

SPORTS IN BRIEF

Gulli leads Aggies at Big 12 Indoor Championships

Texas A&M senior Melissa Gulli brought two gold medals back to College Station from the Big 12 Indoor Track and Field Championships in Lincoln, Neb., last weekend.

Gulli, a five-time All-American, won the 3,000- and 5,000-meter events to earn her first two Big 12 championships on a rather long resume.

"Melissa just dominated the women's field, and this is a good field in the women's distance races," said A&M head coach Ted Nelson. "She just went out and dominated both the 5,000 and the 3,000. It was a great performance for her."

Despite Gulli's performance, A&M finished ninth on the women's side.

The Aggie men finished seventh overall on the strength of three second-place finishes.

A&M senior shot putter Ronnie Jimenez led the men by posting an NCAA automatic qualifying throw of 64-2.25 in finishing second in the shot put.

Senior Andrew Cook also won a silver medal for the men in the 5,000-meter event.

The A&M distance medley team of freshman Brian Duplechain, sophomore Bryan Kelley, and seniors Juan Cardenas and Tommy Bonn also earned silver at the meet.

Senior Ellison Collins won bronze in the triple jump.

Nebraska claimed both the men's and women's team championships.

In the first ever head-to-head

BCS plans to incorporate fifth BCS bowl

By Mark Long
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MIAMI BEACH, Fla. — TCU and LSU in the Sugar Bowl? Boise State and Texas in the Fiesta Bowl? Marshall and Miami in the Orange Bowl?

As strange as they may seem, those matchups are now more likely to happen.

The Bowl Championship Series agreed to add a fifth game Sunday, increasing access for schools not part of college football's most lucrative postseason system.

"It's our hope that the interest in the series will be heightened by the availability of one more game."

— Dave Frohnmayer
University of Oregon President and
BCS Presidential Oversight
Committee member

It means a better chance at big bucks for teams in the Mid-American Conference, the Mountain West Conference, the Western Athletic Conference and Conference USA. But the changes do not guarantee that a team outside the six BCS conferences — the Big East, ACC, SEC, Big 12, Big Ten and Pac-10 — will play in one of the elite bowls.

"This is still a merit-based system," said Oregon president Dave Frohnmayer, a member of the BCS Presidential Oversight Committee. "We have done our level best not to dilute the quality of play in BCS games."

The fifth bowl is subject to final approval based on market viability, but all indications point to it being in place when the new BCS

contract takes effect before the 2006 season. "This agreement is a significant victory for college sports and higher education," NCAA president Myles Brand said.

Smaller schools have long complained that the current BCS system makes it impossible for them to win the national championship and puts them at a financial and recruiting disadvantage.

The BCS Presidential Oversight Committee and the Coalition for Athletics Reform agreed to tweak the system after a six-hour meeting Sunday that capped nine months of discussions and may have ended threats of congressional intervention.

"It's a significant improvement from where we are right now," said Tulane president Scott Cowen, the leader of the Coalition for Athletics Reform that fought to change the current system.

The champions of the six BCS conferences will maintain automatic berths in one of the five games. The remaining four spots will be at-large berths to be decided by a complex formula based largely on national rankings.

Frohnmayer said the Big East will retain its spot in the BCS despite losing football powerhouse Miami as well as Virginia Tech and Boston College.

The committee and the BCS agreed on access rules for non-BCS schools, but refused to give details until after the changes are presented to the conferences.

Cowen said that using the new system, a non-BCS school would have played in a BCS bowl in four of the last six seasons. He declined to say which teams or which seasons.

The current BCS bowls are the Rose, Sugar, Fiesta and Orange. One of those

bowls pits the top two teams in the BCS standings in a championship game, which will be the Orange Bowl next season. The Rose, Fiesta and Sugar host the other games.

Frohnmayer said the fifth bowl would join in the title game rotation. He also said the Rose Bowl would retain its long-standing ties to the Big Ten and Pac-10 champions during years in which it does not host the title game. The other bowls also would have the chance to protect conference ties.

Frohnmayer said existing bowls probably will get the first shot at becoming the fifth BCS bowl. Cities expected to show immediate interest include Atlanta, Dallas, Houston, Jacksonville, Orlando and San Diego.

"We are envisioning a bowl of equal stature in terms of its command of television audiences and its desirability from a standpoint of teams," Frohnmayer said.

"Whether that would come from the volunteering of an existing bowl system and its own structure or the creation of a new bowl, that's something we simply can't determine at this point."

The BCS bowls generate more than \$110 million a year for the big conferences. The BCS gives about \$6 million a year to smaller conferences. Frohnmayer said those figures should increase under the new format.

Since ABC owns the current television rights to BCS games, Frohnmayer said the network would get a chance to negotiate a new contract under the five-bowl format.

"It's our hope that the interest in the series will be heightened by the availability of one more game," he said. "It's our hope that this whole new system will generate more revenue."



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A&M equestrian wins first-ever head-to-head show

show in Texas A&M equestrian history, the Aggies defeated Auburn University 1,102-1,042 at N.W. "Dick" Freeman Arena on Friday.

A&M won every section on its way to victory. The Aggie western squad defeated Auburn 305-199 in the horsemanship section and 271-241 in the reining section.

The A&M English team beat Auburn 261-245 in equitation over fences and 265-257 in equitation on the flat.

A&M junior western rider Katie Forest led the Aggies with three wins on the day. Forest won in both the horsemanship and reining competition, and she also won in the exhibition trail class.

A&M's western team will compete in three shows at the N.W. "Dick" Freeman Arena Saturday to finish out its regional season.

Henson works out for Cowboys at Valley Ranch

IRVING, Texas (AP) — The Dallas Cowboys got another up-close look at Drew Henson during a private workout Monday at team headquarters.

It showed renewed interest by the team in Henson, who is giving up baseball to return to football.

His rights are held by the Houston Texans, who already have a young quarterback in David Carr. The Texans drafted Henson in the sixth round last year hoping to trade him if he did decide to play football.

Henson, who played at Michigan, is hoping to arrange a trade to the team of his choice. If no deal is done by the draft on April 24, he could be selected by any team.

The Texans held an open workout in Houston on Feb. 12, and Dallas was among 20 teams that was represented.

Henson is expected to hold similar private sessions for more teams.

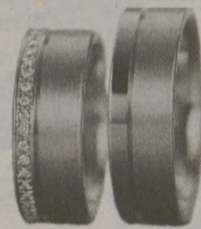
Buffalo Bills president Tom Donahoe said Monday he's suspended plans to invite Henson for a private workout, a sign the team is cooling on the quarterback.

The Texans are believed to be asking for an early round draft pick for Henson. Whoever trades for him also would have to sign him.

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