

# SPORTS

THE BATTALION

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## Commerical Break

### A look at why giving advertisers the stiff-arm is a right decision for A&M

By Ryan Irby  
THE BATTALION

find loopholes in the rules and sell out rights to advertise.

The necessity of ad revenue is unavoidable, yet many schools have given so much of their persona away to the lure of the American corporation that it becomes a nauseating experience to watch a football game away from Aggieland. Traveling around the Big 12 is like watching NASCAR—a most everything you can see or hear has been sold to advertisers.

The University of Texas in Austin has sold the naming rights of individual regular-season games for the right price. According to MackBrown-Texas-Football.com, the UT home opener against the University of North Texas on September 4 is "presented by CarMax."

The ad revenue doesn't stop there. Head north to Lincoln, Neb., and you will find that the official corporate sponsors of the Huskers' football program are Pepsi and Adidas. The University of Oklahoma brings with it the chance

for advertisers to gain prime space: the annual battle with Texas is known as the SBC Red River Shootout, and the Bedlam series with in-state rival

Oklahoma State is sponsored by Ford. Even in cyberspace, much of the Big 12 uses CollegeSports.com to outsource their official athletic sites in exchange for pages riddled with advertisements and pop-ups.

Perhaps the most disheartening of all Big 12 schools is located in Lubbock, where you can watch Texas Tech play in Jones SBC Stadium, the first and only school in the Big 12 to sell the naming rights to its football venue.

The Red Raiders proudly display 74 corporate partners on their official Web site and are one of the few schools in the Big 12 to publish a link on its athletic site to corporate sponsorship opportunities. For the

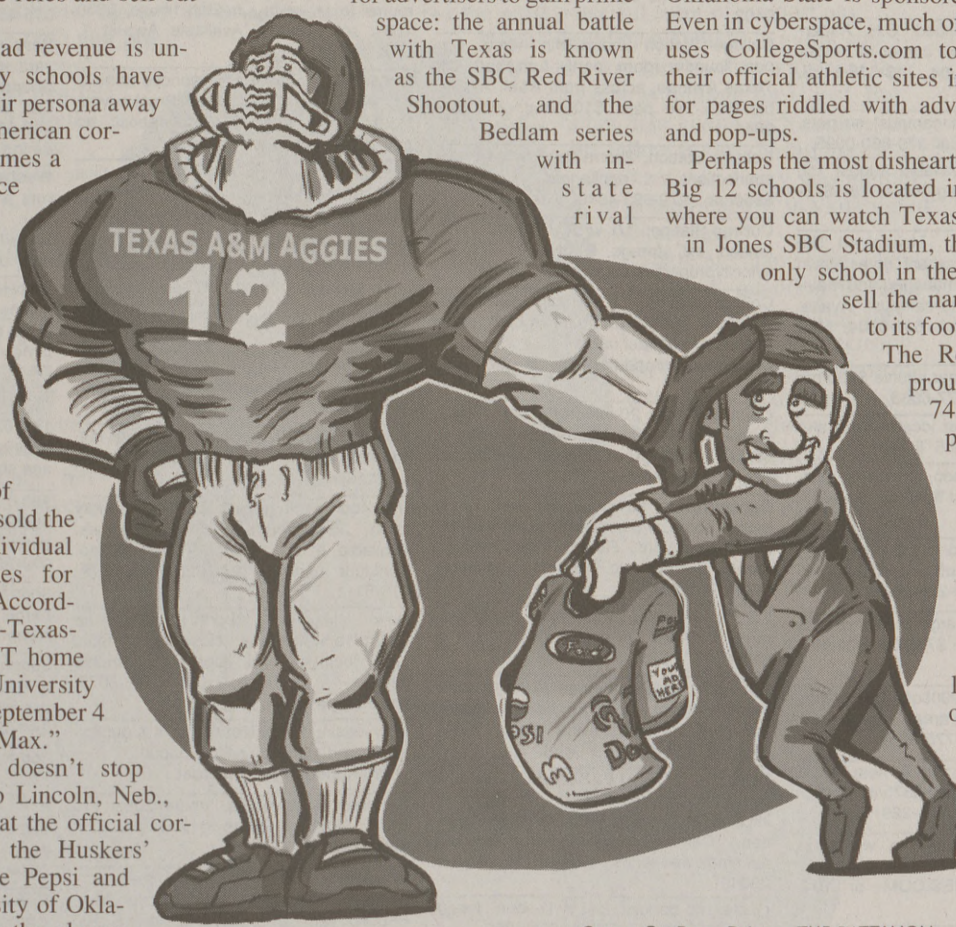
loyal Aggies, the football experience at Kyle Field has not been as heavily diluted by the presence of advertisements placed in trafficked areas. AggieAthletics.com is devoid of any type of advertisement besides the 12th Man Foundation logo. Kyle Field has been home to the Aggies since 1927, never having its name changed and remaining the most recognizable structure in College Station.

However, corporate sponsorship is never fully avoidable. The most prominent advertisements are placed on the scoreboards in Kyle, as a GalleryFurniture.com and UPS logo is affixed to the Jumbotron, and Dodge Ram insignias are fashioned on the smaller scoreboards.

As more programs begin to sell out in college football, the differences between the NCAA and the NFL will soon be eliminated. Student athletes play the game for the love of the sport, not the enticement of cold, hard cash.

This fall, win or lose, A&M students should be proud to stand along with the rest of the 12th Man as Coach Franchione hopefully leads the Aggies to victory.

A&M is a place of reverence and respect, and Aggie supporters everywhere should be thankful the administration hasn't yet put a price on a Saturday at Kyle Field.



GRAPHIC BY: RUBEN DELUNA • THE BATTALION

Summer is halfway over, the Class of 2008 is already showing its fresh-faced eagerness in the halls of Harrington and Heldenfels and the majority of the student body in College Station is frothing at the mouth for Saturdays at Kyle Field in the fall.

Walk into any bar at Northgate on a Saturday night and the buzz is about the gridiron: what went wrong, what will go right and where the Ags are headed. There are many names tossed about: Fran, McNeal, Appel, Lewis, Murphy and McGee.

If you don't know these names yet, they will become familiar after hearing some play-by-play on Saturdays this fall. What you won't hear from the belly of Kyle, as you stand sweating with your brethren, are names like SBC, CarMax, PowerBar and Ford. Win or lose, the Texas A&M football program is run with class, virtually free from the selling of advertising space to bolster athletic funding.

Today's trend in sports is to sell anything you can: wall space, naming rights, air-time and even space on jerseys. Professional sports are infected more so than college athletics as the NCAA has regulated sponsorship heavily, yet some programs still

## Rangers win to stay in first

By Jimmy Golen  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The Texas Rangers didn't want to give Boston too much confidence going into the All-Star break. "Now we know we can play with these guys," reliever Francisco Cordero said Sunday after helping the Rangers turn back a Red Sox rally to beat Boston 6-5.

"It's exciting to pitch well in this atmosphere because it shows me I can get the job done in front of this type of crowd."

Cordero could be seeing more crowds like the one that filled Fenway Park hoping to see the streaking Red Sox finish the first half with an undefeated home-stand. Instead, Texas snapped Boston's five-game win streak to enter the All-Star break leading the AL West for the first time since 1999.

The Rangers have a two-game lead over the Oakland Athletics in the division. Boston leads the A's by one game in the AL wild-card race.

Alfonso Soriano homered and had a tie-breaking sacrifice fly off Keith Foulke in the eighth inning after Boston came back from a 5-2 deficit to tie it. Eric Young went 5-for-5, and Kevin Mench and Mark Teixeira also homered for the Rangers.

"It was an outstanding game of two teams saying, 'See you in September.'" Young said. "We should feel good about how we performed in the first half. Now we've got something to build on."

Doug Mirabelli and Johnny Damon hit back-to-back homers off Frank Francisco in the seventh as Boston rallied for three runs to tie it 5-5.

After Mark Bellhorn walked, Brian Shouse came on and David Ortiz worked the count full before lofting a long fly ball into a stiff wind and Laynce Nix caught it for the last out of the inning.

Cordero walked Bill Mueller to lead off the ninth, then got pinch-hitter Manny Ramirez to pop up behind second base, where Soriano made a nice play for the out. Pinch-runner Pokey Reese was picked off first base and Damon reached on third baseman Hank Blalock's error.

Damon stole second and took third when the throw from catcher Danny Ardoin hit him and rolled into the outfield.

Cordero struck Bellhorn out looking on a 3-2 pitch to end the game.

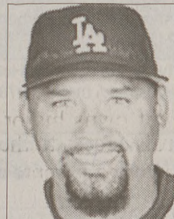
"That was horrendous," Boston manager Terry Francona said. "That doesn't help us now."

Foulke entered a tie game in the eighth and gave up a leadoff single to Rod Barajas followed by a double to Michael Young. Foulke struck out Blalock before Soriano hit a sacrifice fly to left that easily scored the go-ahead run.

**"It was an outstanding game of two teams saying, 'See you in September'."**

— Michael Young  
Texas Rangers Infielder

## Lima, Dodgers silence Astros



LIMA

Los Angeles (AP) - Jose Lima was only kidding earlier this week about letting the family of batterymate Paul Lo Duca use his luxury suite at Houston's Minute Maid Park for the All-Star game.

After Lo Duca's sensational weekend for the Los Angeles Dodgers — including his first career grand slam in Lima's 7-4 victory over the Houston Astros on Sunday — the right-hander might want to rethink his plans.

"I'm not getting that, so anybody who thinks it's for my family is wrong," Lo Duca said with a laugh.

Lima pitched six strong innings and got the win despite giving up a tying two-run homer in the sixth by Carlos Beltran, who was added to the NL All-Star team a few hours earlier as a replacement for the injured Ken Griffey Jr.

Lo Duca, heading to his second straight All-Star game, extended the lead to 7-2 in the eighth. He drove a first-pitch slider to left off David Weathers for his ninth homer of the year, and third in the four-game series — including a three-run shot off Roger Clemens on Saturday.

"It feels great, my first grand slam. I'll remember it," Lo Duca said. "David struck me out last year with the bases loaded when he was with the Mets, but today he threw me a slider and I didn't try to do too much. I hit it good — but in the day-time here, it travels a little bit more. At night, it

probably gets caught. " The Dodgers head into the All-Star break leading the NL West by a half-game over San Francisco after snapping Oswalt's four-game winning streak, and improved to 48-38 with their 11th victory in 14 games.

It's only the second time the Dodgers have been in first place at the break since 1994, when the postseason was canceled because of a players strike.

"It's a good place to be, but we've still got half a season to go," second baseman Alex Cora said. "We were in the same situation two years ago and we lost seven of the first 11 games, so we need to make sure we finish strong. It doesn't matter where you're at in July."

It just might to the Astros, who dropped to 44-44 — the first time they've been at .500 since April 11. The loss assured them of their first double-digit deficit in the standings at the break in 11 seasons.

"Obviously, we thought we'd be playing a lot better at this point than we are right now, but we still believe that we have a good baseball club and can do some great things," first baseman Jeff Bagwell said.

"I know we're kind of getting behind the 8-ball a little bit, but there's still a long way to go. A lot of things can happen in the second half. And with the talent we have in this room, we can make things happen."

Lima allowed two runs on five hits and struck out four to improve to 4-1 in his last six starts — all at Dodger Stadium.

### SPORTS IN BRIEF

#### Sykora named to volleyball team

Former A&M volleyball stand-out Stacy Sykora was named to the U.S. Women's Olympic volleyball team on Wednesday.

It is the second time that Sykora has participated in the summer Olympics, the first coming in the 2000 Sydney games in which Sykora helped lead the team to a fourth-place finish.

The United States is currently

ranked second in volleyball, with China taking the top spot.

Sykora played for A&M from 1995-98 and earned second-team All-American honors in her final two seasons. As a senior, Sykora led the Big 12 in digs per game and set the league record in digs-per-game average. She finished her career ranked second in kills and digs and set many other A&M, Big 12 season and Big 12 career marks.

The U.S. women's volleyball team takes to its first round of action against China on Aug. 14.

#### Rose swims way into Olympics

Recent Texas A&M graduate Matt Rose qualified for the Canadian Olympic swim team on Thursday.

Rose earned his spot at the Olympics in the 100-meter backstroke with a time of 55.32 seconds. Rose was the Big 12 100-back champion last season.

Rose also broke the Canadian record time, which he already

owned, in the 50-meter freestyle on Saturday with a time of 22.42 seconds in the trials. To make the Olympic team however, Rose will have to shave .01 seconds off his time to meet the qualifying standard of 22.41.

Another former Aggie swimmer, Riley Janes, will be accompanying Rose to the Olympics. Janes also qualified for the Canadian team in the 100-meter backstroke.

It will be the first time for both former Aggies to compete in the Olympics.

#### Beltran named to All-Star team

HOUSTON (AP)—Carlos Beltran switched All-Star teams Sunday.

Voted to the AL squad by fellow players before being traded from Kansas City to Houston, the center fielder was picked for the NL roster to fill the opening created when Ken Griffey Jr. was hurt Saturday night.

Beltran became the first player to be chosen for one All-Star team

and wind up on the other side, the commissioner's office said.

It will be a neat homecoming, of sorts, for Beltran in his first All-Star game. The game will be played at Minute Maid Park in Houston on Tuesday night.

Beltran was chosen by AL players, managers and coaches in voting released July 4.

After the deal, Major League Baseball said Beltran was considered an All-Star and could participate in the festivities, but could not be put on the NL team.

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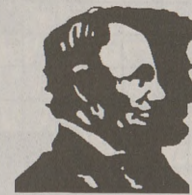
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