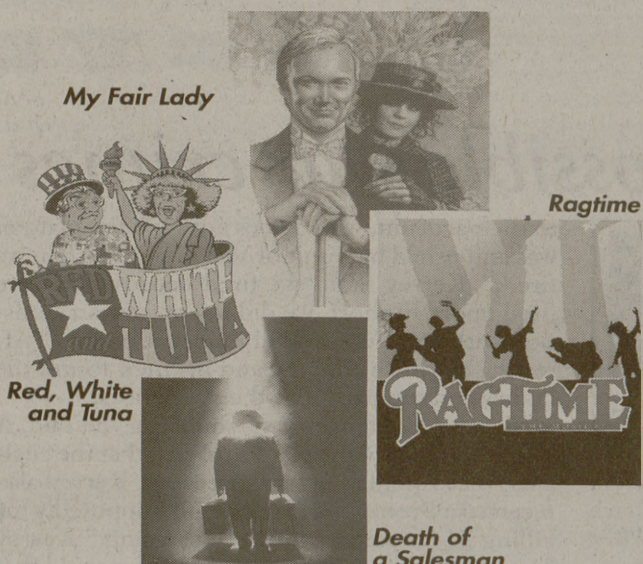


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Baseball's future bright

Pitching depth, newfound maturity promises victories



MARK PASSWATERS

After two years of not reaching the NCAA tournament, critics of Texas A&M baseball coach Mark Johnson have taken to the airwaves and the Internet calling for his firing. Since every year does not end in Omaha, these critics reason, Johnson must be at fault. Johnson, like all good coaches, is a teacher, but there is one thing that cannot be taught: maturity. The Aggie baseball team came of age during the Big 12 baseball tournament, and odds are that the critics will largely be silent next season.

One look at this baseball team's depth chart shows that it is very young and inexperienced. Through most of the season, this lack of experience cost them games in the form of mistakes veteran teams do not make. The

Aggies did not make these mistakes in the tournament and they were the better of Texas, Texas Tech and Oklahoma. If such growth continues, the Aggies will be tough customers in the 2002 season.

The pitching staff alone should be enough to have Texas A&M fans excited about next season. With the return of injured ace Khalid Ballouli, Johnson will have assembled a formidable — and still very young — staff. Ballouli and Todd Deiningner will be juniors; tournament starters Justin Moore, Kyle Parcus, and Chris French will be sophomores, as will Matt Farnum, perhaps the team's most consistent starter. With the addition of Steven Ponder and Chris Finch, Johnson has depth that would be envied by almost any coach in the conference.

If the pitching staff continues to improve on the promise it showed late in the season and in the tournament, the pressure

will then move to the hitters. Hitting in clutch situations, the ultimate sign of maturity, must continue. Players like Wong, David Evans, Ben Himes and Neal Stephenson must hit consistently for average and some power as well.

The only glaring hole the Aggies have is at third base. Greg Porter and Tim Petru have yet to fulfill their potential, and freshman Matt Alexander must move ahead of both of them in the depth chart by next spring.

Come next year, fans that usually go to Olsen Field will likely recognize the players, not their level of play. The (or two) of gaining experience will have past, and the future will be now. If the team continues to grow as did from the start of the season to the end of the Big 12 Tournament, the future will be very bright.

Mark Passwaters is an electrical engineering major.

TOURNAMENT

Continued from Page 3

home runs, Nebraska became the first team to win the Big 12 regular season and tournament titles in the same season.

An RBI single by Stephenson drove home Evans and gave Parcus a 1-0 lead when he went to the mound in the bottom of the first. Nebraska responded with a run of their own with Jeff Blevins' two-out RBI double. The inning was able to stay alive for Nebraska when Himes slipped and had designated hitter Matt Hopper's fly ball deflect off his glove, letting Stern go to third.

The Aggies regained the lead in the third when Freeman doubled off the right-center field wall with two outs, scoring Schindewolf.

That lead vanished in the bottom half of the inning when Hopper singled to right field, with Himes having the ball bounce out of his glove after a diving effort. Johnson followed with his first homer, a mammoth shot which cleared the right field bullpen.

The Aggies scored again in the fifth on a Freeman RBI single and Evans' third tournament homer, but it would not be enough as Johnson would crush any Aggie hopes at completing a miracle run with another two-run shot in the fifth.

The Huskers would tack on two more runs in the bottom of the seventh, leaving the Aggies to ponder what might have been.

"We didn't give them the game, they won the game," Garner said. "We had our hearts in the game,

BIG 12 CONFERENCE	
2001 Phillips 66 Big 12 Conference Baseball All-Tournament Team	
C:	Kelly Shoppach, Baylor
1B:	Dan Johnson, Nebraska
2B:	Nebassett Brown, Oklahoma State
3B:	Jason Bartlett, Oklahoma State
SS:	Jake Brown, Iowa State
OF:	Jake Bollig, Jimbo McElhenny, Oklahoma State
OF:	John Cole, Nebraska
DH:	(co) Ben Himes, Texas A&M; Matt Hopper, Nebraska
SP:	Shane Komine, Nebraska
RP:	Chris French, Texas A&M
UT:	Greg Dobbs, Oklahoma State

RUBEN DELUNA/The Battalion

and sometimes your heart is broken."

aquatics fitness & classes intramurals
sport clubs golf course outdoor

work and play everyday

SUMMER 2001

GO OUTDOORS

Let TAMU Outdoors be your source for unique summer adventures. Our affordable programs are geared towards all ability levels. We invite you to visit our facility, located behind the Rec Center, across from Olsen Field.

Event	Date	Registration
Intro to Rock Climbing Clinic	June 10	May 28-June 7
Fly Fishing by Canoe	June 16	May 28-June 12
Canoe Day Trip	June 23	May 28-June 19
Lead Climbing Clinic	July 10	May 28-July 9
Horseback/Hiking Day Trip	July 14	May 28-July 10
Intro to Rock Climbing Clinic	July 15	May 28-July 12
Rock Climbing Day Trip	July 21	May 28-July 17
Bat Watching Canoe Trip	July 27	May 28-July 24
Wilderness First Aid Course	Sept. 1-2	May 28-TBA

GET A SUMMER JOB WITH REC SPORTS

- Hiring Lifeguards**—Screening will be held May 31st at 6pm in the Rec Center Natatorium. Proof of certifications required at screening. Please do not hesitate to e-mail Kmay@rec.tamu.edu for more information.
- Personal Trainers Needed**—Applications are available in Room 202 and current Personal Trainer/CPR Certification is required.
- Special Event Crew Needed**—Variable hours needed for afternoons, nights and weekends. Contact Paula Opal at 845-3076 or e-mail at popal@rec.tamu.edu. Applications available in Room 202 Rec. There will be informational meetings on Thursday, May 31st at 4pm in room 256 Rec and on Friday, June 1st at 10am in room 227 Rec.

GET GREEN WITH GOLF

- Get Golf Lessons!**—Single and group lessons available for beginners to those looking to improve skills. Rates are a competitive \$30.00 per individual lesson or \$50.00 per group lesson. Discounts are available for 3 lessons or more. Contact Rick Kahlich at 845-1723 for more information.
 - Junior Golf Clinic**—July 23-July 27, ages 8-12 8:00 a.m.-10:00 a.m. and ages 13-17 10:00 a.m.-Noon. \$75.00 per camper. Clinic will cover all aspects of the golf game.
- Open to the public! We are located on the southside of the A&M campus. Call the Pro Shop at 845-1723 & visit us online.

GET WET WITH AQUATICS

- SCUBA Class Offering**—Learn a new skill this summer! Successful completion of this course will allow you to SCUBA dive anywhere. Register now through June 3rd for this class beginning June 4th. Cost starts at \$225 depending on Rec Membership status.
- Water Aerobics**—Join us from noon to 1:00 pm everyday this summer for this refreshing workout in the outdoor workout pool.
- Have you been to The Backyard?**—Cool off in our backyard pool facilities! Sit back and catch a tan in between classes, relax in our casual play pool or improve your skills in our lap pool. Coin operated lockers are available for 25 cents (and you get the quarter back!) inside our outdoor locker rooms. Do not forget to visit our world class facilities in the Natatorium.

<http://recsports.tamu.edu>

GET INVOLVED WITH INTRAMURALS

Event	Registration Period
3-on-3 Basketball	May 28-June 7
Slow-Pitch Softball	May 28-June 7
Sand Volleyball	May 28-June 7
Half Court Indoor Soccer	May 28-June 7
Water Basketball	May 28-June 7
Racquetball*	May 28-June 7
Golf	May 28-June 7
Tennis*	May 28-June 7

* Indicates a FREE event, others involve a minimal cost. Intramural registration closes at 6:00pm on the date of closing.

GET HEALTHY WITH FITNESS & CLASSES

- FREE TRIAL of Summer Rec Aerobics!**—Kick off the summer with our FREE week of Aerobics, May 28th through June 2nd.
- Unlimited Aerobics Pass**—On sale for \$40 and good for entire summer. Visit Member Services for your pass.
- Yoga Sessions**—Register now through 5pm Friday, June 1st. Classes will be held June 4-August 1. Cost is \$45.
- Pilates Class**—Register now through 5pm, Friday, June 1st up for one of two sessions, June 4-August 1 or June 5-August 2nd. Cost is \$45.
- Jump Start!**—Let the Rec Sports personal trainers give you a platform that will begin your healthy lifestyle with: 1 personal training session, complete fitness profile, nutrition consultation with the "food processor" and more for only \$30!