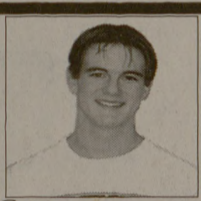


## Football vs. Fútbol

As soccer gains fans, football faces a challenge to its supremacy

Some days, it just seems it's the United States versus everyone else. Being the biggest, baddest nation on the block has its advantages, but it also has its disadvantages.



CHRIS HUFFINES

Many times foreigners will criticize or just make fun of what they see as Yankee idiosyncrasies.

Like football. Foreigners always point to their "football" — soccer — and attempt to rationalize why it is better, while Americans stick by the true American pastime of football.

So, which is better, soccer or football? Part of the problem with that question is the two sports are so different while being so similar. Both involve teams of 11 people on large fields. Both are extremely physical games, which lead to extreme spirit among their fans.

Of course, there are differences. Football tends to emphasize raw power, while soccer is a finesse game. Football is more of a controlled brawl moving up and down the field, while soccer is running with some competition thrown into the mix.

Football can be played by individualists while a soccer team that is not flawlessly integrated will get beaten almost every time. And of course in soccer, you only score one point at a time.

But which is better? Soccer is better for a variety of reasons. Soccer is easier to learn but harder to excel at. Soccer is more of a strategic game, with only three substitutions allowed per game and longer stretches on the field, making it a game for the long haul.

Soccer also breeds less hostility on the field. It probably has something to do with not trying to kill your opponent during every play.

However, football could also be viewed as a better sport than soccer. Football is actually safer than soccer. The pads actually do work.

Football is visually more exciting. It is a tactics-oriented game, where individual plays tend to make the difference.

Also, football is not as physically demanding as soccer. Players do run but not nearly as much or as far.

Of course, soccer stinks for a lot of reasons. First among these is that it is illegal for everyone but the goalies to use their hands.

Another defect of soccer is that it is not a high-scoring game. There is very little chance for the great athletes to prove themselves the way many other sports allow.

There are Michael Jordans in Major League Soccer and other leagues, but soccer is not a sport where players are judged by their stats.

Football isn't all that good for some of the same reasons. There are too many crack-

smoking, wife-beating superstars. They tend to outshine all the good works the rest of the players are doing.

In addition, football has become an industry, something that has not happened to soccer — yet.

So, which is better? Here at A&M, both NCAA teams, football and soccer, are nationally recognized and both help bring students to the University. Which is better? It really does not matter. Everyone's opinion will be different. The important thing is to know why the opinion is held.

Oh, I like soccer better, but that's because I play it.

Chris Huffines is a senior speech communications major



GABRIEL RUENES/THE BATTALION

## Soccer Club looks to raise membership

BY RUTH STEPHENS  
The Battalion

For those Texas A&M students with an interest in playing soccer, or for those who just like to watch, the TAMU Men's Soccer Club is gearing up for another season.

Junior landscape architecture major Bryan Warne said the team is making an increased effort to recruit players this year.

"My freshman year the turnout was not spectacular," Warne said. "Last year we had a lot more. This year we're hoping for good quality and more numbers."

Club athletics gives students an opportunity to play sports that are not offered at the varsity level.

In Texas, these teams are promoted and developed by the Texas Collegiate Sports Association (TCSA).

Even though A&M does not have a varsity men's soccer team, Warne said he still thinks Texas is one of the best states in the country for soccer.

The A&M club soccer team is one of 32 men's teams in Texas sponsored by TCSA.

Last year the Aggies competed in the University Division which consisted of the 32 men's soccer

teams sponsored by TCSA.

After a top-eight finish in the University Division last year, A&M will compete against the other seven ranked teams in the Premier Division this year.

"We haven't played the best teams in the past," Warne said. "This year we're in the Premier Division with better schools."

Eastern Conference members along with A&M are Southwest Texas State University, Rice University and Sam Houston State University.

The Western Conference includes the University of Texas, Baylor University, Texas Tech University and Angelo State University.

Warne said their schedule includes extensive travel. The team plays two games every weekend, one at home and one away. They will start this year's season with an away game at Rice.

At the club level, Warne said it is a constant challenge to find enough money for uniforms, equipment and travel funds.

Warne said they receive some money from the University, including gas money for travel, but the majority is raised by the players.

"Our main fund raiser is our annual 12th Man Invitational Tournament in the spring for

**"This year we're hoping for good quality and more numbers."**

— Bryan Warne  
Men's Soccer Club player

SEE SOCCER ON PAGE 4

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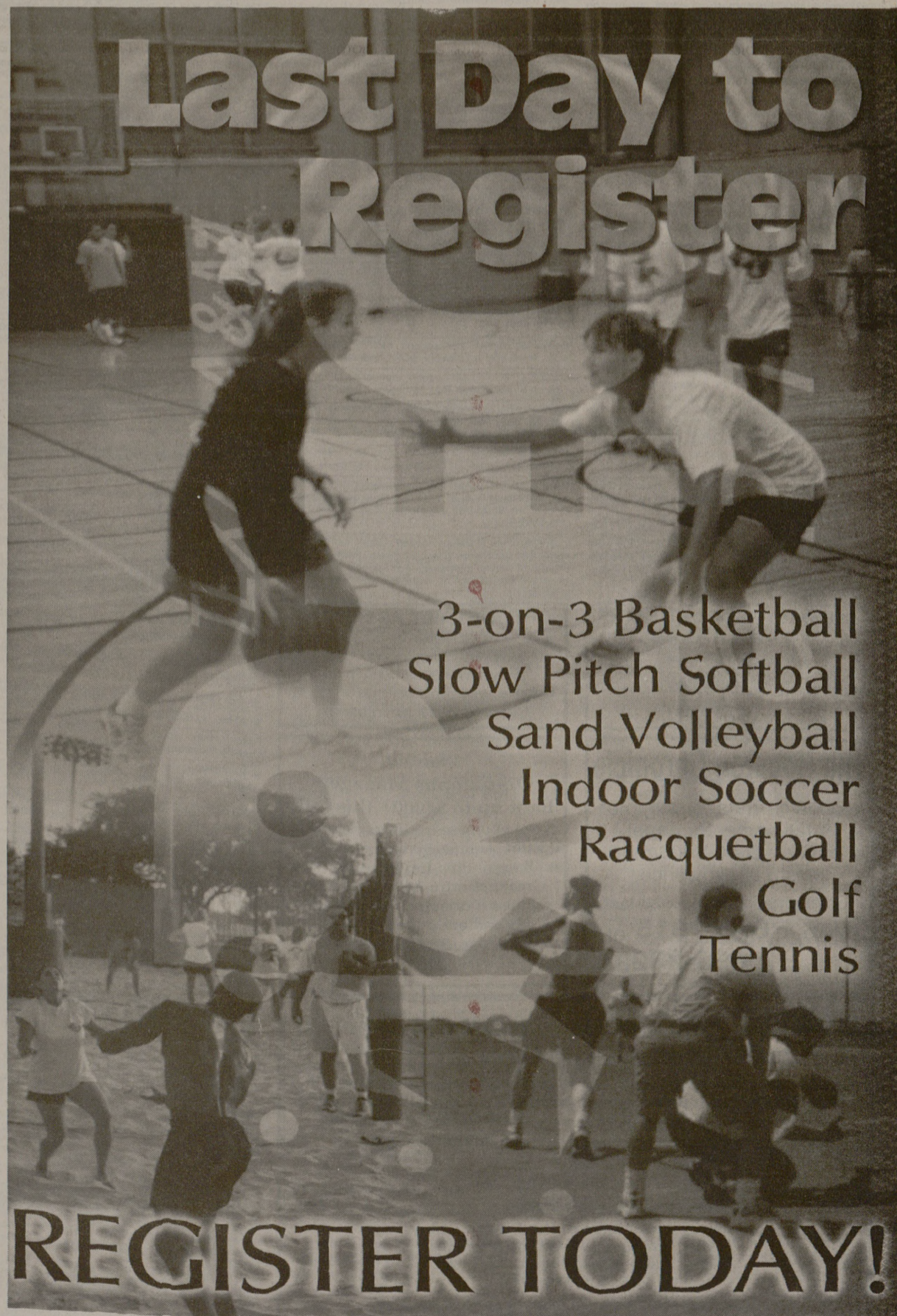
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