

A&M's Clara Ho excels in first season

BY BEN WESTBROOK
The Battalion

Texas A&M swimmer Clara Ho is no stranger to winning. The northern California native, who took first this past weekend at TCU in the 200 freestyle and 100 backstroke, has been dominating other women swimmers for years with no end in sight. Ho, from Fremont, California, is the Aggies' No. 1 freshman prospect and is tearing up the competition.

Ho began swimming the same way millions of other people do. "My parents put me in [swimming lessons] just to be water-safe," Ho said. They did not know they were sending Clara on a path that could culminate with a roster spot on the 2000 U.S. Olympic team.

The path to swimming stardom faced an intersection when she had to decide to focus on either swimming or dancing.

"In eighth grade I had to choose

between the two because they were taking up a lot of my time," she said. "So I chose swimming."

No one knows if Ho's dancing career would have led to stardom,

"I think she's a great swimmer and a good person. She's wonderful for the team."

— Don Wagner
A&M swimming coach

but her swimming career has led to four California state championships, a ninth-place finish in the 1996 Olympic trials and a scholarship to a major Division I school, A&M.

She is making a splash in Ag-

gieland also. She holds the 200-meter butterfly school record for freshmen and has even come as close as second on A&M's all-time best for the event. Ho will compete on the World Team this April in China.

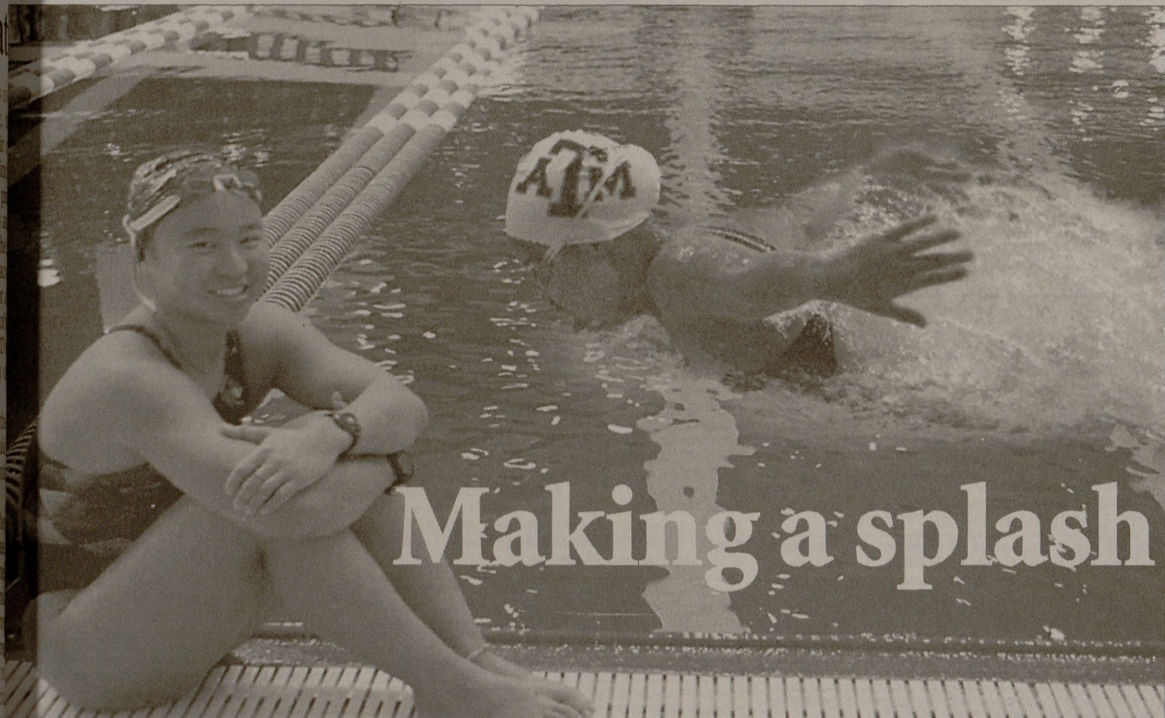
The high school great is becoming a college great, thanks to a strenuous weight-lifting schedule and hard work.

"When I came to college I had kind of plateaued," Ho said. "But I've been doing a lot more, and I'm lifting weights now, so I think that kind of helps."

Women's swimming coach Don Wagner, who coached Ho in the 1995 Olympic Festivals, is quick to praise the freshman.

"I knew after [the festivals] I was going to recruit her wherever I was once she graduated," Wagner said. "I think she's a great swimmer and a good person. She's wonderful for the team."

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Making a splash

PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY MIKE FUENTES/THE BATTALION

Aggs prepare to take on Owls

AL LAZARUS
The Battalion

Dumitru Caradima and Shuon Madden were the eighth-ranked doubles team in the country entering the Rolex National Intercollegiate Tennis tournament last Thursday, but the Texas A&M Men's Tennis Team duo came away with a No. 1 finish and a load of confidence.

"We weren't intimidated," Caradima said. "We knew we were a good team and that if we played our best game nothing could stop us from winning the tournament."

A tournament victory is just what the Aggie sophomores got, knocking off three of the country's top five doubles teams along the way to winning the prestigious event, which is the third leg of the collegiate tennis grand slam.

Madden said he and Caradima were looking to prove they were worthy of a higher ranking.

"We had a lot of confidence, and even though we were seeded eighth, we felt like we belonged much higher than that," he said.

The Aggie duo seemed to maintain their high confidence level after dropping the first set of the tournament's final, rebounding to defeat No. 3 seeds Jeff Laski and Gavin Sontag of the University of Illinois, 3-6, 6-3, 6-4.

A&M coach Tim Cass said the victory will give the doubles team some much-deserved attention.

"Two sophomores are going to be the No. 1 doubles team in the country," he said, "and that's a tribute to their skill level and hard work."

Cass said Caradima and Madden's victory was also a tribute to the hard work of the whole team.

"More importantly than individual championships, we're concerned with the team part of it," he said. "We had some really good team practices going into it, and really it was a win for our whole team."

The 14th-ranked Aggies will look to carry momentum from the victory into today's match in Houston against Rice University. The dual match is the first of the spring season for the Aggies, who in their lone dual match of the fall defeated the University of Nebraska, 6-1.



MIKE FUENTES/THE BATTALION

Sophomore Justin Work of the A&M men's tennis team prepares for a shot in practice.

The Aggies have split their last two matches against Rice, losing to the Owls two years ago and coming back to trounce them, 7-0, last season.

Madden said he expects the team to be ready for today's match.

"Everyone's pumped for the match," he said. "[Dumitru and I] have lit the fire, and hopefully it will keep burning for a while."

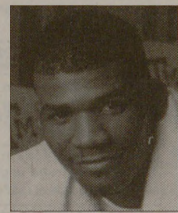
News In Brief

Cook honored as Rookie of the Week

Texas A&M junior guard Clifton Cook has been named Big 12 Conference Rookie of the Week for the third time this season, the league office announced Monday. No other Big 12 player has been honored more than two times.

Cook averaged 18.0 points, 2.5 steals and 3.5 assists last week in games against the University of Texas and Baylor University.

He leads all new comers in scoring (15.4), assists (6.1) and steals (2.8) this season. Nationally, Cook leads all junior college transfers in assists and steals.



COOK

A&M Soccer Team signs four Texans

Texas A&M soccer coach G. Guerrieri announced Monday that four Texans have signed national letters of intent to play for the Aggies in 1999.

Jessica Martin, Martha Moore, Heather Ragsdale and Andrea Starnes will look to fill the holes left by seniors Linda Castillejos, Emily Elias, Sharon Pickering and Rebecca Stewart for the Aggies in the fall.

In 1998, the Aggies went 14-8-0, 7-2-0 in the Big 12 and advanced to the second round of the NCAA Championship. The Aggies are set to open the 1999 campaign on Aug. 25 against the University of Florida.



GUERRIERI

THE JOB INTERVIEW: 5 shocking truths that can help you nail your dream job

Paid advertisement

Let's face it. Nobody looks forward to job interviews. A total stranger stares you down for an hour while you sit there uncomfortably in your pantyhose, trying to sound super-intelligent while also remembering to keep your legs crossed correctly. While you'd prefer to avoid thinking about the whole thing, and just get through it when the time comes - Don't! Here are a few "insider" insights about the whole process that may shock you, but can help you better connect with your interviewer and distinguish yourself from the competition.

1. RESUMES ARE OBSOLETE

Well, they're not really obsolete, but they are only one piece of the job puzzle. "Most people spend much more time on their resume than they do preparing for each interview. That's a huge mistake," says Bruce Tulgan, the author of *Work this Way*, a book about how to thrive in your first few jobs. "People can easily lie on resumes. The interview is much more important, which is why recruiters spend so much time doing them - and why you should spend time getting ready."

What to do:

- Think about all the time you will spend on your job search; then, carve out a chunk of those hours to prep for your interviews.

2. WORK EXPERIENCE NOT REQUIRED

Okay, so you may not have a ton of real work experience. But that's not what recruiters are really looking for when they are hiring new college grads. Believe it or not, the very fact that you are young can be worth a lot to many companies. They're in search of a 22-year-old's energy and fresh perspective. You may have a whole new way of looking at things, and that's invaluable to most companies. "Frankly, experience is not very important to us," says Tom Scott, co-founder of Nantucket Nectars, a booming small beverage company with current annual sales over \$50 million. "We can teach you to do the things you need to do here. What we're looking for is hunger." As Scott suggests, entry-level job interviews are not designed to weigh your experience, they're supposed to measure your smarts, enthusiasm, personality and passion.

What to do:

- Instead of just describing your past summer jobs, focus on stories that showcase your energy and passion for the activities you really care about. Or, talk about how your leadership has made a difference. While your examples may be summer jobs, they may also be a concert you organized, a paper or project for a favorite class, or

a team sport that you play. Make it clear that you will be just as hungry and passionate about the job for which you are interviewing.

3. GOOD QUESTIONS, NOT GOOD ANSWERS CAN CLOSE THE DEAL

Most people spend time preparing answers that will showcase their intelligence, savvy and interest in a company. This is important. But preparing some thoughtful, well-researched questions can accomplish the same thing - and often with greater impact! When the interviewer gets around to "Any questions?" (and he or she will), that's your chance to strut any stuff that you haven't been asked about during the course of the interview. What you

reveal in a well-thought-out question might even nail you the job. Jodi Kantor, a New York City college grad, used this strategy to beat out heavy competition for a job as political aide to the Mayor. When she interviewed for the position she wanted to highlight her passion for and understanding of the job. She called on her own experience with New York's parking ticket and birth certificate bureaucracy to make her point. "I made sure to ask specific questions about whether I could work on customer service projects that would fix problems similar to the ones I had faced as a city resident," she says. Turns out that the Mayor was launching some big service initiatives in that area. Kantor's interviewer was so impressed with her genuine interest in the city's problems that he hired her and put her on the team to help solve them.

What to Do:

- Stay away from obvious questions (i.e.; the ones answered in the company literature). Instead, find out what your interviewer thinks about a relevant company or industry issue. Or, ask about a specific part of the job that is of particular interest to you.

4. YOU CAN KNOW EVERYTHING ABOUT A COMPANY

Many people look at prepping for an interview like studying for an exam. They read all the obvious material to make sure they know "who, what and where." This is a great start, but it's just the tip of the iceberg. Reading a company's recruiting brochure and spitting it back in the interview won't impress anyone. To really

stand out you need to arm yourself with current and substantive information about the company and industry. Thanks to today's technology, this does not have to be a daunting or time consuming proposition. You can learn a lot with minimal effort and make a great impact because most other undergrad candidates won't take the extra step.

What to Do:

- Read the newspaper! See what's happening in the world that might be relevant to the respective company or industry.
- Call and ask for a company's sales materials to see how they talk to their customers.
- Use on-line info like company or news web sites. Sites like www.wetfeetpress.com and www.vaultreports.com carry great company and industry profiles for sale.
- Utilize free news information resources at your school library like Lexis/Nexis or the Bloomberg News Service.

5. FUN, NOT FACTS MAY MAKE THE DIFFERENCE

Probably the most important piece of information a recruiter will want to know but will never ask directly is "What is this person like to be around?" A good recruiter knows you will be working some long hours in a closed room with other people. You better believe that a key question on his or her checklist is "Do I want to work with this person? Would my colleagues want to work with this person? Let's face it, many people will have the same skills as you, but not everyone can package those skills with your personality. You want the recruiter to walk away wanting to work with you!

What to Do:

- Make sure pieces of YOU come out in the interview! Be confident about yourself, and communicate with energy and enthusiasm. Don't be afraid to laugh when appropriate or talk about a personal issue to make a relevant point.

Secret



"Strong Enough for a Man. But Made for a Woman."