SPORTS The Battalion I 1.29.15

EQUESTRIAN

A&M preps for pair of weekend opponents

Team returns to action after more-than-two-month hiatus

By Kevin Roark

No. 8 Texas A&M will host No. D 10 New Mexico State and unranked Delaware State in this weekend's double-header competition at the Hildebrand Equine Complex.

The Aggies (3-3, 1-3 SEC) kick off the weekend against Delaware State before serving as a neutral-site host for a competition between the two visiting squads. Saturday morning, A&M will be back in the saddle to ride against New Mexico State in a clash of the Aggies.

"We've actually never done it," said head coach Tana McKay. "It's going to be tough having two competitions back-to-back. It's tough having to remember all the different patterns we'll use for both days, and just a longer weekend for the girls and horses.

A pair of riders brought honors to the team preceding the start of the semester. Junior Logan Pluhar was named the Horsemanship Co-Rider of the Month after a successful November. Pluhar was invited to compete in the AQHA Collegiate Horsemanship Challenge where she won second place. "Logan's 4-1," McKay said. "She

had a really good November. She's [one of] our mentally strongest riders. She's a very tough competitor and she does both events which makes it a lot more difficult."

Junior Kaci Fisher will participate in the 2015 Sun Circuit Horsemanship Invitation. Just one of eight collegiate riders invited to the competition, Fisher has claimed two MVP awards during

CAREER FAIR

CONTINUED

"Unprepared

out for

wrong reasons and will

immediately be taken out

stand



Equestrian will match up with New Mexico State and Delaware State this weekend.

her undefeated 2014-2015 season.

"[Fisher] has made leaps and bounds, and has become just a fierce competitor," McKay said. "This sport is very much mental and they kind of have to get their feet wet and see how they handle the mental part of the game. That's actually been one of her strengths, being very mentally tough. She's got the best record out of the horsemanship. This is the second year they've actually done the invitational so it's a little bit new. The schools get invited and we get to pick what rider gets to go.'

This weekend will be the team's first competition in more than two months.

Post-career fair After the career fair, the

interactions are not over. Stober suggests sending

thank-you emails over handwritten letters, because interactions during career fairs are typically short and companies are likely to be traveling extensively as they search for new recruits.

"Unless you make it to on-site interviewing do you have to prepare a handwritten Stober said. "This letter,"

is when recruiters are flying you out to their company for an interview and taking you out to dinner. Your thankyou letter is dependent on the level of interaction.'

When it comes to actually applying for the job, Stober said it is important to be persistent, but not annoving.

"A lot of students send the first email and then let the ball drop," Stober said. "If you apply online; 2-3 weeks go by and you don't

hear anything, you need to contact them again. This reiterates your interest with recruiters and anyone you met at career fair.'

Sladecek said the number one secret to getting hired is to relax and be yourself.

"I'm a pretty social person, I can pick up on social cues,' Sladecek said. "I just let conversation keep going or stop. I don't try to push it, or keep it artificially afloat."

McKay said the team is looking to shake the rust off before priming for this double-header meet. "The girls had a pretty

good break over the holidays," McKay said. "We've been back in practice now three weeks. I feel like we were on a good note last semester and we picked up pretty much right where we left off.'

The Aggies will travel to Waco next weekend for a battle with undefeated No. 1 Baylor. Pulling off a victory would ensure a significant climb in the rankings before the SEC and National Championships. However, the women are focused on DSU and New Mexico State, taking things one week at a time.

"The thing about our sport is we're not going to change the game plan based on a competing

team," McKay said. "We have a job to take care of and that job stays the same every meet. We just have to ride our horses better than our competitors. Now we do have to start thinking about the horses. We haven't been there in two or three years so I'm sure we're going to see a lot of new horses so that's going to be a big challenge for us. But we'll get time to see the horses warm up and we'll be as prepared as we can.

The Aggies compete at 10 a.m. Friday and Saturday morning.

Above anything else,

Longtime Aggie track coach leaves behind rich legacy

TRACK

Charlie Thomas, who died Monday, served the university for more than 30 years

By Seth Stroupe

Charlie Thomas, Texas A&M's track coach from 1959 to 1990, died Monday in Bryan at the age of 83.

Thomas leaves behind a long legacy at Texas A&M, including 22 NCAA individual champions, 105 All Americans, five Olympic medalists, four top-10 finishes team

Charlie Thomas at the NCAA Championships

and three decades of service to this university and the athletes he mentored.

"He was a very well respected guy," said head track coach Pat Henry. "He was in it a long time. He got old in the sport. All the coaching community is blessed to have men like him around because it puts things in perspective. Athletics is only part of young people's lives. It's not the end and it's not the catch-all."

Thomas did indeed grow old in the sport where he crafted his legacy, making a name for himself as a competitor before he took the reins as a coach. Thomas accumulated five individual state championships in high school before accepting an offer to run track for the University of Texas. He was equally as prolific for the Longhorns, where he excelled in the 220-meter dash and sprint relay. During his time on varsity, Thomasnever lost a 220-meter race

in the state of Texas.

Thomas even tried his hand at representing his nation. He placed fourth at the 1952 U.S. Olympic trials in the 220 meters, one place short of qualifying. In 1954,



amateur status by accepting the head coaching position at East Texas State University -

Olym-

now Texas A&M University-Commerce - in 1956. Three years later, in 1959,

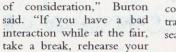
Texas A&M made Thomas its head track coach at the age of 28. He would go on to hold that position for the next 32 years, coaching eight world and American record holders during that time. Thomas was inducted into the A&M Hall of Fame in 1996. Thomas never stopped following the sport he loved and remained close to the program even after his retirement.

"Charlie was a great athlete and coach, but just as important as that he was also a true gentleman and leader within our sport," Henry said. "He was a great Aggie who loved Texas A&M. He will never be forgotten in the track and field world and will live on here at Texas A&M for being the coach and man he was for his athletes and this institution."

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