

Track teams return to lofty elevation in Colorado Springs

By MICHAEL FERGUSON
Staff writer

After a successful showdown against many of the top schools in the nation last weekend in Reno, Nev., the Texas A&M Track and Field teams will once again take on the challenge when they travel to Colorado Springs this weekend. They will compete in the Colorado Springs Sprint Classic on the historic campus of the Air Force Academy. Some of the stiff competition the Aggies will face includes teams from UCLA, Washington, Wisconsin, Colorado, South Carolina, Kansas, Auburn and the University of Texas.

The high elevation should once again be a factor, providing for rather quick races and lengthy throws and jumps.

Senior Larry Wade and sophomore Desmond Powell will try to duplicate their performances of a week ago in Reno, where they streaked to a 1-2 finish in the 55-meter hurdles.

Senior Adrien Sawyer also had a huge day, bringing home gold in both the long jump and triple jump and setting school records in both. In the long jump, Sawyer jumped 20 feet, 10.75 inches, breaking the old school record of 20-2.25, set by Alissa Bell back in 1989. However, she was far from being finished. In the triple jump, she leaped to a mark of 42 feet, 6 inches, shattering her own

school record of 41-6 set in 1996.

Junior Detrich Clariett also had a tremendous jump of 42-0.50, which also would have broken the old school record. Junior Kelli Schrader continued her streak of breaking her own school record in the weight throw, throwing for a distance of 53 feet, 7.25 inches, breaking her own mark by nearly three feet. Other notable performances included sophomore Richard McDonald in the pole vault.

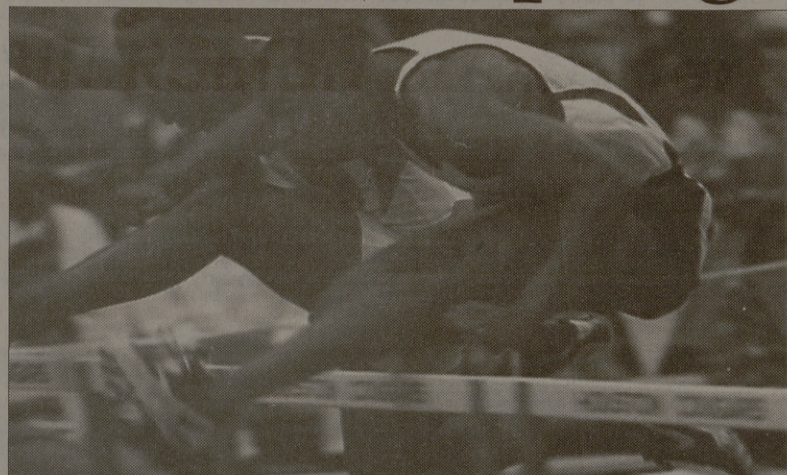
While the sprinters and field athletes were burning up the track in Reno last weekend, the distance runners had the weekend off due to the elevation difficulties. This weekend, the Colorado Springs Sprint Classic does not even give the distance runners a chance to

compete, not offering any race over 800 meters.

The Texas A&M distance runners will remedy this by traveling to Indianapolis this weekend to compete in a distance meet hosted by Butler College. This will be a big meet with most of the top distance teams competing. These teams include Stanford, Arkansas, Georgetown, Villanova and Oklahoma St.

According to distance coach Greg Hinze, the team has high aspirations. "We're going up there with the intention of getting a lot of PRs (provisional qualifiers) and setting some school records," Hinze said.

The teams will be reunited next weekend as they travel to Houston to compete in the Houston Invitational on February 21.



RYAN ROGERS/THE BATTALION
Junior Desmond Powell will try to jumpstart the A&M cause in Colorado.

Aggies hope to end slide at Missouri

All-time losing streak of 14 games in sight for Texas A&M Men's Basketball Team

JEFF SCHMIDT
Staff writer

In November, the Nebraska Cornhuskers football team used a miracle to beat the Missouri Tigers at home. The Texas A&M Men's basketball team (6-15, 0-11) will need a miracle themselves to get their first win against Missouri (13-11, 5-6) in Columbia on Saturday at 7 p.m. The Aggies are coming off of a 75-58 loss to Nebraska. Missouri lost 89-80 at Baylor. Missouri holds the all-time series lead 2-1.

Last season, Missouri escaped with a 61-57 victory in College Station. The Aggies led by as many as 15 points in the second half but could not come up with the win.

Against Nebraska, only three Aggies scored in double figures. Michael Schmidt came off the bench to lead the team with 15 points, but the season's leading scorer, Shanne Jones, only had 10 points.

Missouri is led by senior forward Kelly James, who paces the team with 14.6 points a game and 6.2 rebounds. Senior swingman Monte Lee is the only other player scoring in double digits. Junior center Monte Hardge is imposing force in the middle, standing 6-foot, 11-inches tall and weighing 300 pounds. Michigan transfer Albert White and junior

college transfer John Woods both average at least nine points.

"Hardge has started to play very well for them. He's really a good player when he gets up and down the court," Coach Tony Barone said. "Thames and Lee are both outstanding swing players. White has given them some great games."

However, Missouri's biggest weapon is their home-court advantage. The Tigers are 12-2 at the Hearnes Center including an upset win over Kansas.

"I think it's the toughest place in the league to play. Their fans are really loud there. They've had great success at home," Barone said.

The Tigers rank near the bottom of the Big 12 in nearly every category except three-point field goal percentage where they are fifth. However, they rank above A&M in every category except rebounding margin. This does not bode well for the struggling Aggies who have lost 12 straight games, 11 of them in conference play.

Despite the situation, sophomore point guard Brian Barone remains optimistic. "It'll be tough. We matched up pretty well with them last year. I think they are a good team, especially at home," Barone said. "We've nothing to lose, so there's no reason to be nervous."



RYAN ROGERS/THE BATTALION
Sophomore Brian Barone and the Aggies have lost 14 straight conference games. The all-time mark is 18.

Softball team to play in Grand Prairie

By ROBERT HOLLIER
Staff writer

The Texas A&M Softball Team (2-0, 0-0) will be looking to continue its winning streak in Grand Prairie at the UTA Pepsi-Cola Classic Tournament this weekend.

The Aggies will play each team in their pool followed by a double-elimination tournament on Saturday and Sunday.

On Friday, A&M will play Tulsa at 12:15 p.m. and UTA at 2:45 p.m. On Saturday, the Aggies will face Mississippi at 11:15 a.m. Based on its record against their pool, the Aggies will be assigned a seed number and will play the other teams in the tournament. Freshman pitcher Ashley Lewis will start the Tulsa game.

"We will get a chance to play some really good teams in this tournament like Oklahoma and Oklahoma State," Coach Jo Evans said. "We feel like we can win our pool. Hopefully, we can build on that and go from there."

During A&M's two-game sweep over Southwest Texas State on Tuesday, the Aggies put on a pitching and hitting clinic, including a complete game shutout in game one by Lewis. The Aggies also outscored Southwest 11-4 in the two games. "The team felt really good,"

Evans said. "We got some great pitching from Ashley (Lewis) and Amy (Vining) and some good consistent hitting from Jamie Smith and Stephanie (Trumbull)."

"We also played very well in the field," she said. "They gave our young pitchers some good solid defense."

In this tournament, all of the teams will play a minimum of five games. This will allow the Aggies to gain some much-needed experience.

"All of our pitchers will be pitching in more than one game because we have several games clumped together," Evans said. "This tournament is exactly what we need to give our freshmen more game experience before we start Big 12 play."

Even though the Aggies will be on the road, they are still confident and are expecting some support from Aggie fans.

"A lot of our players are from that area (Dallas)," Evans said. "They are really excited to be in this tournament and they should receive a lot of support from friends and family members."

Next weekend, A&M will play at home for the first time when they will host the Aggie Invitational Tournament Feb. 20-22. Following that, the Aggies will participate in the NFCA Tournament Feb. 27- Mar. 1



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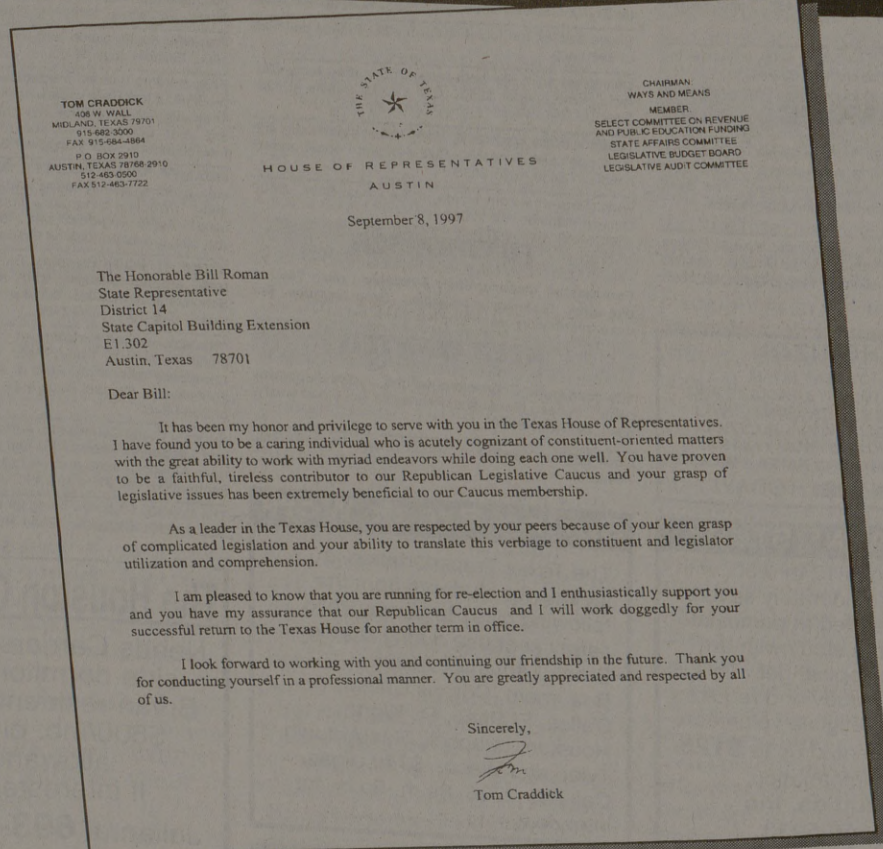


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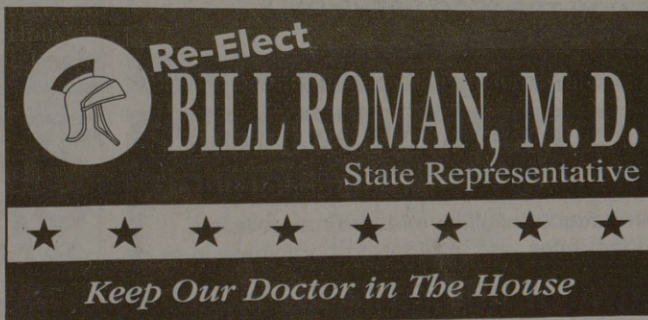
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