

Hit or Miss

The sports page is beginning a weekly pro/con package in which students have the opportunity to write in and respond to a pro/con issue of the week. Topics will be announced in Monday's paper. Responses should be no longer than 300 words. Bring it by The Battalion at 013 Reed McDonald or fax it to 845-2647. One letter for each side will be chosen and printed in Friday's paper.

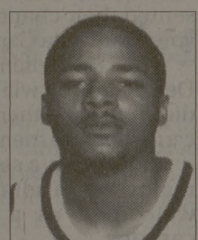
This week's topic:

Was Dennis Rodman's penalty for kicking a photographer too harsh or not harsh enough?

SPORTS BRIEFS

A&M hoopster Hart declared ineligible

Texas A&M Men's Basketball Team Head Coach Tony Barone announced senior guard Derrick Hart was ruled academically ineligible and will miss the remainder of the basketball season Friday.



Hart

Hart has battled injuries all season and did not play in the Aggies last two contests against the University of Nebraska and the University of Texas.

Last season, Hart set the A&M record for three-point field goals with 74 and averaged 13.1 points per game. "I feel sorry for Derrick that his college basketball career is finished but more importantly, that he will not be able to get his degree from Texas A&M," Barone said.

Ranger winter caravan stops at Rec. Center

The Annual Texas Rangers Winter Caravan will make a pit stop in College Station at the A&M Student Recreation Center for an autograph session from 6 to 8 p.m. today.

The Bryan-College Station Chamber of Commerce Sports Committee will host the event which will include: outfielder Rusty Greer, infielder Mark McLemore, pitcher Darren Oliver, general manager Doug Melvin, KRLD radio announcer Eric Nadel and the assistant of public relations Charley Green.

Additionally, the public is invited to take tours of the Student Recreation Center facilities. For more information contact Tiffani Drake at the Bryan-College Station Convention and Visitor Bureau, 260-9898.

Timberwolves coast past Spurs, 96-83

MINNEAPOLIS (AP)—Stephon Marbury scored six of his 20 points in a franchise-record 14-0 run to open the game and the Minnesota Timberwolves coasted to a 96-83 win over the San Antonio Spurs on Monday.

Marbury added 13 assists, matching a career high, Kevin Gar-

nett scored 20 points and Tom Gugliotta had 18 points and 12 rebounds. Minnesota improved to 9-1 at home against teams with losing records. Vinny Del Negro scored 22 points and Monty Williams came off the bench to score a career-high 20 points for the injury-depleted Spurs, who cut a 25-point deficit to eight in the fourth quarter before losing for the seventh time in eight games.

Mavericks fall to Van Exel, Lakers 109-99

INGLEWOOD, Calif. (AP)—Annoyed with himself for 6-of-26 shooting in the Lakers' last two losses, Nick Van Exel decided some extra pregame work was in order. The practice paid off, with Van Exel scoring 24 points, Eddie Jones 19 and Los Angeles continuing its mastery of the Dallas Mavericks with a 109-99 victory Monday.

"When I'm playing bad, we don't play too well," Van Exel said. "I felt like I let the whole team down the last two games. I was real depressed yesterday at practice. I didn't even say two words."

The Lakers were coming off two consecutive losses for the first time since early November. A third seemed unimaginable considering the Lakers

were playing Dallas, and they hadn't lost three straight in 12 1/2 months.

"We wanted to win real bad," said Van Exel, who was 8-of-13 from the field, made five 3-pointers and all three of his free throws. "I just wanted to come out and have a good game."

The Lakers beat Dallas for the fifth straight time and 19th in the teams' last 21 meetings dating to the 1991-92 season.

Dallas got no closer than seven points late in the second quarter on a jumper by Chris Gatling. Los Angeles ran off seven straight points and closed the first half on a 3-pointer by Jerome Kersey at the buzzer for a 57-43 lead.

Jackson led Dallas with 22 points, while Gatling added 21 and Mashburn 19.

NAFTANEL

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Wright said the meet against Tennessee was a great milestone for Naftanel because he showed maturity in his diving, and his mental focus was greater.

"Now I focus more on the dives and not on the meet itself, or how the other competitors are going to do," Naftanel said.

Wright will now help Naftanel finalize his list of dives for the Big 12 Championship and the NCAA Zone meet, for which he has already qualified.

Naftanel will get his chance to prove himself against a tough Nebraska team at the conference level, and said he hopes to do well enough at the NCAA Zone meet to compete at the NCAA National Championships against the reigning champions in all three diving events — the University of Miami.

Naftanel said he is looking forward to the upcoming competitions, especially in light of the opportunities he lost last year because of his injuries.

"I am excited about this season because I have gained (physical) strength and am doing more difficult dives," Naftanel said.

With the added degree of difficulty, Naftanel can increase his point totals if he executes all of his

dives cleanly. The increased point totals will make him more competitive on the national level.

The Austin native, whose brother and sister both attended A&M, said he is excited about the possibilities in store for the diving team.

"I am excited about seeing the team move up (on the national scene)," Naftanel said. "We have gotten a lot of support from the University."

A&M Men's Head Swimming Coach Mel Nash said Naftanel is a team-oriented guy.

"This summer we had recruits over to my house to talk about the program, and we had no diving recruits, but he (Naftanel) came over anyway to try to convince them to come to A&M," Nash said. "He's just a great Aggie."

Naftanel's next challenge will be when A&M takes on defending national champion Texas in a dual meet in Austin Saturday.

Naftanel said he feels comfortable in the Lee and Joe Jamail Texas Swimming Center, since he dove there for eight years with their club team before coming to A&M.

"I know their program and their coach very well, and I enjoy diving there," Naftanel said.

If the beginning of the season is any indication of what is to come, Naftanel will not be disappointed with the results. Instead of leaving the NCAA Zone meet injured and disappointed, he hopes to leave with a chance at the NCAA title.

"I've been able to come back when things haven't gone my way," Naftanel said. "I hope that this season I can compete well enough to get into the finals."



Naftanel

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