

CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP) — The shuttle Atlantis' is closed the doors to national space station only after accomplishing chores and more. Planned to pull away Atlantis late Sunday.

did a fantastic job," Mission Control, "and the Expedition One crew really appreciate all you put in getting home set up."

tion One — the first space station crew scheduled to blast off Oct. 28 on a Russian rocket — is at the complex two weeks for a four-month stay. Their five days inside the station with more than 100 pounds of food, soap, toothbrushes, pens, notebooks, radios, vacuum power converters and ir.

men installed the oxygen generator and in the new Russian quarters and, during mission outside last week, hooked up power and batteries. They also plugged in into a 240-mile-high orbit 14 miles higher.

WINNING

Continued from Page 1A

ld for a series of jumps, the five victims will be canopies of jumpers and George.

For this year's Games, the Sydney Olympic Games Organizing Committee (SOGOC) will receive \$627 million from 96 sponsors and suppliers.

Surprisingly enough, this large sum is less than the amount the Atlanta Games accumulated in four years. In 1996, 102 companies paid \$826 million to be part of the Olympic Games.

Considering that these figures do not include the economic boom created for Olympic cities by increased tourism, it is no wonder that Houston and Dallas are trying to lure the Olympics their way in 2012.

The International Olympic Committee (IOC), the administering body of the Games, also get its fair share of sponsorship revenues.

Eleven major sponsors, including Coca-Cola, Visa and IBM, have paid a combined

air friendship.

year, Class of '99 was Cessna 182 and a fellow

n Warden, Class of '99 celebrated his one-year anniversary with his wife, JoLynn.

oodings, Class of '94, ader, is described by H as an individual who brought an incredible amount of fluency to the team. He was a manager and was an avid supporter of Aggie sports.

the Sky Diving Club was Lynn's house to remember.

was two weeks before divers knew what the Get back in the air. How time it would be without land with an even bigger

s nothing that makes life and beauty more of the world, not to mention the bus, from 13,000 feet in.

members began the recovery, grief continued. Students were killed by the following month after the plane crash fire collapsed, killing 12.

gies would not return until Memorial Day or a boogie, an event where divers together for an end of jumps and fellowship that the crash took out made it even harder," said sky diving adviser Jan.

"We were no longer able to place we felt most comfortable. That first there was a statement that

turn will take place first fly over at 7 p.m. and end as the club hosts a crash site in memory Miller, Puryear, Warden.

ings. int to make sure canopies fly over Coulter Field. said. "It's what they would

OPINION

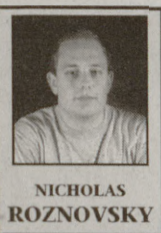
THE BATTALION

Page 5B

Show me the money

Message of Olympic Games lost in financial gain and personal greed

While organizing the first modern Olympic Games in 1896, founder Pierre de Coubertin hoped to establish "a four-yearly festival of the springtime of mankind."



NICHOLAS ROZNOVSKY

For more than 100 years, the Olympic Games have united athletes from around the globe to compete in a variety of athletic events and foster peace among the nations of the world.

Now that the 2000 Summer Olympic Games are underway in Australia with more than 10,000 athletes competing in more than 300 events, it would seem that Coubertin's dream has been realized.

Along the way, however, other dreams have been realized, too. For many of the cities and companies involved, the Olympics are the ultimate celebration of revenue and profit.

Over the past 104 years, the Olympics have grown from a simple athletic festival into a multibillion dollar industry, and businesses all over the world are trying to get a piece of the Olympic gold for themselves.

The true motivation behind the modern Games is becoming all too apparent — financial gain.

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Eleven major sponsors, including Coca-Cola, Visa and IBM, have paid a combined

\$605 million to be recognized as "Olympic Partners."

Although such sponsorship provides companies with incredible marketing exposure, IBM has decided that the price is becoming too high and will end its partnership with the IOC after the 2000 Games.

The company in the United States most visibly making money off of the Games is General Electric Co., the parent company of television network NBC. The network has exclusive Olympic broadcast rights in the United States through the 2008 Games.

For this year's Olympics alone, NBC paid \$705 million dollars for broadcast rights. Despite the large cost, NBC announced one week before the opening ceremony in Australia that it had turned a profit by selling a record \$900 million in advertising for the Games.

The Olympics are certainly bigger and more profitable than ever, but are they better?

In its quest to expand the Games and maximize the revenue, the IOC has ignored Pierre de Coubertin's vision of the Games as a showcase of amateur athletics.

Professional athletes now make up the majority of Olympic basketball and soccer teams and a sizable percentage of tennis competitors. One cannot watch 15 minutes of Olympic coverage on NBC without seeing at least one ad featuring world-class sprinter Michael Johnson.

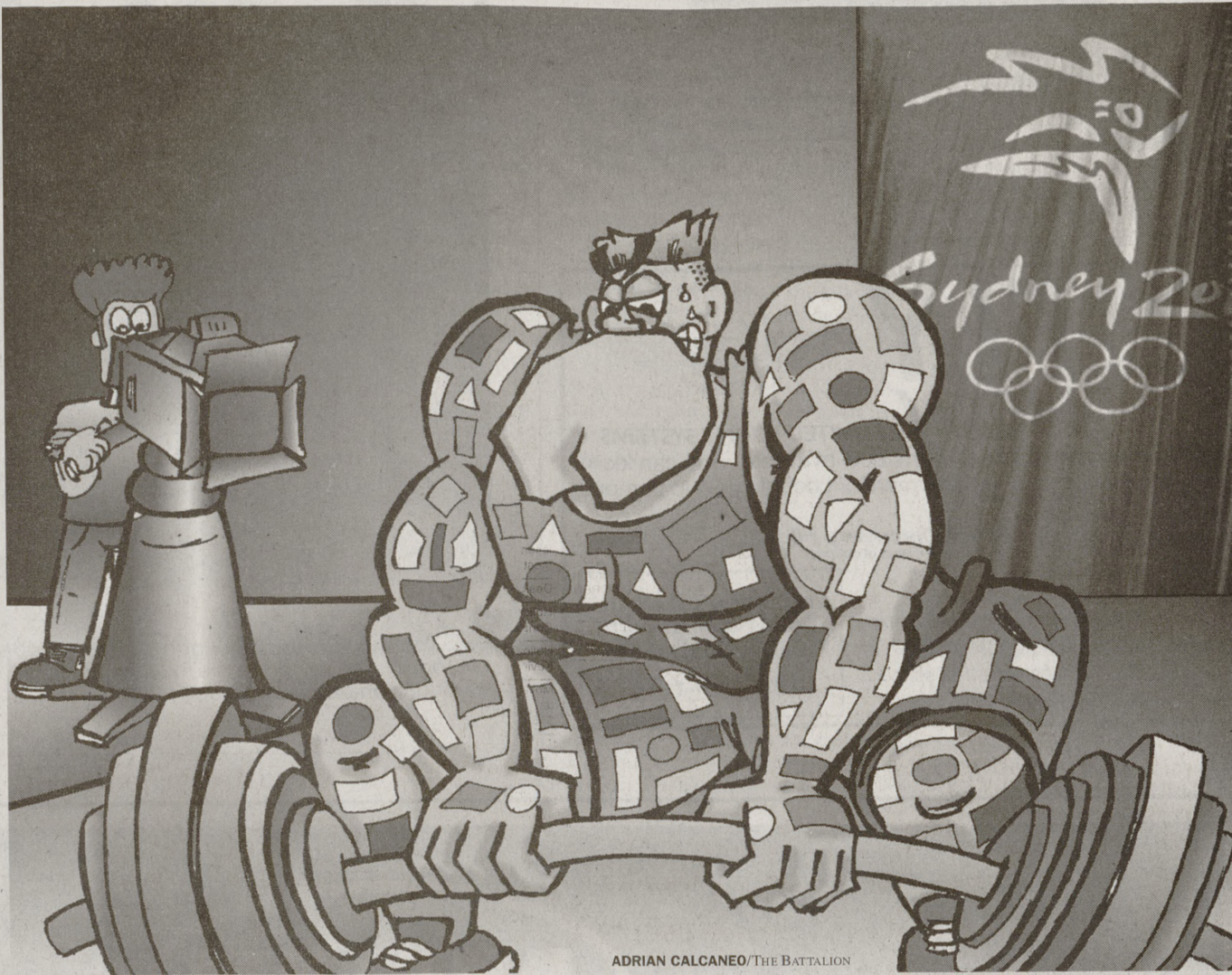
In addition, it seems that the average Olympic athlete today is far less an amateur than his predecessors.

While the Olympic Games purport to spread athletics and friendly competition around the world, the IOC has been extremely vigilant in cracking down on Internet broadcasts of the Games.

Web broadcasts of the Games have been effectively banned because Olympic broadcasting contracts prevent companies from sending video or audio signals outside their own national or regional territories.

Instead of embracing the new medium as a way of increasing viewership of the Games, the IOC is buckling under the pressure from its broadcast licensees (like NBC) to protect its investments.

"If someone has the capacity for major distribution, it's a copyright violation and



ADRIAN CALCANEO/THE BATTALION

we will find some way to close it down," said IOC vice president Richard Pound.

The IOC has apparently chosen lucrative television contracts over unprecedented coverage. So much for spreading good will and sports.

The upcoming 2002 Salt Lake City Winter Olympics created a crisis within the IOC when it was revealed that committee members received over \$1 million in gifts from the Salt Lake City organizers.

The incident prompted a congressional investigation and resulted in the resignation of key Salt Lake City Organizing Committee officials.

Although the IOC has revised its selection process and prohibited its members from visiting potential host cities, the IOC has a long way to go before greed is purged from its ranks.

For the athletes who have spent years training and preparing for the Sydney

Olympic Games, the next two weeks still represent a chance to prove themselves as world-class athletes. To Americans watching at home, however, the Games are just a two-week festival of capitalism.

It does not matter who wins the gold, silver, or bronze — the corporate world already has captured the green.

Nicholas Roznovsky is a senior political science major.

Mail Call

Vatican message misconstrued

In response to Mark Passwaters' Sept. 14 column.

Passwaters seems to have missed the intentions of the Vatican. The Catholic Church has been teaching the notion of no salvation outside the Church for almost 2,000 years.

Yet, when it tries to lead the effort to bring peace among different religions of the world, many people view this as the Church accepting salvation by any religion.

Just because you do not agree with someone's beliefs, it does not mean you hate them. We are to love all people, whether we agree with their beliefs or not.

The Church is not trying to reconcile doctrines of different religions, but people's attitudes toward each other.

The fact that people now see the Church contradicting itself shows that they have completely missed the pope's attempt to bring religious tolerance to the world.

The pope is trying to stop death and persecution because of religion, not create a new view of salvation by any religion.

Besides — if people do not believe the Catholic Church to be correct, then why does one statement affect so many non-believers?

Louis Mandanici
 Class of '02

The Battalion encourages letters to the editor. Letters must be 300 words or less and include the author's name, class and phone number.

The opinion editor reserves the right to edit letters for length, style, and accuracy. Letters may be submitted in person at 014 Reed McDonald with a valid student ID. Letters may also be mailed to:

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SHARE OF THE BLAME

Engineering board not free from fault in Bonfire collapse, hypocritically blaming others

One of the most remarkable things about the Bonfire tragedy is so few people have been looking for someone to blame.



MARK PASSWATERS

Unfortunately, that situation has changed in the past few weeks.

"You tell me who that you have heard say, 'I was at fault,'" said Dr. John Breen, father of collapse victim Christopher Breen.

Nancy Braus, whose son Dominic was injured in the collapse, was quoted by The Dallas Morning News as saying, "There has to be somebody responsible for letting it happen. It wasn't a freak accident."

People looking to point fingers for the cause of the collapse got their wish. On Sept. 8, the Texas Board of Professional Engineers released its findings on the collapse and included harsh words for the students who worked on the project and the Texas A&M administration.

What it failed to do, however, was recognize its own culpability in the tragedy due to its unwillingness to take action.

Engineers are supposed to be proactive, not reactive. If an engineer recognizes a problem, he or she is supposed to take action to rectify the situation before the public is harmed.

Otherwise, he or she will have violated his or her social contract with the public.

The board stood by and did nothing for decades while Aggies continued to build a structure that it knew violated engineering guidelines.

For the highest review board in the engineering profession to be forced into action by a tragedy is deplorable, as is the board's general attitude regarding the entire situation.

In its findings, the board noted that the students building Bonfire were in violation of the 1937 Texas Engineering Practice Act, which prevents anyone from practicing engineering without a license.

Victoria Hsu, the executive director of the board, said that the assumption was made that such a violation existed in previous Bonfires.

"It's possible, because it was a similarly complex structure in past years," Hsu said.

If this is indeed the case, such a finding is more damning to the administration and to the board itself than it is to the students.

The "wedding-cake" design had been in use for more than four decades, yet no questions were asked concerning its safety.

Any violation of engineering canons should be considered a serious matter.

When the violation takes place in the creation of a totally unique structure, it should send up warning signals.

The board also criticized the University administration. While it is still uncertain whether the Uni-

versity technically broke the law. The board criticized the University for not paying closer attention to the project.

If A&M spent more than \$8,000 on Bonfire, it violated a clause in the Engineering Practice Act that states that any public work costing more than \$8,000 must be designed and supervised by a professional engineer.

The board has the ability to formally reprimand the school and the students, as well as impose a fine, but declined to do so at the Sept. 8 meeting.

Instead, it appeared content to exert its power over the University and others.

"Our objective is to send a clear message to the rest of the state that we will not tolerate this," said Kathleen Walker, Chairwoman of the enforcement committee.

Its primary target would appear to be Keep the Fire Burning (KTFB). Members of the board said they would request a cease and desist order against KTFB.

If the board had acted this way several years ago, it is highly likely that last year's collapse would not have happened.

Instead, the board had to be roused from its slumber by an event that could have been prevented.

The board has considered sanctioning members of A&M's Col-

lege of Engineering for not previously voicing their concerns about Bonfire.

This accusation is not true; several members of the University's faculty did voice their concerns in previous years, and they were ignored by all — including the Texas Board of Professional Engineers.

Among those who voiced their concerns were Larry Grosse, former head of the Department of Construction Science and faculty adviser for Bonfire until 1994.

Grosse, along with civil engineering professor emeritus Louis J. Thompson, repeatedly mentioned possible problems, which fell on deaf ears.

It seems odd that such a well-researched report would make such an incorrect assumption, unless the board is embarrassed about ignoring criticisms about Bonfire's design from engineering professionals.

The Texas Board of Professional Engineers is perfectly within its bounds to pass judgment on the student body and A&M's administration for their mistakes leading up to the Bonfire collapse.

However, it should be remembered that the most powerful engineering review board in Texas was either unwilling or unable to take a stand against a situation that was in plain violation of engineering laws.

Its silence allowed young men and women to put their lives at risk building a structure they believed was safe.

Now that those victims are gone, the board has found its voice and is capable of pointing fingers.

In this case, it should keep one finger pointed squarely at itself.

Mark Passwaters is a senior electrical engineering major.

