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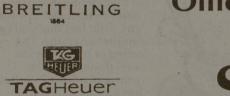
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S PORTS

Swimming, diving aim for top



The Texas A&M Swimming and Diving Teams are concentrating on one thing right now — having both the men's and women's teams ranked in the top 10. Despite a schedule that includes four of last year's top 10 teams and an extremely tough conference meet looming in the future, both Aggie teams are hop-ing to achieve their goal by the end of the season.

Fresh Faces

Only four men on the A&M swimming team roster are upperclassmen. This means much of this season has been a learning experience for the entire team. As the Aggies have taken on teams ranked in the top 25, the new faces have had the chance to get rid of the freshman, or sophomore jitters and get down to business in the pool. Freshman Tim Campbell has

been posting personal bests in the distance events, while freshman Kevin Kehlenbach has posted personal bests in the freestyle and backstroke. Freshman Michael Colligan has been getting stronger in the 50-meter freestyle

"He (Colligan) is one of the only real drop-dead sprinters I have ever seen," A&M Men's Head Swimming Coach Mel Nash said. "He works out hard, and has great muscles. He really explodes in the pool."

Senior Robb Pantano said after this year's difficult schedule, which features several tough meets backto-back, the team is really coming together well. He also said the younger men are adjusting well to competition against top 25 teams.

'They had to learn that these guys we are competing against are just like us," Pantano said. "They go to class, work out and compete just like we do."

Steady Improvement

The Lady Aggie swimmers have a tough opponent scheduled for next week — Southern Methodist University. The Lady Mustangs ended last season ranked No. 2 in the nation and are ranked in the same spot this year.

A&M Head Women's Swimming Coach Don Wagner said despite stiff competition awaiting them, the Lady Aggies will swim well.

"We are feeling pretty confident, Wagner said. "We've made rapid progress this season and should be very competitive with them.'

Sophomore Lauren Buckalo has been improving rapidly in the freestyle and breaststroke, and junior Stacie Karnes has already qualified for the NCAAs in the 200-meter freestyle and 200-meter butterfly.

Next weekend will be especially tough for the Lady Aggies. They will swim against the University of Houston Jan. 31 and then take on the challenge of SMU Feb. 1.

Recruitment Tip of the Day

Get an Olympic medalist to join the team. That's what the A&M diving team did, at least. Russia's Irena Lashko committed to A&M during the early signing period and will be joining the team next fall.

Lashko was the silver in the three-meter spring both the 1992 Olympic Gar Barcelona and the 1996 Oh Games in Atlanta. Lashkoi former European champ

Thursday • January 23,

the three-meter springbo A&M Diving Coach Ke Wright said Lashko is pro most experienced diving remaining in competition forward to helping her feel at home in Aggieland.

In the Zone

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Minority

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Two Lady Aggie divers ha qualified for the NCAA Zone which will be held in Colleg tion in March. Junior Jodi J. and sophomore Jennifer Sp ki are on their way to what! be a tough competition.

Janssen has enjoyed ast Aston H season so far, winning theo meter springboard compet M is tryi the Rainbow Invitational in in January and placing in the five on both the one- and th meter springboards at the Te Invitational in December.

a diver since she came here, Wright said. "She has impro overall body control through new strength-training progra

and has a great work ethic." Spychalski has also comeo strong, taking second place on one-meter and third place or three-meter springboard in Hawaii. Wright said if both gi diligent in working out, they a chance of doing well in the B Championships and qualify the NCAA National Champ onships at the zone meet.

Nets perpetuate Spurs' slide, 103-95

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — Kendall Gill scored 32 points, including 15 in the third period, as the New Jersey Nets beat the San Antonio Spurs

103-95 Wednesday night. Kerry Kittles added 23 points for New Jersey, which took the lead for good with a 15-3 run midway through the final period. Gill scored seven points during the streak, including a three-point play.

Dominique Wilkins, returning

after missing 10 games with a sore knee, and Vernon Maxwell each scored 20 points for San Antonio.

The Spurs took an 81-76 lead on a pair of free throws by Vinny Del Negro with 8:59 left in the game, but the Nets

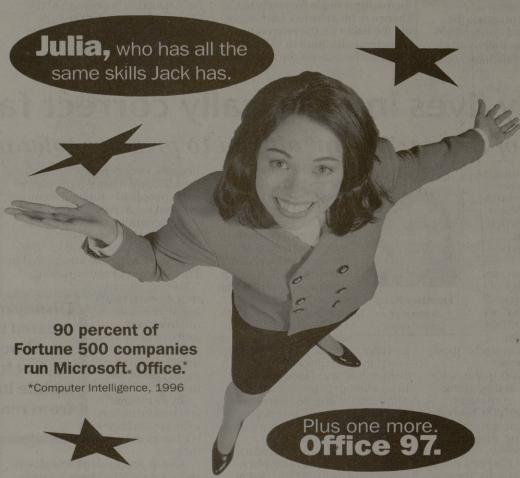
then went on their decisive run. New Jersey led by as many as 10

points in the second quarte Maxwell sparked a San Anto ly that put the Spurs up 48-47 1:20 left in the half. A running footer by Kittles gave New Jerse 49-48 halftime lead.

San Antonio shot 51 perce from the field in the first halbut still trailed because New Jerseywk 10 more shots.







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