

EDITORIAL

THE BATTALION
 Established in 1893

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A&M vs. tech
 A&M shouldn't indulge tech's UFO: unwarranted football opportunity

We've heard of crop circles and alien abductions, but nothing proves the existence of paranormal forces greater than the discovery of Texas technological college in the Big 12.

Likewise, a paranormal event, this one occurred in the middle of nowhere. Actually, if you go to nowhere, you still have a hefty drive left until you reach Lubbock. One of Lubbock's favorite sons, songwriter Mac Davis, said it best with the lyric, "Happiness is Lubbock in my rear-view mirror."

Could tech be in the conference because of a history of strong athletics? The football team has been to such illustrious bowls as the Peach, Tangerine and Raisin Bowls, but post-season play hardly seems to be in the team's near future. The NCAA doesn't like it when athletes are given credit for fictitious classes from Bob's Junior College and Hardware.

Perhaps Big 12 officials were impressed with tech's academics. Just recently, tech hired Sally Struthers to do some advertising, and next year tech is making VCR and TV repair a doctoral program.

Or maybe it was the rich traditions that endeared it to the Big 12. But tradition at tech has had a tough road lately. Their suicidal, drug-addicted horse threw its rid-

er off two years ago and ran into a wall, and throwing tortillas after touchdowns was banned by referees. Yes, throwing tortillas was a tradition. Tortillas.

We could look to tech's burning rivalries with A&M and T.U. as reasons for why they had to be included in the new conference, but there is nothing there. Like a pesky little brother, tech has been whining for years about not having a rival. They see all the fun A&M and T.U. have, and tech desperately wants to play along.

But now both schools are in the new Big 12, and it looks like we'll have to indulge tech a little longer. Although a more suitable home for the red raiders might be the wacky WAC or Conference U.S.A., legislators just couldn't have approved the new conference without the votes of West Texas lawmakers who would have insisted on tech's inclusion.

So tech fans, welcome to big-time football (at least until the NCAA decides what to do about that little scandal). But most of all, welcome to Kyle Field this weekend. If you do a little research, you'll find that your Heisman candidate Byron Hanspard is in danger. Our defense has never treated Heisman candidates with much reverence, and it won't start tomorrow.



Just look at the Aggie's blem-ished '96 record. This team, and their golden boy quarterback from the hills of Tennessee (at least he's a true Texan at heart), failed to get a good start in the inaugural year of the Big 12. The almighty Aggies can hang their heads in shame as Saturday afternoon, the Aggies called Aggie-like.

Sportsmanship can only be a team after a big loss. Such a team don't beat up the oppos-

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Remember us? If they keep losing games, they're going to need a "13th man" to pull them out of this sea-

Coaching beyond sports

When the team is down, it is easy to jump off the bandwagon, but it takes a true diehard to support the cause no matter what the record is. Many so-called Aggie supporters have already taken the leap and now claim that the coaches are not doing their jobs up to par.

Columnist



David Minor
 Graduate student

But what are their jobs? If it is to win games, these coaches' records prove they have done a stellar job. In his eighth season, R.C. Slocum, Head Coach of the Texas A&M Football Team, has compiled a 71-19-2 record and three Southwest Conference championships.

And Tony Barone, head coach of the A&M Men's Basketball Team, has been to the NCAA tournament numerous times with Creighton and has led an overachieving Texas A&M team just off probation to a NIT berth.

In 11 years, Mark Johnson, head coach of the Texas A&M Baseball Team, has 531 wins, two SWC crowns and a College World Series appearance. If their jobs are only to win games, these men can stand proud by their records.

Although they are paid to win games, their jobs involve much more. The coaches are responsible for guiding and molding young athletes into strong men that will be future leaders. Looking at the track record of Slocum, Barone and Johnson, it is obvious the three have been successful in improving the lives of young adults.

Take Slocum, for example. He meets the families of every player he recruits in order to better judge his character. It is important to Slocum to ensure every player understands the responsibilities of becoming a sports ambassador for Texas A&M. For many people around the country, their only glimpse of Texas A&M will be a football player on Saturday afternoon.

Sure, there have been players that have not represented the University in a positive manner, but Slocum has consistently handled each situation in a professional manner. He did not hesitate to dismiss a returning starter and a key role player from the team last summer when they broke team rules. At Miami or Nebraska, criminals are often allowed to stay on the team and even start every game.

Likewise, Barone has been misunderstood in his efforts to rebuild the basketball program for the past five seasons.

Because most Aggies are not the most passionate basketball fans, they do not understand the demeanor needed for the furious non-stop action. Instead, they see a coach out of control, yelling at his

players. The fans have recognized that inside that Italian fireball is a man who wants nothing but the best for his players and Texas A&M.

The few people who have begun to warm up to Barone have noticed his efforts to help the University and its surrounding community.

He annually organizes a Thanksgiving dinner with the team that supports the less fortunate and regularly encourages player involvement in other community projects.

And if graduation rates were the test of a coach, Barone would be ranked number one. Since his arrival, only one player who played for four years didn't graduate. Compare that to the student body graduation rate of 60 percent and it's easy to see a coach's impact on the future of Aggies.

Being a former baseball player, my opinion of Johnson is definitely biased. But what better way to judge a coach, than by asking his former players about him.

Johnson's top priority is to develop young baseball players into responsible adults.

From day one, he begins to discover what is best for the individual. He continually teaches his players to prioritize their lives, manage their time and enjoy life. While he desperately wants to win every game, he realizes the student athlete is here to gain an education, learn about life and then, once his other responsibilities are complete, to compete on the playing field.

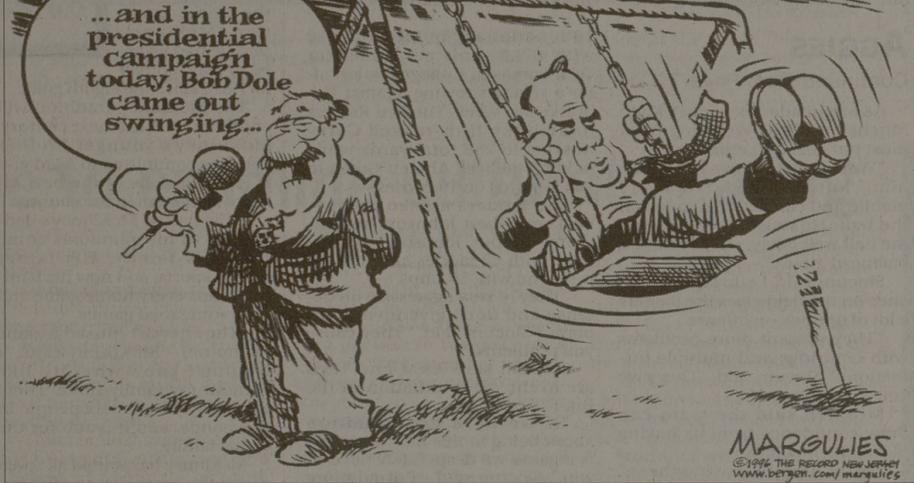
Johnson is the perfect role model for all ages, on and off the playing field.

Off the field, he is involved in the University and community by openly speaking to student organizations, such as the 12th Man Student Foundation and the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, about the merits of working hard and keeping the faith.

On the field, he is aware that the athletic arena catches many people's attention and that the manner an athlete conducts himself under the spot-light can effect much more than just the outcome of a game. He teaches his players that children look up to athletes and it is important conduct themselves in a positive manner that will represent themselves and the University in a positive light.

Coaches are responsible for winning, but that is only a small part of the jobs.

Even though it is easy to judge a person by the win column, people must look a little deeper to see the true success a coach can bring to a university and a community. The football season may look bad at 3-4, but remember, there are still five games left



MAIL CALL

Kappa Alpha didn't deserve free press

Regarding JoAnne Whittemore's Oct. 21 article, "Program offers 'hangout': Fraternity members work to keep children off streets':

I have never seen such gross distortions of the truth concerning the Kappa Alpha Order's involvement in a community action program, Kemp Gym. The article shouldn't have run until Kappa Alpha had demonstrated dedication to the program. Several children asked why fraternity members bothered to show up when all but five left after less than an hour.

These guys scored a huge publicity coup, and they knew it. One was quoted as saying, "It's something that will give good publicity for IFC and give fraternities a better name." Whittemore didn't speak to anyone else and didn't even try to get the whole story. The real heroes are the volun-

teers who volunteer every Friday and Saturday night. The article didn't mention the people who do support the program with consistent attendance and personal sacrifice. I commend the members of Kappa Alpha that took the project seriously, and I hope they return. But sadly, the distortions were made on the front page; the truth will remain buried in Mail Call.

Rebecca Wood
 Class of '96

Hazy line should be clearly defined

Regarding Heather Pace's Oct. 24 article "Decisions ramifications go beyond right & wrong":

Though I disagree with her conclusions, Pace does make two very good points about the abortion

debate: (1) Society cannot have it both ways; if abortion is not considered manslaughter, then you cannot consider it manslaughter when the "fetus" is "terminated" against the mother's will.

(2) The rights of one individual cannot be arbitrarily granted or denied by another. (i.e., the "fetus" does not become a human being worthy of government protection at someone's whim, not even the mother's).

Obviously, society must make a choice. Unfortunately, those most affected by that choice won't have much to say in it.

Jason Knott
 Class of '00

The Battalion encourages letters to the editor. Letters must be 300 words or fewer and include the author's name, class, and phone number.

The opinion editor reserves the right to edit letters for length, style, and accuracy. Letters may be submitted in person at 013 Reed McDonald with a valid student ID. Letters may also be mailed to:

The Battalion - Mail Call
 013 Reed McDonald
 Texas A&M University
 College Station, TX
 77843-1111

Campus Mail: 1111
 Fax: (409) 845-2647
 E-mail: Batt@tamvm1.tamu.edu

For more details on letter policy, please call 845-3313 and direct your question to the opinion editor.

Motorists drive over sidewalks

As a kid, one of my favorite bumper stickers was the one that said, "If you don't like the way I drive, get off sidewalk."

Columnist



Shannon Halbrook
 Junior English major

It was really funny, I thought. And until I got to A&M I thought it was a joke. But campus sidewalks, usually reserved for pedestrians

errant, out-of-control bicyclists, have also become the domain of large, four-wheeled motor-vehicles made out of steel and other hard substances that can mow a poor defenseless Ag in seconds. And more than anything else, they make walking across campus a dangerous undertaking. Sometimes the vehicles are those golf-cart things that Physical Plant guys ride around in to fix pipes and chase down the fifth tee. Those aren't one can usually leap into bushes to avoid them. But usually they're bigger and more dangerous, including University Astro vans and huge Coca-Cola trucks filled to the brim with their wares.

It's a big problem; all these large trucks and vehicles restrict our movements on campus. It's bad enough to walk around a building and be pushed by a bicyclist. But when you turn to face a huge mass of growling metal it can be downright scary.

And it's hard to know what to do. These drivers are impossible to make eye contact with, and it's easy to be intimidated

And the drivers of these big machines always seem to pick bad times to drive across campus, hitting the sidewalks just when they are crowded to capacity. It looks like they could make it a little better. Sidewalks are places for feet, not for giant wheels threatening to mow people down. If the drivers of these trucks need to carry things onto campus, they can park in parking areas like everywhere else.

The paradoxical thing about the situation is this: As Aggies, we're forbidden fellow students and visitors alike to walk on the grass. I assume this means we can't drive on it, either. So these truck drivers aren't allowed to run over students when the students are dead. But it's perfectly OK to do it when they're alive.

Anyway, it makes the proposed conversion of Ross Street to the one out front of Reed McDonald — completely useless. Supposedly, the street is to be turned into a sidewalk because it's caving in. But it's made into a sidewalk, then trucks will still be driving on it. And it'll still cave in. And these trucks aren't just a major inconvenience; they're a threat to traditions at this university.

Members of the Corps of Cadets, the renowned keepers of the spirit, are at risk just as much as normal students. And that if a truck accidentally backs over the Sully statue in an attempt to refill the snack machines in the Academic Building? The poor bronze guy would be crushed.

So what can we students do about it? Not a whole lot. It's 10,000 students against lots and lots of horsepower.

The best we can hope for is a Hands Across America kind of thing, keeping big trucks off the sidewalk or sacrificing our lives in the process.

Or maybe the only thing to do is enough copies of the renowned bumper sticker and stick them surreptitiously on every university vehicle to effectively warn people. Of course, it would only be on the backs of the vehicles and then it'd be too late.

Friday • October 25, 1996

Armstrong's cancer surgery a success

Motorists drive over sidewalks

Heimuli

Continued from Page 9

"He's played very well," Heimuli said. "He's made progress about every single week. I think he'll be a fine player. Heimuli attributes his success to the starting line every day in practice. "No matter who you play, it's not going to be as good as playing against the Aggies. Sometimes the vehicles are those golf-cart things that Physical Plant guys ride around in to fix pipes and chase down the fifth tee. Those aren't one can usually leap into bushes to avoid them. But usually they're bigger and more dangerous, including University Astro vans and huge Coca-Cola trucks filled to the brim with their wares.

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