

A&M men head to NCAAs

BY MATT LAGESSE
The Battalion

Less than four months ago, swimmer Alfred Mansour was not sure he would ever swim competitively again.

Today he is in Minneapolis with eight of his teammates preparing to compete in the NCAA Men's Swimming and Diving Championships.

With the aid of modern medicine and a supportive cast of doctors, parents and teammates, Mansour overcame the effects of a fractured wrist which left him sidelined for a substantial part of the season.

Mansour sustained the injury after landing awkwardly on his left wrist in a Frisbee game during winter break in Florida.

Upon learning the extent of the damage to his wrist, Mansour said that he wasn't sure how to react to the devastating news.

"When I was in the orthopedics office, and he came in with the final X-ray and told me the bone was cracked, I wanted to break down," Mansour said. "It was a very down time for me."

Mansour said the initial prognosis indicated that he would be sidelined for 12 weeks, leaving little hope for a full recovery before the end of the season.

However, with a strong work ethic and the support of his parents and trainers, Mansour found himself back in the water just five weeks later.

Texas A&M men's swimming head coach Mel Nash said that the outpouring of support and Mansour's desire to return were the key ingredients for a quick recovery.

"It was a full family effort," said Nash. "It was an incredible combination of positive thinking, commitment, focus and fate that allowed him to get back to where he was."

Although he had to make several refinements to his technique, Mansour said that the changes in his swimming led to positive results.

"It gets better and better every day," said Mansour. "I really worked hard to keep my triceps in shape, and I have been getting a little faster every day."

Mansour's plane ticket to Minneapolis was secured at the Phillips 66/Big 12 Swimming and Diving Championships on March 4

when he, in his first meet since the injury, anchored the 200-yard relay team that finished second place with a NCAA qualifying time of 1:27.19.

Nash also said that Mansour's phenomenal performance during the meet was a tribute to all of the adversity and physical battles the junior had to face.

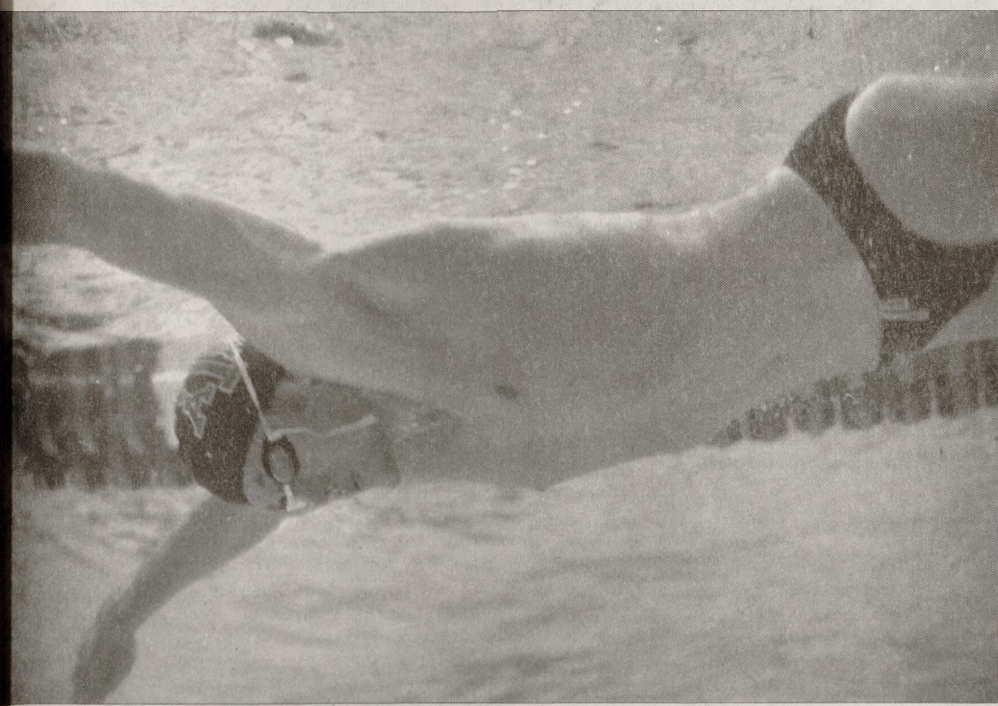
"It was a tremendous performance," Nash said. "He didn't start that well because it was the first time he had been in a meet in the last six weeks, but he hopped up angry in the last relay and almost pulled off the upset."

Joining Mansour in Minneapolis will be 200-yard medley relay teammates Riley James, Nik Tate and David Morrow.

Also on the Aggie roster are divers Jesse Even and Adam Morgan, who qualified for the meet at the Zone D Diving Championships March 10-11 at the Rec Center Natatorium.

A&M will also send three first-time NCAA participants—Patrick Kennedy, Scott Taylor and Erik Toth.

The three-day event is being held at the University of Minnesota starting today.



BRIAN SMITH/THE BATTALION

freshman **Brent Ruoff** swims in the 200-yard breaststroke at the 2000 Phillips 66/Big 12 Championships on March 4 at the Student Rec Center Natatorium.

Track and field heads to LSU

BY JASON LINCOLN
The Battalion

The Texas A&M track and field team is starting the 2000 outdoor season with highlight performances. After sweeping the team titles at the College Station Relays last week, the Aggie men and women will travel to the Louisiana State Quadrangular Saturday in Baton Rouge, La. for its second week of outdoor competition.

The meet will feature four teams—Louisiana State University, Texas Christian University and Oklahoma University, in addition to the A&M squad—but promises to give the Aggies a chance to build into the season.

With only three days of competition behind them, the team has posted five NCAA provisional qualifying marks.

The men's team owns three of those marks. Sophomore Bashir Ramzy posted a 51-8 1/2 provisional mark in the triple jump, continuing his success from A&M's indoor season. The 1,600 relay team of Ramzy, senior Johan Lannefors, sophomore Brandon Eyans and senior Travis

McAshan ran a qualifying time of 3:07 flat. Both Ramzy and the relay team competed in the NCAA Indoor Championships earlier this month.

Junior Tolga Kosoglu rounded out the men's early season highlights with a distance of 196-9 in the discus. That mark, his season debut, was just one inch shy of the NCAA automatic qualifying mark with two months of competition still remaining.

Sophomores Robyn Burkhardt and Katy Doyle turned out a pair of consideration times for the women's team. Burkhardt cleared 5-11 1/4 in the high jump while Doyle hurled the javelin 163-0.

A&M has also fared well against Big 12 competition. In their debut meet, the A&M men outperformed Texas Tech University and the University of Nebraska. The women added a win over Oklahoma State University in addition to victories over the Red Raiders and Cornhuskers.

With two weeks remaining before their first big competition at the University of Texas host meet, the Texas Relays, A&M is looking for early motivators for what promises to be a grueling track and field season.

No. 13 Aggies host Oklahoma, ACU

BY AL LAZARUS
The Battalion

In a one-week span beginning Saturday, the 13th-ranked Texas A&M men's tennis team will take on No. 8 Baylor University and No. 4 Pepperdine University.

So who are the Aggies most concerned about right now?

How about No. 47 University of Oklahoma.

A&M (5-4) will battle the resurgent Sooners (10-5) at 2 p.m. at the Varsity Tennis Center in the first match of a doubleheader. The Aggies will face Abilene Christian University in the nightcap at 6 p.m.

"The Baylor match is not even an issue right now," A&M men's tennis coach Tim Cass said. "We think very highly of Oklahoma and are not looking past them."

The Sooners are a team on the move after a recent defeat of No. 17 University of Minnesota. The victory jumped OU seven spots from its previous ranking of No. 54.

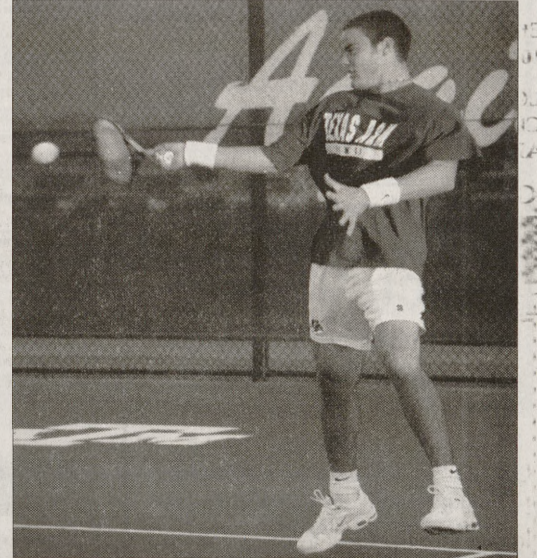
"We know Oklahoma has a great tennis tradition," Cass said. "That was an impressive win over Minnesota."

Cass said the Aggies' match against ACU in the second half of the doubleheader should allow them to reach deeper than usual into their talented roster.

In the latest individual rankings, A&M junior Shuon Madden jumped five spots to No. 3 in the nation. The ranking is the highest-ever singles ranking held by an A&M player, but Cass said he does not expect it to be a distraction to Madden, who last Thursday was named Big 12 Player of the Week for the fifth time in his career.

"Shuon's been through that his whole life, so I don't think it's very different for him," he said. "And his concern at this point of the season is on the team, not on individual rankings."

Junior Cody Hubbell joins Madden in the national top 100 for the second time this season at No. 90. In doubles, Madden and junior Dumitru Caradima are ranked No. 15.



SUSAN REDDING/THE BATTALION

A&M junior **Shuon Madden** hits a forehand against the University of Miami.

FANS of the Rec Center

Vote Yes!

on the Rec Sports Fee Referendum

How Does a \$7 fee increase benefit TAMU students?

Students will be voting Mar. 29 & 30 on whether to increase the Recreational Sports Fee. The Department of Recreational Sports and Student Government leaders have recommended a net \$7 increase. The increase will preserve what Aggies have now. Specifically, the Rec Center and Department of Recreational Sports programs will be maintained and operated in the same high quality and accessible manner that they are today. The Department will be able to replace old equipment and keep it in good working order. The Rec Center will continue to be open from early morning to late evening, and will be able to continue to offer the programs and services students have come to expect and enjoy. A vote of "yes" will ensure that future Aggies have the same opportunity to recreate, socialize and be exposed to a healthy lifestyle in well-maintained and beautiful surroundings.

Polling Sites: 9 a.m.–5 p.m. March 29 & 30

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Referendum information available at
recsports.tamu.edu



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