

Men's Swimming and Diving places third in Big 12 finale

BY JASON LINCOLN
The Battalion

Eight and a half points was all that separated Texas A&M University from their best finish ever in the Men's Big 12 Swimming and Diving Championships. The Aggies scored 625.5 points this weekend to place third behind the second-ranked University of Texas.

Texas' win gives the school a 19-year streak at conference dominance as they go into the NCAA meet with a bid for first. Nebraska has been third for three years running in the Big 12, but A&M has closed the gap from more than 240 points in '97 to under 10 in '99.

"I was really pleased with our performance," A&M coach Mel Nash said. "The Big 12 is one of the best conferences in the country. Texas, Nebraska and A&M are all top 20 teams and Iowa State, Missouri and Kansas State all have real strong individual swimmers. It was an extremely fast meet.

"We wanted to take a run at Nebraska, and we did. The first day we were ahead and the second we fell by 57, making it to close the gap to 8.5 like we did. We always want to finish as high as we can in conference, but our No. 1 goal is NCAAs."

Leading the Aggies to their closest run ever at the Cornhuskers were nine players who will qualify for the NCAA championships on Thursday's announcement. The men were led by senior diver Mark Naftanel and senior freestyler Jerrod Kappler. Naftanel concluded his confer-

QUALITY TIME

A&M men's swimmers who have set consideration times for the NCAA championships March 25-27.

Jerrod Kappler	All of the swimmers will be competing on an A&M relay team, and seven of the eight are in consideration for multiple events. The NCAA will officially announce final qualifying times for all events Thursday.
David Morrow	
Michael Kolligan	
Riley Jones	
Nick Tate	
Keven Kehlenbach	
Alfred Mansour	

ence reign in true grace as he aced his final dive, a forward three and a half pike with three perfect 10s. The dive gave Naftanel his fourth straight conference platform championship to enter him in the record books with the most individual conference championships by an Aggie with eight.

"I was shocked, especially to tie that record in the one-meter to give me the opportunity to break it on the tower during this meet," he said. "It is an amazing honor because I grew up watching Aggie athletics. It makes me real proud to be in that same category as some of the former great Aggies."

Kappler continued the seniors' strong conclusions by being one of three swimmers in the entire conference to have double wins. Kappler touched the wall first in both the 50 and 100-freestyle events with

times to secure a spot in the championships.

Eight Aggies managed to times that will allow them to in the national meet at Indiana on March 25-27. In addition, eight swimmers individual will automatically qualify and more are in consideration.

"We're excited and positive (the NCAA championships) Michael Kolligan said. "A lot of teams don't realize that we're as fast as we'll be for the relay's our going to be fighting to be real close."

The Aggies performance meet places them into the 12 in the Speedo America Cup Poll going into the final prep for the championships and anapolis.

SOFTBALL

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The Golden Gophers, on the other hand, would not be nearly as fortunate. The Minnesota defense crumbled under the barrage of Aggie hits, committing five errors for

the game.

The women also beat Dayton University and Butler University, going 4-0 against the two teams. It was Butler's Stephanie Burlien who cost the Aggie's first-place finish by hitting a two-run homer off A&M pitcher Jordana Barrack. The home run gave the Aggies sev-

en runs scored against, while nesota finished the tournament with six.

"We were disappointed they scored those two runs on home run," Evans said. "We at that point we didn't win the nament, but I thought we well enough to win it."



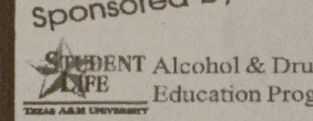
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Moderator: **Jane Conoley**, dean of the Texas A&M College of Education

Debaters: **Ken Meier**, Texas A&M political science professor
Eric Hanushek, University of Rochester economics professor

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Mar. 27-28	Mar. 1-23
Mar. 27-28	Mar. 1-23
Mar. 28	Mar. 1-23
Mar. 28	Mar. 1-23
Mar. 30	Mar. 1-29

EVENT DATE	REGISTRATION
Aug. 21-27, 1999	NOW—June 19

EVENT DATE	REGISTRATION
May 16-22	NOW—April 26
May 22-29	NOW—April 26

PROGRAM DATE	REGISTRATION
Mar. 22-25, 29-31 & Apr. 1	Feb. 23—Mar. 9

FEATURE PROGRAMS

- Low-Fat Dining in the Brazos Valley Update**—Mar. 10 at 5:30 in room 281, Linda Kapusniak, R.D., author and well-known public speaker, will talk about her third edition of Guide to Low-Fat Dining in the Brazos Valley. Find out which restaurants serve the baked tortilla chips, low-fat pizza, lowfat bread sticks, plus more. This lecture has been one of our most popular. Come early!
- Cooking Classes**—Mar. 9, 30, Apr. 13 & 17 from 3-4:30. Cooking demonstrations and taste testing will be part of each class.
- Tai Chi**—classes begin Mar. 23, every Tues. & Thurs. from 6-7:30.
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