

Pick-up Lines

Once the trademark of the playground, trash-talking is a dead art form at A&M



JEFF WEBB
sports editor

Talking trash on the basketball court is something of a lost art at the Student Recreation Center. Playground basketball was founded on the idea that making your opponent looking foolish garnered as many style points as a three-pointer hit deep in the corner.

So what are the best lines on the court now? The pickings are mighty slim.

My favorite line is one borrowed from Steve Smith of the Atlanta Hawks.

"So, when is your mom going to have a kid who can play this game?"

Although personally, sometimes a simple, "Meet the Press" will do just fine.

Texas A&M guard Chris Clayton said that guys always are talking in his direction just because he plays on the varsity team.

"Every day some guy will call you out, especially if you're on the basketball team," he said. "Usually they say something like, 'Just because you got a scholarship doesn't mean you're better than me.'"

However, games at the Rec Center are becoming increasingly friendly at an alarming rate. This is bad for pick-up basketball.

What is a game without trash? Any NBA player will tell you (if you get a chance to ask them, which is only likely if you frequent arraignment hearings), breaking your opponent down mentally is the best part of the game.

Except for

winning, that is.

But no one remembers who had the backdoor layup to win the game.

They're all still gawking at the guy who pulled off the behind-the-back, free-throw-take-off, 440-degree, one-handed jam and landed by saying, "In your eye, little-man!"

Basketball is not a game for the weak of mind or body. There are no ticky-tack fouls on the playground, but generally a, "Can I have my arm back now?" will get the guy off your back.

If you really want to ruin a shooter's confidence after he bricked his first shot, just tell him how nice it was.

"Good shot. You almost had that one."

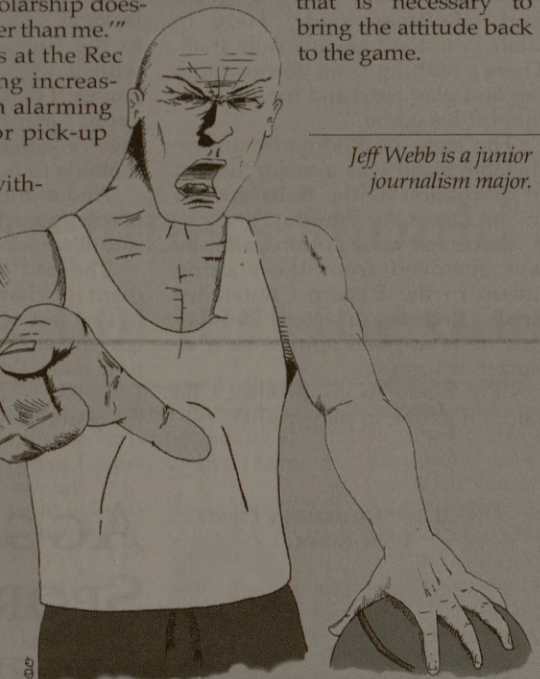
Just had a high-light block that would make Alonzo Mourning blush? Perhaps a, "Not in my house, dog!" will provide the proper mood.

Or take a tip from Dikembe Mutombo and wave a finger or two.

For those of you who can only muster a, "Go back to Read" from your basketball vocabulary, work on your words.

Although sometimes words are not necessary. Ask Michael Jordan. Sometimes a shrug and a look is all that is necessary to bring the attitude back to the game.

Jeff Webb is a junior journalism major.



We got game

Student Recreation Center basketball games score big with students

By JEFF WEBB
Sports Editor

If you go to the Student Recreation Center on a lazy Tuesday afternoon in the summertime, you might see Texas A&M forward Shanne Jones sprinting down a basketball court and throwing down a one-handed dunk. On that same court, there might also be a student like senior finance major Jeremy Youngblood playing just for exercise. Perhaps this diversity is what makes pick-up basketball games at the Rec Center such a popular pastime.

"I come up here about six times a week," Youngblood said. "If there's more than two games backed up, though, it's not worth it. I've seen 60 guys here before, but that's a busy day."

The basketball courts at the Rec Center were refinished just before students arrived for summer school this year, a process that is completed about twice a year due to heavy use. The yearly cost of refinishing the floors is about \$15,000 a year, according to Student Recreation Center Director Dennis Corrington.

Texas A&M Men's Basketball Team players such as Jones and guard Chris Clayton use the Rec Center to work on their game during the summertime.

"I play here everyday," Clayton said. "It's good to get exercise and work on my game. We (varsity players) all try to come up here as much as we can."

Clayton, a transfer from Ventu-

ra Community College in California, said the quality and availability of pick-up games is superior on the West Coast.

"In California, you can play a pick-up game almost anywhere, but here you have to sit out a lot," Clayton said. "There's nowhere else in College Station to play."

That lack of competition may be what drives players like guard Jerald Brown and former A&M forward Larry Thompson to Houston for pick-up games with some NBA players.

Some of the play can get physical, which leads to occasional physical confrontations. However, Corrington said that supervisors roam the Rec Center to oversee the play of students.

"We don't have much of it (fighting), but it does happen," Corrington said. "Contact constitutes assault and battery. People can file charges and we will advise them of the rights they have. Just like in sports, if you commit a foul, you suffer a penalty. We have to make people responsible."

A&M student Ben Jacobs said he has seen fights on the basketball courts at the Rec Center, but most of the time, they get diffused before anything serious erupts.

"I've never been in one, but I've seen them here," Jacobs said. "Someone gave a hard foul and the guy threw the ball at him. It got stopped before it got serious."

However, most games at the Rec Center are devoid of confrontations and simply serve as a fun means of exercise for students.

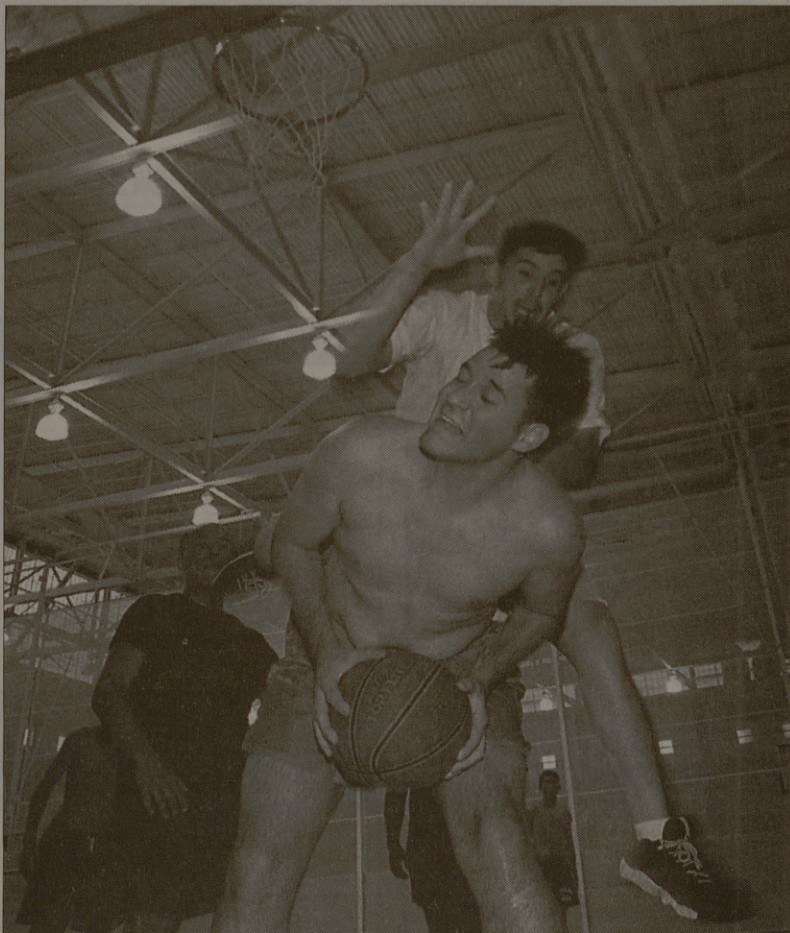


PHOTO BY RYAN ROGERS / THE BATTALION

He Got Game Senior elementary education major Randy Creager attempts a shot against the defense of Randy Biddlecome, a junior BANA major.

Agent says Ambres desires deal with Florida Marlins

MIAMI (AP) — An hour after being drafted by the Florida Marlins, Chip Ambres still wasn't in their starting lineup.

And Ambres won't be in the big leagues any time soon. The Marlins may be desperate for pitching, but they resisted the temptation to seek immediate help through the draft and instead took Ambres, an 18-year-old prep outfielder from Beaumont, Texas, in Tuesday's first round.

"This isn't like the NFL or NBA," scouting director Orrin Freeman said. "We want the best guy. If this guy takes four or five years to get to the big leagues and then plays in five All-Star games, that would be outstanding."

"I wouldn't want somebody to get there in a year and just be an average player. We're looking for guys who will be All-Star-type players to bring us another championship."

The Marlins project the 6-foot-1-inch, 190-pound Ambres as an All-Star type. One publication projected him as the third-best position player in the draft, but he was still available when Florida picked 27th — perhaps because of fears he would be difficult to sign.

Ambres, an outstanding option quarterback in high school, signed a national letter-of-intent in February to play football at Texas A&M. He prefers baseball, but his agent said football is an option if contract negotiations with the Marlins stall.

"I'd like to think we can certainly get something worked out," said agent Brian Peters, who declined to disclose a starting price in negotiations.

Ambres said he patterns himself after Ken Griffey Jr., which must sound good to the Marlins. Minor injuries limited him to 66 at-bats as a

senior at West Brook High School, and he hit .500 with 10 home runs.

"He's a five-tool player," Freeman said. "He can hit, he can hit with power, he can run, he can throw and he can play center field. We're elated to have him."

Ambres monitored the draft with more than 30 friends and relatives at his parents' home in Beaumont. He was delighted to be selected by the Marlins, despite their recent decline.

"You have a lot of young players. I figure that's a big plus for me," he said. "My intention is to get signed and play for the Florida Marlins. I've been playing baseball since I was 5 years old. It has been my love, and I'm ready to continue my career."

Four of the Marlins' six previous first-round picks have made it to the majors, including their current right fielder, rookie Mark Kotsay.

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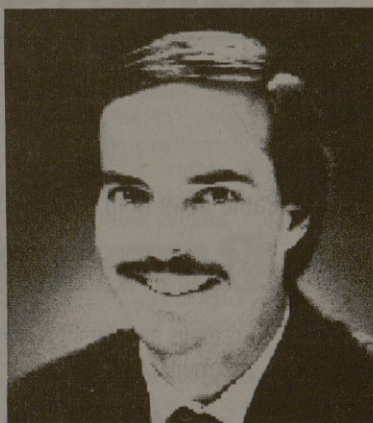
James V. Bonds, M.D. continues to welcome new patients as well as families who have looked to him for health care during the past seven years.

Dr. Bonds is an internist, specially trained in adult medicine and is experienced in diagnostics and treatment.

He received his bachelor's degree from Baylor University in Waco and his medical degree from the Texas A&M University Health Science Center College of Medicine. He completed residency at the University of Texas Health Science Center in San Antonio and is a diplomate of the American Board of Internal Medicine.

Dr. Bonds is also an assistant professor at Texas A&M's College of Medicine.

He recently opened an office in College Station for private practice. For appointments, call 764-7983.



JAMES V. BONDS, M.D.
1602 Rock Prairie Road
Suite 320
(409) 764-7983