual game, which helps me to improve my concentration."

Senior team captain Nancy Dingwall said her teammate is always working hard and is not one to goof-off during practice.

"Rebo is real determined," Dingwall said. "She is a very quick player and is in excellent shape."

Having played around the world, Rebolledo said two experiences stand out among others.

"One of my most memorable moments was when I played in the World Youth Cup in New Zealand and was able to represent Peru," Rebolledo said. "Also, I was very excited when I won my first international tournament in Brazil."

In addition to a strong work ethic, Rebolledo said she does have some superstitious beliefs.

"I eat the same thing for breakfast every day when I am playing well, usually a bagel, a banana and a glass of orange juice," Rebolledo said. "I figure that if something works well, I'm going to do it."

On the court, Rebolledo is considered a backcourt player who has a baseline game.

"She is able to come in on the short balls and can use the overall court," Kleinecke said. "If

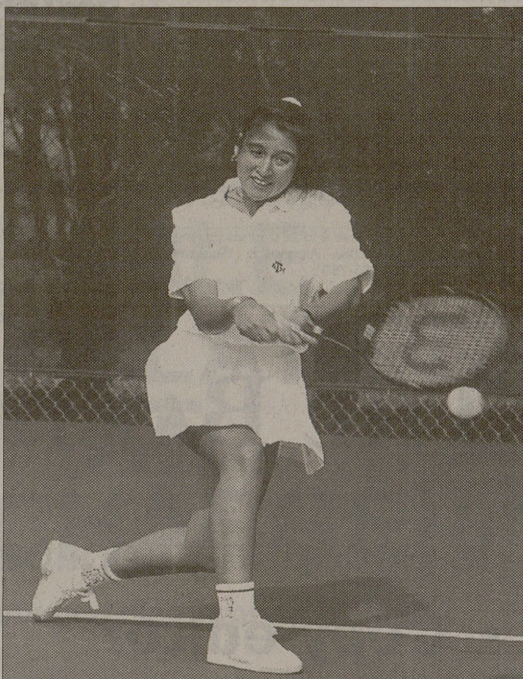


PHOTO COURTESY OF A&M SPORTS INFORMATION DEPT.
Lady Aggie netter Monica Rebolledo came to A&M from Peru in the spring of 1995.

she can step up to a level even higher than last year, she will be such a success."

Improvement is what Rebolledo strives for every day. However, working hard on the court often leaves no spare time. But in those rare moments of freedom, Rebolledo said she enjoys listening to music and keeping in touch with friends she has met throughout her playing career.

But tennis is something that will always be there for her.

"I plan to play all of my life," Rebolledo said. "I have always been involved in sports and I always will. I do what I like and that is tennis."

Lady Ags head to Las Vegas
for UNLV 4-Way Tourney

BY SARA DUESING
THE BATTALION

They may be off to the city of bright lights, but it is business as usual for the Texas A&M Women's Tennis Team. The Lady Aggie netters have traveled to Nevada to compete in the University of Las Vegas 4-Way Tournament today through Saturday.

A&M will face difficult competition from the University of Tennessee, Brigham Young University and UNLV.

Last season, BYU finished No. 12 in the Rolex Collegiate Rankings, while Tennessee finished No. 17.

Head Coach Bobby Kleinecke said playing top-notch competition in the tournament will be a great opportunity for his team.

"This will be a good chance for us to beat some good players," Kleinecke said. "Our goal this week is to be more aggressive and to remain consistent."

Senior team captain Nancy Dingwall said the team's main focus is to be not only aggressive, but to also be more successful in the doubles competition.

"We're going to try to play more at the net," Dingwall said. "We're still going to have to take one match at a time, though. This is our first look at UNLV, but it should be pretty tough all around."

Last season, the Lady Aggies played close dual matches against BYU and Tennessee, falling to each team 5-4. Despite the strong competition, junior netter Monica Rebolledo said she is excited and ready to compete.

"This will give us a good look at our opponents, so we can practice and be better for the real competitions in the spring," Rebolledo said. "We're looking to gain control early in the matches so we can have the edge on points."

Kleinecke said the main focus of every season, and this one in particular, is to be better than the year before. Last season, in the final year of the Southwest Conference, the Lady Aggies finished in a second-place tie with a 5-2 record.

"We are always striving to improve," Kleinecke said. "This weekend, we'll get in some good match play which will help us to see where we stand."

Playing tough competition on the road may seem like a disadvantage, but Kleinecke said he feels good about his team.

"This group of girls' best feature is their work ethic and easy coach ability," Kleinecke said. "They are all open-minded and understanding when changes are needed. That has been a big plus this season."