

Equestrian team heads to Stillwater

By Marcus White
THE BATTALION

The 2002 Intercollegiate Horse Show Association (IHSA) National Champion Texas A&M Equestrian team will head to Stillwater, Okla. this weekend to take on region rival Oklahoma State in two English riding competitions. The Aggies aim to pull even with the Cowgirls, who took first place in the California Classic and lead the yearly points race by two points. In mid-January's California Classic held at Fresno State University, the Aggies finished second behind OSU in the western team competition. During the English competition, A&M finished sixth among competing teams. Junior Meredith Houx is just one of many great Aggie

English riders looking to make an impact in the points race this weekend. Houx contributed 76 points last season alone, and has amassed more than 150 points in her short career. "Meredith goes into the arena with confidence," A&M Assistant Coach Pam Bruemmer said. "She really believes in her riding, and that confidence effects the performance of the team as a whole." Houx represented the Aggies last year at the USA Equestrian/Cacchione Cup competition at Nationals and posted a seventh place showing that would prove to be A&M's highest ever. Also representing the Aggies in Stillwater this weekend is English Co-captain junior Beth Von Brecht. Von Brecht was Zone Champion during the 2001-02 season and finished fifth at Nationals over fences.

The OSU Cowgirls will depend on another strong performance from junior Lindsay Parker, who placed first in her division Equitation Over Fences at the California Classic and helped propel the Cowgirls to a second place finish. "This is a good way to start the semester," OSU Head Coach Larry Sanchez said of the second place finish. "Both disciplines rode well. Both have things they need to work on but I am happy with the outcome." Oklahoma State has recently provided the Aggies a formidable rival, finishing one point behind the Aggie western team in the Zone Seven Championships and just two points behind A&M in last year's IHSA National Championships. The Aggies also edged out OSU in the 2002 Tournament of Champions III English dis-

cipline competition. OSU English riding coach Suzanne Flaig said the sport is fortunate to have a close rivalry within the region. "We have a lot of respect for (the A&M Equestrian team)," Flaig said. "We have to remind our girls that even if it looks like we'll come out on top, it can always flip flop. It's always a very close competition." Currently A&M trails the OSU Cowgirls by two points, and with only four competitions left in the season, Bruemmer knows that season is still up for grabs. "Two points is the difference between first and second place in an individual event," Bruemmer said. "With four matches left, two points means nothing." A&M and OSU square off for two days of competition beginning Saturday.

Knight

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take," Watkins said following the game. "Maybe a leprechaun knocked it out. Do you have leprechauns around here?" A&M senior guard Bernard King set his own record in the 75-68 loss to the Sooners. King's 21-point performance carried him to the top of A&M's all-time scoring list, leaving him only 41 points shy of the Big 12 Conference scoring record. A&M's 68-point performance tied the season high for an Oklahoma opponent set earlier in the season in Alabama's victory over the Sooners. The Aggies will need another solid performance and, while Watkins' focus is likely aimed at postponing Knight's party for at least another game, the other coaches in the Big 12 are speaking out about Knight's accomplishments. "He's one of our great leaders in America," Baylor Head Coach and former Knight assistant Dave Bliss told the AP. "He just happens to be a good basketball coach. His ability to lead people into battle is tremendous. "He can really assess talent. He can be a very stern taskmaster in demanding potential be reached, make a team be very cohesive, is good at assessing strength and weaknesses, and very good at preparing the strategy." Knight's quest for win No. 800 will begin with a 5:30 p.m. tip-off and the game will be shown statewide as part of the Lone Star Series.

2003 COLLEGE BASEBALL PREVIEW

Longhorns are primed for a big encore

Texas will attempt to become just the fifth team to repeat as College World Series champs, joining the Longhorns of Texas (1949-50), Southern California (1970-74), Stanford (1987-88) and Louisiana State (1996-97). With a Division I-record 285 schools fielding baseball teams this season, here are the top ones to watch.

Team	Coach	Record	Notes
Arizona State	Coach: Pat Murphy	(306-161-1, ninth season)	Sun Devils should score in bunches—a staple of Murphy's squads, which have led nation in runs scores in two of last four seasons; RHP Ben Thummond is a transfer who was 22-9 in three seasons at Winthrop, and pitched for Team USA in 2001.
Cal State Fullerton	Coach: George Horton	(259-116-1, seventh season)	The Titans have made the NCAA tournament in each of Horton's first six seasons; team has won or shared the Big West title four of the past five years; Chad Cordero's 26 saves are most among active college pitchers.
Florida State	Coach: Mike Martin	(1,239-416-3, 24th season)	The Seminoles have appeared in the NCAA tournament 25 consecutive years, second to Miami's active record of 30; Team has made 11 trips to Omaha in last 16 seasons; Matt Lynch and Marc LaMacchia form one of the country's top pitching duos.
Georgia Tech	Coach: Danny Hall	(396-172, 10th season)	Hall has led the Yellow Jackets to the NCAA tournament in eight of nine years, coming off a school-record 52-win season in which team went to Omaha for first time since 1994; landed the top recruiting class in nation, as rated by Collegiate Baseball.
Louisiana State	Coach: Smoke Laval	(44-22, second season)	The Tigers have reached super regionals in each of the last four seasons, but missed trip to Omaha for second straight year—first time that's happened since 1996; LHP Lane Merritt (11-5, 2.59) had shoulder surgery in June and could miss season.
Rice	Coach: Wayne Graham	(478-212, 12th season)	Seven pitchers return from a staff that led the nation with 2.79 ERA; Vincent Sines, 1B, was Western Athletic Conference player of year; Owls have won seven WAC titles in 10 years, and have made the NCAA tournament in each of the last eight seasons.
Southern California	Coach: Mike Gillespie	(645-356-2, 17th season)	The Trojans have won five Pac-10 titles under Gillespie, including the last two; the school has won the most CWS titles (12), last one in 1998; freshman C Jeff Clement set the national high school record with 75 career homers.
Stanford	Coach: Mark Marquess	(1,093-533-5, 27th season)	The Cardinal are coming off a school-record fourth straight CWS trip; they have won 40 or more games in eight straight seasons; OF Sam Fuld enters the season as the Cardinal's career leader with .367 batting average.
Texas	Coach: Augie Garrido	(227-142-1, seventh season)	The defending College World Series champs return with six starting position players and eight pitchers; second in the nation with a 2.83 ERA; program has the most CWS appearances (29); Garrido is 4th wins shy of becoming Division I career leader.
Wake Forest	Coach: George Greer	(562-325-4, 16th season)	The Demon Deacons have won the ACC title in three of the past five years, and have made five consecutive trips to the NCAA tournament; all nine position starters and 11 pitchers return from team that went 47-13-1.

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