

# Fire up the grill

## Students speak about traditional pre-game tailgate barbeque

BY MELISSA PANTANO  
The Battalion

Sebastian Seymour drags himself out of bed early Saturday morning fighting to keep his eyes open as he stumbles around his bedroom. Visions of beer, bones and barbecue dance in his head as he realizes that today, he tailgates.

As long as there have been college sporting events, there has been tailgating. The idea of slapping meat onto an open flame and sharing it with the team sends chills down the typical fan's spine.

Seymour, a senior agricultural development major, said he enjoys the social aspect of tailgating.

"It's a place to meet the people who you are sitting with before the game," he said.

Tailgating at out-of-town games offers diehard fans an opportunity to mingle with fans from the opposing team. Seymour said he had a good time with the University of Nebraska locals before and after the game.

"At the Nebraska game, we had a great tailgate," Seymour said. "We ate and talked with the Nebraska fans — they were really nice. After the game, they came back and they didn't gloat or anything. They just lied and told us what a good game the Aggies played."

Along with the typical tailgating social pleasantries comes some humorous stupidity. Seymour said one such event involved the Nebraska mascot.

"That Nebraska blow-up guy came and hit my friend in the head," Seymour said. "He got mad and punched him in the crotch. [The doll] was inflated, so it didn't hurt him, but everyone was kind of giggling."

While some enjoy tailgates on the road, others enjoy the comforts of partying on home ground.

Dan Belisle, a junior economics major, said the best part of tailgating is the lack of artifice or formality.

"There is no stress of food selection," Belisle said. "That's what's good. Usually we make some kind of Sloppy Joe meat or sandwich cuisine."

Gavin Daniels, a senior architecture major, said a tailgate party is fun as long as the cooking duties are passed on to someone else.

"Cooking for tailgating is overrated," Daniels said. "It's too much work. I mean, why spend all your time cooking when you could be drinking?"

Tailgating is an event that can be enjoyed by both sexes. Belisle said a tailgate party allows men and women to socialize in a relaxed atmosphere.

"Usually we go to the parking lot and hang out while the womenfolk congregate around the Coleman grill," Belisle said. "It's fun because it's a good way for family and friends to bond."

While the reason for throwing a tailgate party is almost always an athletic event, sometimes the allure of the grill overpowers the desire to attend the big game. Belisle said tailgaters should be prepared for such a contingency.

"One time we had so much fun that we stayed out there the whole game," Belisle said. "Everyone was having such a good time drinking their frosty beverages that we kind of forgot about the game altogether."

Instead, the party-goers improvised.

"We turned on the TV in one of the vans and all crowded around and ate and drank all afternoon," Belisle said.

Organizations throughout campus use sporting events as an excuse to get together and have a good time.

Calvin Waida, a senior agricultural business major, said he and other members of Alpha Gamma Rho, and agricultural fraternity, throw a tailgate party before every home football game.

"We get together and throw some meat on the grill at 7 in the morning," Waida said. "It's a good time to get together and play 42 and kick back before the game."

Waida said tailgating before home games is a time-honored part of being a sports fan.

"Being all together at the same time and place, talking and just being an Aggie is the best," he said. "When old Ags come down and hang out with us, it's really fun. [It's] like we are all the same, except they are rich."

Some use tailgates as an instrument to bring families together. Daniels said tailgating allows his friends at school to mingle with his family and make connections with an older generation of Aggies.

"My parents come down for every football game to tailgate with us," Daniels said. "They really enjoy meeting my friends. My parents see their friends here all the time — people who they haven't seen in years."

"My dad's 25th anniversary was a few years ago, and they all got together with their friends and got crazy. Now they have a group that comes up from Houston for every game."

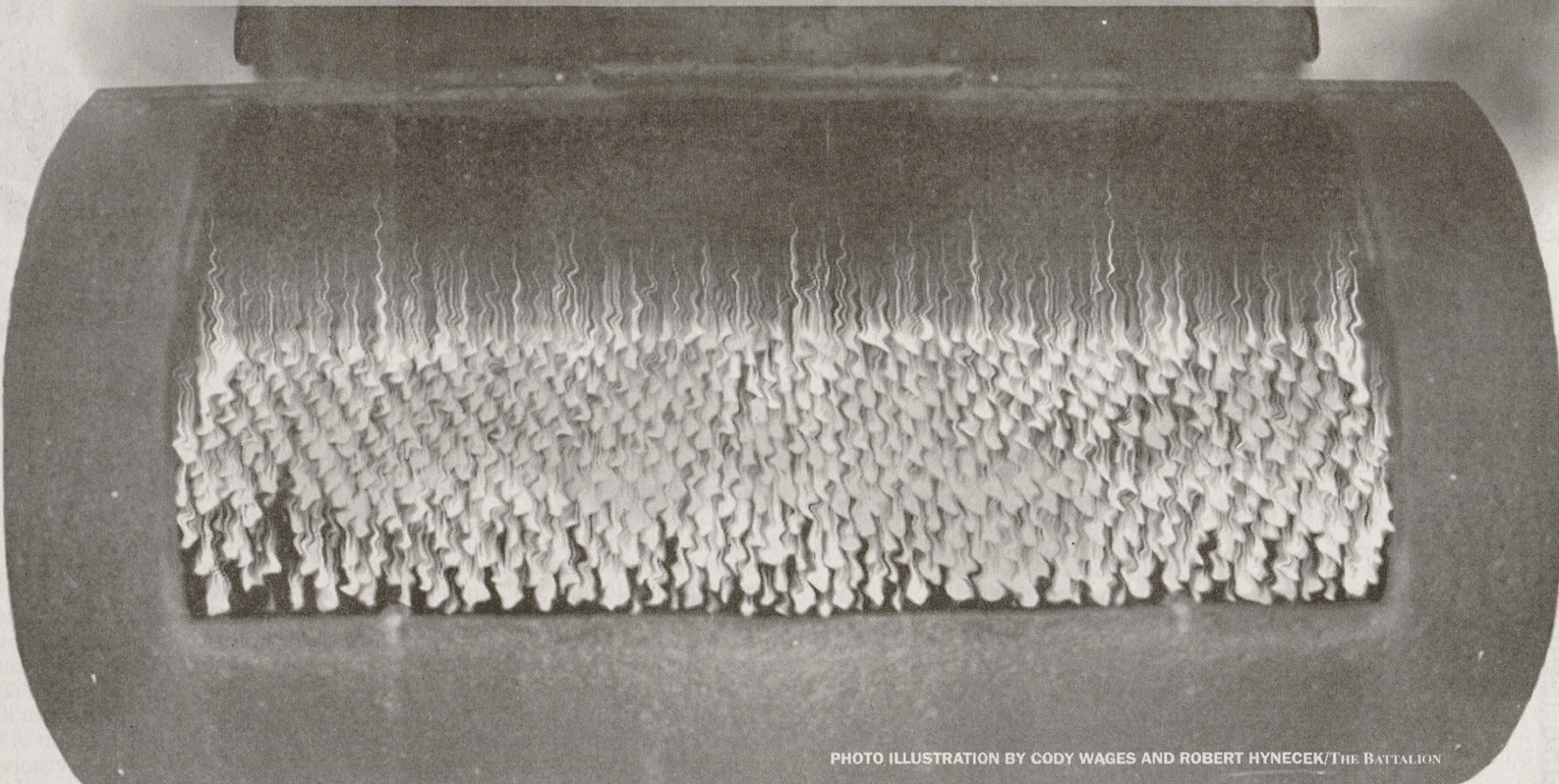


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