

Ready to Run

Cross Country seniors Stephen Erath and Scott Lengefeld enjoy breakthrough year

BY BLAINE DIONNE
The Battalion

Friendships are made in a variety of ways: through circumstance, through adversity and over time. The friendship between fifth-year senior cross country runners Stephen Erath and Scott Lengefeld was forged from all three.

They met for the first time as freshmen on the Texas A&M Cross Country Team, they fought through injuries together and over the past four years, they have competed side-by-side through eight seasons of cross country and track.

Both were accomplished runners coming out of high school, but that was their only similarity before their careers at A&M.

Lengefeld is from Texas, Erath from Louisiana. Lengefeld was the recipient of the largest athletic scholarship ever given by A&M to a cross country runner, while Erath was a walk-on after being awarded an academic scholarship.

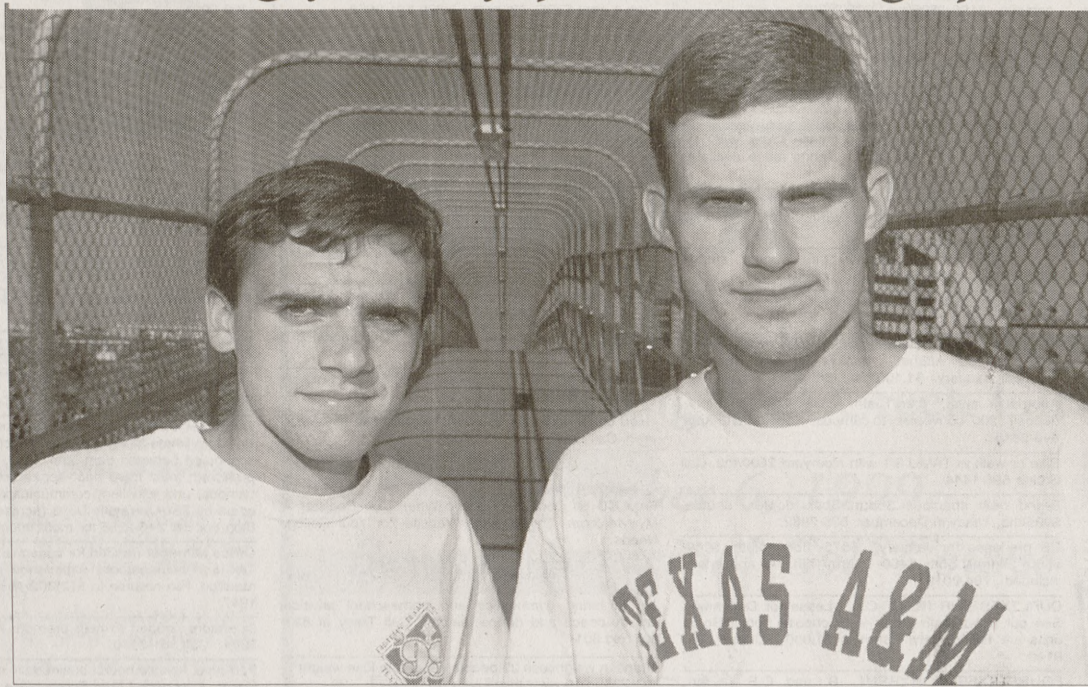
Lengefeld enjoyed a successful freshman campaign, but Erath was hobbled the entire season by an early-season injury.

Lengefeld said although they began their careers differently, they are going to finish them identically.

"We each started out differently," he said. "But we're both going to end up in the same spot, because we're right together now, in our workouts and everything."

They did not get to the same spot by accident, either.

Last season, the cross coun-



JP BEATO/THE BATTALION

Seniors Stephen Erath (left) and Scott Lengefeld are attempting to lead the Aggies to their first-ever NCAA Championships. The Aggies will host the Big 12 Championships Saturday at the Texas A&M Golf

try team faced a transition year, with a new head coach and a squad dominated by freshmen.

Erath and Lengefeld both said they knew there would not be much success coming the Aggies' way with so much inexperience.

So in order to avoid wasting their senior year competing in a situation they knew would be unrewarding, they both red-shirted.

Erath and Lengefeld did, however, continue to practice with the team, so they were able to acclimate themselves to new coach Dave Hartman and develop their running talents further, hoping it would pay off this year when they had a deeper, more experienced team behind them.

Their decision is certainly paying off now. Under the second-year tutelage of head coach Dave Hartman, the Aggie

Harriers are positioning themselves to qualify for the NCAA Championships for the first time ever, the reason Lengefeld and Erath came to A&M.

Lengefeld said he credits the turnaround to Hartman's training regimen.

"It's been 180 degrees different," he said. "Simply because the attitude on the team is a lot different, and that comes straight from the coach."

Erath said he couldn't agree more.

"Coach Hartman was a really good long-distance runner," Erath said. "So he can give us advice on a race and it makes perfect sense because he's been there before."

Hartman seems to be giving them good advice this season, because in all but one of their competitions thus far, the pair have been the Aggies' top two finishers, representing the bulk of the team's point scoring.

As far as Erath and Lengefeld are concerned, though, this team's success has only just begun. Lengefeld said he is sure that the Aggies are on the verge of a major breakthrough.

"It's going to happen; it has to happen," he said. "You can't work out as good as we've been working out in practice and it not carry over into a meet."

Although Lengefeld is the only one so far to have his practice carry over into a meet, he is quick to acknowledge the fact that he is not the best runner on his team at practice.

"I finished 45 seconds ahead of our second man last week at pre-nats (the Pre-NCAA Meet)," Lengefeld said. "But I'm finishing second on the team during practice, so I think that we have a really good chance at doing real well at conference and especially at districts, which is two weeks later."

The districts Lengefeld is referring to is the regional NCAA meet that will be held in

SEE RUN ON PAGE 8.

Equestrian Team takes top spot at first home show

STAFF AND WIRE REPORTS

The Texas A&M Equestrian Team finished its first home show of the year with a first-place team finish and three more first-place placements because of

The Aggies beat Oklahoma State University for the final team championship of the weekend, 25-18. OSU won the first show of the weekend, 24-21, while the Aggies rebounded in the second with a 25-16 defeat of the Cowgirls.

West Texas A&M finished third with six points, while Sul Ross State finished fourth with three points.

Even with the pressure of hosting a show such as this, our team rose to the occasion," A&M equestrian coach Tana Buckner said. "This was a chance for us to get our feet wet and I thought we performed really well."

Individually for the Aggies, sophomore Quincy Cahill won her third open reining title in three tries and followed that up with a third place finish in the open Western horsemanship class to claim her third consecutive high-point rider award.

Cahill scored a combined 32 points over the course of three shows, including 11 in the pathic Medicine School

"This is my first year to ride by IHSA (Intercollegiate Horse Shows Association) rules and I didn't really know what to expect coming in," Cahill said. "I'm used to riding my own horse in the AQHA (American Quarter Horse Association) and this is the first time that I've had to draw horses at random."

Senior Jamie Wells took her third consecutive reserve point rider award with a first-place finish in the open western horsemanship class and a sixth-place finish in the open reining class for a total of eight points.

Wells scored a combined 25 points on the weekend. Senior Nicole Plunk captured her second consecutive Intermediate 1 championship.

The Aggies will be back in action on Oct. 29-31 with two English and two Western shows at OSU in Stillwater, Okla.

CONTEST

The Battalion

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They also are offering free HIV testing. Marla McClure, AIDS Services Director for Brazos County, says the contest will raise awareness of HIV and AIDS in the community.

"Everyone knows about HIV, but no one is talking about it," she said. "People have a misconception with AIDS and HIV. Applications for the contest are available at 016 Beutel and submitted by Nov. 19.

Campus Calendar

Tuesday

International Student Association Mini-Olympics will be held at the campus sports center. Back out the Mini-Olympics for times and locations: acs.tamu.edu/~minio for more information. Call 847-5188.

Executive Council of Health Professions: The Texas College of Podiatric Medicine School Director will be available to visit with students in C 206.

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