

## From top to bottom

Family of New York Mets first-round selection establishes Texas-based memorial scholarship fund for Juliette Tyner

By ROBERT HOLLIER  
Staff Writer

On June 2, 1998, Jason Tyner and his family seemed to be on top of the world. Tyner was selected as the 21st pick in the first round of the Major League Baseball Amateur Draft by the New York Mets, and he was named to the national spotlight. Tyner, considered by many to be one of the most prolific hitters in Texas A&M baseball history, was ready to sign with the Mets and begin his professional baseball career. It seemed life could not be better for him and his family. Unfortunately, life has its ups and downs, and just 14 days after Tyner was drafted by the Mets, tragedy struck. His mother, Juliette Tyner, lost a long battle against cancer. "It has been an incredible month for all of us," Richard Tyner, Jason's father, said. "One day we're as proud and as happy as we can be, and the next day we're as low as we can be as a family. "It was a tough battle for her. She fought it (the cancer) for five-and-a-half years and she never gave up. She was an inspiration for all of us and for anyone."

After experiencing a roller-coaster of emotions, the future began to look bright again for Tyner when he signed a major league contract with the Mets on July 6.

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— Richard Tyner  
Jason Tyner's father

Tyner officially began his professional career Saturday, July 11, on Class A St. Lucie in Florida. In his first game, he went 1-5 with two runs scored. With the passing of his mother, Jason and his family and friends came up with an idea to keep her memory alive and to remind people of her courage and strength. With the help of donations from friends and colleagues, the Tyner family formed the Juliette Tyner Memorial Scholarship Fund. The scholarship will be awarded to one

baseball player and one softball player going to college each year. "This scholarship will be awarded to any athlete in the two sports going to any university in Texas," Richard Tyner said. "Many people have made pledges and we will pick a committee to raise some more money. "This award will be given to any athlete who exhibits the qualities she (Juliette) had. She was a leader, and she fought hard to the end, and that's what we want in the athletes we award the scholarships to." Tyner said athletics are important, but education and discipline are also paramount to success. "We've always stressed three things in our kids: education, discipline and athletics in that order. When you get a good education, you learn discipline and to be a successful athlete, you have to be smart and disciplined. That's what we want in the athletes we select and that's how she would have wanted it." The scholarship will be awarded every year on June 16, the day Juliette Tyner passed away. Each year, the Tyners and their friends will host a one-day baseball and softball camp. The camp will be held either at Lamar University or West Brook



Centerfielder Jason Tyner, drafted 22nd by the New York Mets in the first round, skipped his final year of college eligibility at Texas A&M to play for the Mets' Class A team in St. Lucie, Fla.

High School in Beaumont. All of the proceeds from the camp also will go to the scholarship fund.

"I know she would have wanted to see Jason play pro ball," Richard Tyner said, "but now she's got some peace and Jason is doing what she wanted him to do — playing baseball and having fun."

## Mills makes comeback under Gailey

WICHITA FALLS, Texas (AP) — It's the fourth quarter of the Super Bowl in Phoenix, January, 1996, the Dallas Cowboys against the Pittsburgh Steelers. The Cowboys were being hurt by Pittsburgh's Ernie Mills, who had eight catches for 78 yards and 79 yards on kickoff returns. He was someone very dangerous. Then Mills went down with a torn interior cruciate ligament of the left knee and the Cowboys went on to win 27-17. Two-and-a-half years later guess who is the leading candidate for the No. 2 receiver spot opposite Michael Irvin? "It's kind of ironic isn't it?" Mills said, sweat dripping off his nose on another 100-degree day at Midwestern State University. "Who would have ever thought I'd end up playing for the Dallas Cowboys?" Or who would have ever thought Mills and former Pittsburgh offensive coordinator Chan Gailey, the Cowboys' new coach, would wind up in the same team together again. Mills tried to come back during the 1996 regular season for the Steelers and his old moves just weren't there. He caught only seven passes

for 92 yards. He signed with the Carolina Panthers as a free agent for the 1997 season after it became apparent the Steelers weren't interested. He started but couldn't produce and was deactivated several times. He finished with 11 catches for 127 yards. "I just never fully recovered from the knee injury at Pittsburgh and I thought I was ready to go to Carolina but it was like they never had confidence in me," Mills said. "But it's worked out. Now I get a second chance with Chan." Mills has been dazzling in training camp, using his knowledge of Gailey's pass routes to hook up with quarterback Troy Aikman. Aikman loves what he sees in Mills. "He's been the leader of our receiving corps," Aikman said. "He has been very consistent. In fact, I'm learning a lot about our new offense from him." Asked what he's seeing in Mills, Gailey said "He reminds me of exactly what we left at Pitts-

burgh and that's good enough for me. Gailey remembers 1995 when Mills had 39 catches for 679 yards and eight touchdowns on a run-oriented team that made it to that Super Bowl. Mills said he hopes he can take some of the double-teaming heat off Michael Irvin. "Maybe with me being in there Michael can get a few more one-on-one situations," Mills said. "If I produce I think he will. I can't do the things Michael can do but I think I can really help this team." Watching the seven-on-seven passing drills at Midwestern State University and Mills' worth becomes obvious. Here he is cutting over the middle for a perfect slant pass from Aikman. There he is selling the inside move and cutting outside to get open for an out route bullet from Aikman. "It's great to catch balls Aikman throws," Mills said. "The ball gets right to you in perfect position and it's easy to catch. He hits you right on the break." And the way Mills looks at it after the last two years it's time he got a few good breaks. "It's still a little weird to see that star on my helmet," Mills said.



AIKMAN

## Site of first Aggie exhibition game could change, says one basketball staff member

By KATIE MISH  
Staff writer

The Texas A&M Men's Basketball team might not open its 1998-1999 season in Reed Arena as expected, according to the new basketball schedule. G. Rollie White Coliseum is scheduled to host the Aggies' home opener, an exhibition game against the Australian All-Stars. Kevin Hurley, a member of the basketball department staff, said the game scheduled for G. Rollie is not the official start of the season since the game is for exhibition purposes only. Hurley said there is a conflict with another event in Reed Arena on Nov. 8, but he said the game might move from G. Rollie back to Reed Arena. "I have a gut feeling that the exhibition game will change its location," Hurley said, "and open in Reed Arena as previously planned." The Aggies ended last season with a game against Baylor in G. Rollie. A&M won their only conference game of the season by beating the Bears 80-75 before 4,278 fans. A "Turn Out the Lights" contest was held and the game was billed as the last game in the coliseum. Hurley said that is why he thinks the game will be moved to Reed Arena. "It will be changed," Hurley said. The athletics director and other members of the sports staff are taking steps to change it. Athletics Director Wally Groff could not be reached for comment. Regardless of the location of the exhibition game, the Aggies will play in Reed Arena on Nov. 13, their official

season opener, against the University of North Texas. The other exhibition game for the Aggies will be against the California All-Stars on Nov. 17.

### 1998 Mens Basketball Schedule

Date	Opponent	Time
11/8	EXHIBITION GAME (G. Rollie White)	7:00 PM
11/13	NORTH TEXAS	7:00 PM
11/17	CALIFORNIA ALL-STARS EXHIBITION GAME	7:00 PM
11/19	at Stephen F. Austin	7:00 PM
11/21	CENTENARY	2:30 PM
11/28	at Oral Roberts	7:00 PM
12/1	ALABAMA	7:00 PM
12/3	at Sam Houston State	7:00 PM
12/6	LAMAR	7:30 PM
12/9	TULANE	7:00 PM
12/19	ARIZONA STATE	8:30 PM
12/28	at Southern	7:00 PM
1/2	*at Kansas	TBA
1/6	*OKLAHOMA STATE	TBA
1/9	*MISSOURI	TBA
1/13	*at TX Tech	TBA
1/16	*IOWA STATE	TBA
1/23	*at Baylor	TBA
1/27	*TEXAS TECH	TBA
1/30	*at Oklahoma State	TBA
2/3	*at Texas	TBA
2/6	*BAYLOR	TBA
2/10	*KANSAS STATE	TBA
2/13	*at Oklahoma	TBA
2/17	*at Colorado	TBA
2/20	*TEXAS	TBA
2/24	*OKLAHOMA	TBA
2/27	*at Nebraska	TBA

3/4 thru 3/7 Phillips 66 TBA  
Big 12 Tournament

## Festina members ordered to buy own drugs, doctor says

PARIS (AP) — The Tour de France drug scandal took another turn Tuesday when the doctor for the ousted Festina team charged that riders were ordered by the team manager to pay for illegal substances. "The riders were obliged to put part of their win bonuses into a 'black box' fund to buy banned substances," Arsene Rycckaert, lawyer for team doctor Eric Rycckaert, told the *Le Parisien* newspaper. "These products, like regular drugs, were held at Festina's headquarters in Lyon." Team manager Bruno Roussel was in charge of the system and riders decided what substances they wanted to take, Arsene Rycckaert said. Rycckaert said that his client, did not prescribe or administer banned substances, and was called in only if riders had problems after taking drugs. The drug scandal has rocked the Tour de France since customs officers found illegal substances in the car of the trainer of Festina's top rider, Richard Virenque. The Festina team was thrown out of the race Saturday and police in Lille are holding Rycckaert and Roussel. It also was reported Tuesday that French customs officials found the drug EPO in the car of officials of the Dutch TVM team in March. EPO is the same substance allegedly used by Festina. The International Union of Cycling, the sport's governing body, has asked the Dutch cycling federation to investigate and tour organizers have threatened to expel the TVM team if it is proved riders took the drug. "If the inquiry finds that rules have been broken, the case would go to the courts. But first we need proof that someone has done something wrong," Anne-Laure Masson, the union's anti-drug coordinator, said. TVM, a Dutch transport insurance company, told the Dutch news agency ANP that a third party might be involved in the latest accusations. "The case has been closed for four months. Festina gets caught and this suddenly surfaces again. I find it strange," Ad Bos, director of TVM, told ANP. Hein Verbruggen, president of the cycling union, acknowledges that his sport is struggling to discover how many cyclists are using illegal substances.

## NBA Players, executives begin lockout negotiations

NEW YORK (AP) — The NBA and locked-out players agree on one thing: It's time to start talking again. Commissioner David Stern and players' union director Billy Hunter met Tuesday and agreed to resume collective bargaining. Negotiations have been stalled since June 22. They plan to speak Friday to set a date. "It was a very cordial meeting that didn't focus on the specifics of our negotiation," Hunter said through a spokesperson. "Instead, we talked more generally about the desire on both our parts to resume bargaining. I let David know that my ultimate goal remains reaching an agreement that both sides can live with as soon as possible." The sides probably won't schedule talks before the end of this month. Stern has plans to take vacation next week, and deputy commissioner Russ Granik is in Europe with the U.S. world championship team. Stern and Granik attended the nine negotiating sessions before the lockout, but both do not necessarily have to be there when talks resume. Tuesday's development may have been a positive sign since Hunter had indicated a day earlier there was no need to resume discussions unless either side would show a willingness to move off its current position. The sides remain far apart on fundamental economic issues related to divvying up the pile of money known as basketball-related income, or BRI.



Owners had planned to devote between 48 and 52 percent of that money to player salaries under the last labor agreement, but the number rose to 57 percent — about \$950 million — for the 1997-98 season. In proposals exchanged before the July 1 imposition of the lockout, the NBA was asking for a "hard" salary cap tied to no more than 50 percent of BRI. The union proposed a reduction in future salary cap growth if BRI hit 63 percent. Stern has been demanding "cost certainty" in a new deal, while the players say they should not be responsible for protecting owners from themselves. Other issues that have been discussed but not yet resolved include changes to the rookie wage scale, increased minimum salaries for veterans, player discipline and modifications to the drug agreement. Curiously, neither side has yet proposed a luxury tax, such as the one used in baseball, as a way of deterring high payrolls. During labor talks in 1995, a luxury tax on over-the-cap teams was agreed to before being stricken from the final deal. On Monday, Hunter said owners had proposed a "reverse luxury tax" under which players would give back a portion of their salaries if the BRI percentage went too high. That idea was part of one of the four proposals made by the league, all of which were rejected by the players. The union made one proposal early in April that was turned down by the owners. Hunter said he was unsure which side would make the next formal proposal.

## Cowboys' scrimmage may lose money

EL PASO (AP) — Slow ticket sales for the Dallas Cowboys' scrimmage, which sold out the Sun Bowl in its inaugural year, have raised the possibility that this year's game might not reach the break-even point. Unless another 10,000 tickets are sold in the next two weeks, event guarantors could be left picking up part of the tab for the Aug. 6 game. "This would be the first year we would have to draw on that letter of credit," Wes Jurey, president of the Greater El Paso Chamber of Commerce, said. Jurey said he is still optimistic the game will continue to pay for itself, as it did in the summers of 1996, when a sellout crowd of 51,118 was in attendance, and 1997, when more than 40,000 were sold. He is hoping a trend of sales picking up in the final weeks will continue. Only some 21,000 tickets have been sold. Organizers said they must sell more than 30,000 to reach the

break-even point of about \$700,000. But even reaching that point, would mean little or nothing for the game's charity, the United Way. The 1996 game delivered a profit of \$205,500, which was matched dollar for dollar by a local charitable foundation. The 1997 event raised \$71,500, an amount also matched by the Border Fund. Scrimmage committee members believed that this year's Dallas opponent, the Oakland Raiders, might mean another sellout. That goal seems unlikely, however. "I'm worried as a guarantor, but I'm even more worried as chairperson of the United Way," Martini DeGroat, Southwestern Bell general manager, said. "You would think the third year would be easier. But it seems to be tougher." Event chair Larry Peterson said there are bigger worries than the guarantors having to pay up, because they knew the risks involved.