

New blood infuses women's Elite Eight

FARGO, N.D. (AP) — Gene Roebuck chuckles when he thinks of women's basketball teams coming from the warmth of Georgia, Mississippi, Texas and California to play in snow-covered Grand Forks. Some of them have never been North Dakota before. "I hope it's about 40-below the way they get here," said Roebuck, North Dakota's head women's basketball coach. "Not so much for basketball, but just to make them suffer as much as we have this winter." This year's NCAA Division II Elite Eight tournament has some new, young faces, including one team that has been in the division for just three years. Meanwhile, powerhouse North Dakota State is conspicuously absent. West Texas A&M (29-1) goes up against another Elite Eight newcomer, California-Davis (27-2). West Texas has been to the tournament twice before, but has not come away with a championship title. The two teams played each other earlier this year, with West Texas winning 81-75, led by Natasha Taylor, who averages 19.9 points per game. Coaches say the new blood will help the tournament, despite the potentially bitter climate outside.

North Dakota won the honor of hosting its first Elite Eight tournament starting Wednesday after dashing the hopes of four-time defending champion North Dakota State. The Sioux (25-4) upset North Dakota State 73-66 in the final minutes of the North Central Region title game March 9, breaking the Bison's 45-game winning streak. Still beaming from that win on the road, Roebuck said his players are preparing for what they know will be a grueling quarterfinal matchup with Edinboro, Pa. (24-8). "Edinboro shoots a lot of three-point shots and they've got a lot of good post shooters," Roebuck said. "So we've got to be all over the place on defense." Meghan Miller leads all Edinboro scorers, averaging 14.9 points per game. She collected 23 points in Edinboro's 70-68 East Region win over High Point, N.C., two weeks ago. Coach Stan Swank said his team is not familiar with the Sioux, but respects any club that beats the four-time reigning champs on their own turf.

"If you can beat North Dakota State on their court, then you have to be good," he said. But Roebuck is not overconfident. "I think the biggest thing for us is not getting too excited about not only being in this tournament, but hosting it, too," he said. The first quarterfinal game Wednesday has Delta State (Miss.) making its 11th NCAA tournament appearance against Southern Indiana. Delta State (25-5) already has three Division II titles to its credit under head coach Lloyd Clark. With North Dakota State out of the picture, some coaches see Delta State as the team to beat. But Southern Indiana head coach Chance Dugan believes her team can do it. "We're pretty much mirror images of each other," Dugan, whose team is making its first Elite Eight appearance, said of Delta State. The two teams played once in the regular season, with Southern Indiana winning. "They've got the revenge factor on their side now, but I think it looks

pretty good for us," Dugan said. Another team making its first Division II tournament appearance is Kennesaw State (Ga.), which brings the best record (30-1) into the Elite Eight tournament. Kennesaw State joined Division II just three years ago and already has amassed impressive numbers. Poland native Joanna Cuprys, a 6-foot-3 forward, leads all scorers going into the tournament with 26.4 points per game, including 92 of 185 3-pointers for 49.7 percent. But even head coach Colby Tilley wonders if his team's success in the Peach Belt Athletic Conference will carry over against some of the better-known teams. "Our conference doesn't get a lot of respect," he said. "The pressure we're under is to try to represent our conference and our school to the point that we get some respect." Kennesaw plays Bentley (Mass.) in the quarterfinal round Wednesday. Bentley (26-5) has qualified for seven Division II tournaments in the past nine years. The team made it to the championship round once, in 1990, losing to Delta State.



LONG
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Tucker said Long is a talented player, who has the ability to create plays on the field. "She makes a difference (on the field), because she makes things happen," Tucker said. "She's a very solid player out there. She does her job well and is a player that's going to come up and make that spectacular play."

Long acquired her competitive nature and aggressive style of play by growing up with an older sister who plays softball at the University of Nevada-Las Vegas. "My sister made me work so hard growing up," Long said. "She took me to all of her practices, and then I would have to go to mine. She got on to me a lot, especially when we played together, but it helped me. I look up to my sister a lot." Long was recruited by several other Division I schools, but

chose leave her hometown, Manteca, Calif., to come to A&M. Long said she was immediately attracted to Aggieland and knew she wanted to come here. "I loved the traditions and it was huge," Long said. "I am a people person and I love to talk. A&M is perfect for me because it's big and the tradition here is awesome, and I love it." Long said she is pleased with her freshman season so far but hopes to continue improving some aspects of her game.

"I know I need to get better at things, and there are a lot of things I need to work on," Long said. "As a team though, I think we are coming together and jelling as a team should." Evans said she anticipates Long will contribute greatly to the Lady Aggies in the years to come. "She's a player that's going to help us for the next four years, and she's going to be a big part of our program," Evans said.

SPORTS BRIEFS
A&M football begins spring drills today
The Texas A&M Football Team will start spring drills today at Kyle Field. "I'm excited about getting back on the football field," Head Coach Slocum said. "Our players have been enthusiastic in the off-season program and I know they are anxious to get to work." This year's team will be coached by several new faces. Quarterbacks coach Ray Dorr, wide receivers coach Steve Kragthorpe, defensive coordinator and inside linebackers coach Mike Hankwitz, and offensive

coordinator and offensive line coach Steve Marshall will be making their debut on the coaching staff. "I have been impressed with the additions to our coaching staff," Slocum said. "There already seems to be a good chemistry on the staff and they are looking forward to working with our players." A&M will return six starters on defense, and nine on offense to round out a 44-man roster.
12th Man Foundation host spring barbecue
The 12th Man Student Foundation's Spring Baseball Barbecue benefiting the Diamond Darlings and Aggie Athletes Involved will be held on Wednesday, March 19, at the Olsen Pavilion. The event will include two guest speakers and several student athletes.

Unlike the baseball team's game against the University of Houston, the barbecue will not be rescheduled. The barbecue is open to the community and will begin at 5:30 p.m. and last until 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$5 a plate.
Judo team places at championships
The 1997 National Collegiate Judo Championships were held at the University of Kansas last weekend. Four members of the Texas A&M Judo Team were included in the 160 competitors from 40 male university teams and 18 women's teams which competed. Randy Ramirez, Steve Bushman, Jackie Bayard, and Kim Fulda all made the trip to Lawrence, Kan. Helping the women's team place third overall, Bayard defeated three opponents to win her first National

Collegiate Judo Championship in the 145-pound division. Judo Coach Bob Perez was selected as honorable mention coach of the year. The Judo Team will be traveling to the Liberty Bell Classic in Philadelphia this weekend.
Eagles sign former Cowboy's kicker
PHILADELPHIA (AP) — In front of television crews, newspaper reporters, even an ESPN sportscaster, the Philadelphia Eagles rolled out the pomp on Monday to introduce their brand-new, \$2.45 million ... kicker? The Eagles expect Chris Boniol, a 25-year-old that they lured away from conference rival Dallas last week, to be an impact player. "Chris is one of the top young kickers in the business," said head coach Ray Rhodes. "He's one of the top kickers in terms of hang time."

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March 17, 1997
9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Texas State Graduate Leadership Initiative -- Open to all graduate students, faculty and administrators.
March 18, 1997
2:00 p.m. Special Guest Panel discussion with students on "Applied Research Making the Links from the Bench to the Public." Guests include Dr. Gilman, NCAR, Dr. Lomax, TTI; and Dr. Alexander, Baylor University -- Open to the Public -- Cain Hall Viewing Theater.
4:00 p.m. Opening Reception -- Third Annual GSC All-University Research Competition - Special Guest Speaker: Dr. Ray Bowen, President TAMU -- Open to the Public -- food served -- Fosyth Gallery, MSC.
7:30 p.m. Special Lecture, Dr. Soffen, Director, Goddard Space Flight Center, and Biologist on the Viking Mission to Mars, will speak on "Life on Mars" -- Rudder Theater -- Open to the Public.
March 19, 1997
7:00 a.m. Set up -- Poster and Speaking Competition -- Rudder Theater Exhibition Hall. Event is open for public viewing Wednesday through Friday.
2:00 Dr. LeMone, Senior Scientist, recently elected to the National Academy of Engineering, currently at the National Center for Atmospheric Research, her topic, "Women in Science." -- Rudder Theater -- Open to the Public. Informal reception after the reception.
March 20, 1997
Research and Poster Competition Exhibit -- Rudder Theater Exhibit Hall
2:30 p.m. Dr. Miller, Editor, Science News Magazine, will speak on "Science and the Media: What Graduate Students Should Know." -- Rudder Theater -- Open to the Public -- Reception to follow in the Rudder Theater Exhibit Hall. The GSC is proud to promote this activity, sponsored by the Department of Science and Technology Journalism, and the Office of the VPR/APG.
March 21, 1997
Research and Poster Competition Exhibit Open -- All Day -- Rudder Theater Exhibition Hall
2:00 Research Competition Awards Ceremony to honor all participants and award recipients. Rudder Theater -- Open to the Public -- Reception to Follow in the Rudder Theater Exhibition Hall.
All Events Are Free -- Don't Miss the Opportunity to Attend and be a Part of the Intellectual Community! Direct Questions to Amy Kardell 845-9925
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