

Reaching new heights



MIKE FUENTES/THE BATTALION

Aggie pole vaulter **Jon Nance** and the Texas A&M track and field teams will compete at the University of Houston on Saturday. The competition will start at 9 a.m. at the Bill Yeoman Field House and the UH Athletics and Alumni Center. Last weekend at the Red Raider Open in Lubbock, Aggies **Richard McDonald** and **Erica Bowen** each placed first in the pole vault. A&M team members Brandon Evans and Jason Jacob also recorded first-place finishes in the triple jump and weight throw, respectively.

No holds barred

A&M wrestlers pin second tournament

BY JORDAN DAVIS
The Battalion

With World Championship Wrestling heading for Reed Arena this weekend, the attentions of many Aggie fans are turned to the ring. But A&M hosts its own wrestlers, on an amateur level.

The Texas Aggie Wrestling Team, a club sport offered through the Department of Recreational Sports, offers an opportunity for A&M students, staff and faculty to showcase their wrestling skills.

The team has not gone unnoticed by state and national organizations, including the National Collegiate Wrestling Association.

Texas A&M is ranked fourth among collegiate teams. A&M recently hosted the Aggie Classic Tournament, in which the team placed first. The team also placed first in October at a tournament hosted by Georgia Southern University.

The Aggie Wrestling Team will attend the Texas Invitational Austin

Tournament at the University of Texas on Jan. 31. They will then head to a competition at Vanderbilt University on Feb. 13 before hosting the NCWA Regional competition Feb. 27.

The team is open to any wrestler who is interested. Participants need not be experienced but must be able to handle the nature of the sport, coach John-Paul Stephens said.

"To be successful in wrestling, you need a combination of speed, strength, and flexibility," Stephens, a senior industrial engineering major, said.

Stephens said the most important quality needed to succeed in wrestling is determination.

"If you've got the heart, you can succeed in wrestling," he said.

Stephens said the team has seen members advance to national competition within a semester of joining.

The team practices Monday through Thursday from 5:30 to 7 p.m. in G. Rollie White 260. Those interested in joining must sign a release form before participating.

Rodman staying quiet on future

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) — Dennis Rodman has played a mercenary killer in the movies and a rebounding force in the NBA.

Now, he is just playing coy.

Rodman's agent, Dwight Manley, said yesterday the mercurial star will not sign with any club before next week. Instead, he

will appear on "The Tonight Show" tonight, where he is expected to hint at which teams he would be interested in joining.

The 37-year-old Rodman would be a prized commodity for teams looking to add the final championship piece to their rosters.

BAYLOR

Continued from Page 7

eraging 18.5 turnovers per game, 17.6 in Big 12 games. The defense also has struggled in Big 12 play, with opponents shooting 50.5 percent against A&M. The Aggies have been outrebounded by an average of 7.2 rebounds per game in Big 12 play.

A&M will once again look for solid play from Shanne Jones. The senior forward ranks 22nd on A&M's all-time scoring list and needs 61 more points to move into the top 20.

Junior guard Clifton Cook is averaging 16.2 points per game in Big 12 play and is among conference leaders in minutes, averaging 36

minutes per game.

The Aggies are looking to break a 25-game road losing streak in conference games on Saturday, dating back to their last conference road win of the 1994-95 season, coincidentally against Baylor.

The Baylor men won two out of three meetings between the teams last year, winning 73-64 in Waco in the first encounter. The Aggies then won the final game at G. Rollie White Coliseum by the count of 80-75. Jones scored 20 points in the game, and sophomore guard Michael Schmidt poured in a career-high 26 points to lead the way. One week later, Baylor ended the Aggies' season with a 66-63 victory in Kansas City at the Big 12 Tournament.

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Continued from Page 7

The Aggies' defense was a factor Jan. 13 as the Aggies held sixth-ranked Texas Tech eight points under their season average to keep the score close in a 68-65 loss.

Gillom said a new defensive setup has helped keep A&M in con-

attention despite the team's offensive struggles.

"Defensively, we've been playing what we call a 'jump defense,' and it's been working for us," she said.

"Our strength is defense, and right now our weakness is putting the ball in the hole. Oklahoma State has a lot of people who can score, and hopefully we can stop their leading scorers."

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OR

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