

THE BATTALION

Volume 109 • Issue 132 • 12 pages

Texas A&M University

www.thebatt.com

Monday, April 14, 2003

Top 10 percent plan under fire

By Janet McLaren
THE BATTALION

If the U.S. Supreme Court rules racial preferences in university admissions unconstitutional, the top 10 percent plan in Texas could become a blueprint for states trying to ensure racially diverse college enrollments. But the policy has come under fire from those who say it is a poor substitute for affirmative action and those who say it amounts to backdoor preferences and lowers the quality of the student body.

Since 1996, when the U.S. 5th Circuit Court of Appeals banned Texas public univer-

sities' use of race in admissions and financial aid with its Hopwood ruling, Texas has used a plan that guarantees students who graduate in the top 10 percent of their high school class automatic admission to public universities.

Texas A&M Director of Admissions Dr. Frank Ashley said the top 10 plan cannot be effective in attracting more minorities to the University unless it is combined with racial preferences in financial aid.

"Hopwood's greatest effect was not allowing financial aid to be given based on race," Ashley said. "If you can't target minority students for financial aid, then you're not using the (top 10 percent) tool very effectively."

Minority enrollment at A&M remains slightly below its pre-Hopwood numbers. In the fall of 1996, 80 percent of A&M's freshmen were white, 11.2 percent Hispanic, 3.6 percent black and 2.8 percent Asian-American. In the fall of 2002, 82 percent were white, 9.6 percent Hispanic, 3.4 percent Asian-American and 2.6 percent black.

While the percentage plan has helped increase diversity at A&M, Ashley said it is not the long-term solution needed to remedy the problem of minority underrepresentation.

See **Plan** on page 6

Freshmen SAT scores less than 1000 points

	1996	2001
Blacks	32%	43%
Hispanics	23%	23%
Asians	11%	13%
Whites	7%	9%

TRAVIS SWENSON • THE BATTALION
SOURCE: TEXAS A&M MEASUREMENT AND RESEARCH SERVICES

Just relax



JP BEATO III • THE BATTALION

Texas Gov. Rick Perry gets a massage by Tamara Crabb of Caring Hartz Alternative Health Spa, after completing a 10K run in a time of 46:10, a personal best. The "Run Through the Vines" at Messina Hof Winery

and Resort was put on by the Texas A&M University Roadrunners Group. More than 500 runners competed in the 20th Anniversary of the festival held in Bryan Saturday morning.

Marines take Tikrit after being met by resistance

By Calvin Woodward
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

U.S. forces met sporadic resistance Sunday in their move on Tikrit, birthplace of Saddam Hussein, after spiriting to safety seven missing American soldiers unexpectedly released by a leaderless band of Iraqi troops.

Marines assembled on Tikrit's outskirts and sent units in and out of the city, drawing occasional small-arms fire and rocket-propelled grenades, not the intense battle that once seemed likely there. Even so, U.S. forces did not try to occupy Tikrit right away, Pentagon officials said.

The city is the last center of Saddam loyalists known to the allies, who are already turning their attention to the task of scouring towns they skipped in the race to Baghdad.

"We have simply bypassed villages and towns and so forth," said Gen. Tommy Franks, the war commander. "And now we will go to each and every one of them, and be sure that we don't have some last, small stronghold in that country."

Three weeks after Iraqis seized them and put them on TV, the seven ex-POWs were escorted to a Marine unit on the road to Tikrit by a group of Iraqi soldiers who had given up the fight and been abandoned by their leaders.

See **War** on page 2

A&M study abroad students witness Europe's largest protest

By Sarah Szuminski
THE BATTALION

CASTIGLIONE FIORENTINO, ITALY — Whitney Morriss and Ross Ormond, studying in Italy through Texas A&M's study abroad program, were traveling in Munich, Germany during their spring break when the United States began its first air strikes that began the war with Iraq. "We came up from the subway and were right in the middle of a huge anti-war protest," said Morriss, a junior journalism major.



COURTESY OF: KEN JOHNSON

Protesters make their way through the streets of Rome carrying banners and rainbow-colored peace flags during a million-people anti-war protest.

ment leaders turning a deaf ear to public opinion.

Opposition to the war has been peaceful in Italy, with many citizens hanging rainbow-colored peace flags from windows and balconies throughout the country in a continuous silent protest. Marches, demonstrations and rallies of varying magnitudes are a regular occurrence as citizens attempt to make their voices heard.

Although Italy is a member of the coalition that supports the United States and Britain, a majority of the public opposes the war, leaning on Italy's constitution for their justification. Article 11 of the constitution gives the country's position on war, stating, "Italy shall repudi-

ate war as an instrument of offense against the liberty of other peoples and as a means for settling international disputes."

This is where Italians butt heads with Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi, local professor Monica Capacci said.

"He says being anti-war means being pro-Saddam, which isn't the case," she said.

Because Berlusconi privately owns three of the six major television networks and oversees the remaining three public networks as prime minister, the public questions the credibility of the information it receives through the news.

See **Protest** on page 2

American POWs return

By Patrick McDowell
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

KUWAIT CITY — Iraqi troops south of Tikrit handed U.S. Marines a stunning surprise Sunday: seven American POWs released in relatively good condition after three weeks of captivity. They said they were treated roughly when captured, but given medical care, and some believed they were doomed.

"I thought they were going to kill me," Pfc. Patrick Miller, 23, of Park City, Kan., told two reporters who interviewed the POWs on a transport plane. "That was the first thing I asked when they captured me: 'Are you going to kill me?' They said no. ... I still didn't believe them."

Freedom brought hugs, applause and slaps on the back from smiling Marines before the seven were flown to Kuwait for a medical checkup and debriefing. Back home, their families and friends burst out in jubilation.

Five of those returned Sunday were members of the 507th Ordnance Maintenance Company that made a wrong turn near the southern Iraqi city Nasiriyah and was ambushed March 23 — the same incident in which rescued POW Pfc. Jessica Lynch was captured.

The other released prisoners were crewmen of an Apache helicopter downed the next day.

"It's just a good way to start off the morning, to have been notified that seven of our fellow Americans are going to be home here pretty soon in the arms of their loved ones," President Bush said in Washington.

Among the former POWs was Shoshana Johnson, 30, of Fort Bliss, Texas, a single mother of a 2-year-old. Johnson, the only woman among them, had been shot in the ankle, and Spc. Edgar Hernandez, 21, of Mission, Texas, had been shot in the elbow, according to

See **POW** on page 6

Wounded, but in good condition, POWs released by Iraqis

Iraqi troops released seven U.S. soldiers on Sunday. Five were from the 507th Ordnance Maintenance Company that was ambushed near

Nasiriyah on March 23. Two were pilots of an Apache helicopter that was grounded on the same day near Karbala.



	Spc. Edgar Hernandez	Spc. Joseph Hudson	Spc. Shoshana Johnson	Pfc. Patrick Miller	Sgt. James Riley	Chief Warrant Officer David S. Williams	Chief Warrant Officer Ronald D. Young Jr.
AGE	21	23	30	23	31	30	26
HOMETOWN	Mission, Texas	Alamogordo, N.M.	Fort Bliss, Texas	Park City, Kan.	Pennsauken, N.J.	Orlando, Fla.	Lithia, Ga.

SOURCE: Associated Press

AP