

## Athletes in the off season

*Just because summer is here doesn't mean student athletes take a break*

By Jimmy Hissong  
THE BATTALION

For the majority of students, summertime means flip-flops and suntan lotion. Daily routines and schedules enter a realm of distant memories, while poolside relaxation becomes a priority. Aside from where and when classes start and stop, the only other piece of information that holds any relevancy is how long someone can lie on his stomach before the skin on his back starts to sizzle.

Janet DeGroat, a junior marketing major and member of the A&M women's golf team, has replaced her flip-flops and suntan lotion with golf spikes and a nine iron.

In addition to a full-time summer course load, she must allocate time to keep her golf game up to par. DeGroat and other student athletes view the months from June to August as extra time to train to reach a desired level of competition for the fall season.

Committed student athletes begin and end their days with the sport to which they are devoted. Erin Briskie, a junior agricultural life sciences major and member of the A&M women's swim team, describes her day as starting and stopping with swimming.

Like a few other student athletes, Briskie has managed to turn her talent into financial benefit. She tries to mix her daily routine up a bit by saving some time for herself and her friends but, come the month of June, she is busy balancing her own personal training with the time she puts in as a swim camp counselor.

"I made sure to have all of my classes really early," DeGroat said, "that way I can have all of the afternoon to practice."

DeGroat said she tries to make her way over to the gym by lunchtime so there is still plenty of time to squeeze in a round or two after working out.

"The longer summer daylight hours definitely help out," DeGroat said.

DeGroat usually finds enough time during the week to be out on the course at least three times. But when she isn't counting strokes, she is perfecting her swing on the range.

DeGroat will attempt to compete on an individual basis throughout the summer but, during this first summer session, tournament play is simply out of the question. Most tournaments involve three, four or even five days of play with as much as 36 holes each day. In addition to these time constraints, she must also come up with the entrance fees and travel expenses on her own. As a result, DeGroat will likely compete in only four or five individual tournaments this summer. Competition is what helps these student athletes maintain a desired peak of performance.

The typical student athlete must often endure many burdens to find a certain desirable level of competition.

Kati Jo Spisak, a junior agricultural education major and goalkeeper for the A&M women's soccer team, has been city-hopping for weeks and will continue to do so throughout the summer until the A&M team training starts up again in August.

At the end of April, Spisak was in Los Angeles. From there she traveled with the national Women's Under-21 team to Brazil where she competed against the Sao Paulo University team and the Brazilian All-Star team. Spisak is currently in Florida competing along with A&M teammates Amanda Burke, Laura Probst, and Becky Olsen.

"It's not bad here," Spisak said. "We work a lot, but at least we are two minutes away from the beach instead of two minutes away from Lake Bryan."

The women get the chance to compete every weekend, but the weekdays are crammed with practice, running and lifting.

Suzzette Devloo, a sophomore marketing major and member of the A&M women's track team, is certainly no stranger to a rigorous training schedule either. Devloo will spend countless hours in and around the gym training this summer to become a triathlete.

Devloo is training with a few other track team members. Although the three of them stick to a strict schedule, she said there is not as much pressure during the off-season.

"We usually have a little more time to relax during the off-season," Devloo said.

However, Devloo's idea of relaxation and fun is significantly different from that of the average

college student.

"I usually like to relax with a good post-workout swim conditioning," Devloo said.

At the end of July, Devloo plans to participate

in her first triathlon of the summer with teammates Annie Burnett and Phil Stephenson.

For fun, Devloo will complete her third of the short-distance race: a 20-mile bike ride.



RUBEN DELUNA • THE BATTALION

## REEL

"Super Size Me"  
Directed by Morgan Spurlock  
Starring Morgan Spurlock  
Samuel Goldwyn Films

Many people scoffed when two private American citizens made headlines by suing fast food god McDonald's. How could the blame of the fattening of an entire nation be pinned on the golden arches? Besides, there was absolutely no proof that Big Macs even made people fat. Some claimed that they could even be a key part of a balanced diet.

After reading about the case, skeptic Morgan Spurlock took it upon himself to test the theory of fatty fast foods and to film it every step of the way.

Armed with a handful of medical practitioners, a nutritionist, cardiologist, general family doctor and sports trainer, Spurlock sets out to only eat food exclusively from the McDonald's menu for an entire 30 days. There were only three rules:

- 1) No options: Spurlock could only eat what was available over the counter (water included).
- 2) No Super Sizing unless offered.
- 3) No excuses: Spurlock had to eat each item on the menu at least once.

## CRITIQUE

Finding humor in the experiment, most of the doctors hypothesized that nothing significant would change and that the short length of the experiment would invalidate any results found.

Wrong. Halfway through the film, Spurlock's doctors and his vegan girlfriend beg for him to stop, or to at least to take a multivitamin, as the doctors are stunned by the damage that the exclusively "golden" caloric content of his diet does on his insides. One doctor compares what is happening to Spurlock's body as frighteningly similar to the abuse suffered by a binge drinker. Imagine, instead of water, only vodka for an entire month. This film also features facts about the fast food industry and examines many possible causes of our nation's health problems.

Citing obesity as the number two cause of preventable death -- behind smoking -- Spurlock visits grade school to examine what foods kids are being served. One fourth-grade cafeteria diner explains that french fries as vegetables and chocolate milk constitute a hearty meal.

In Texas, Spurlock is asked to Super Size his meal more times than anywhere else in the nation. The film notes that Texas is one of the fattest states in the United States.

"Super Size Me" is a well-made and entertaining film that raises more questions than answers, but points its finger at the growing

problem ingesting our nation and brings awareness in an interesting and comedic way -- a great indie film that is a great relief from the cookie-cutter movies of the summer. This is a very enjoyable movie that may make the viewer think twice before digging into his next double cheeseburger.

-Daniel Chapman

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