

A&M grad Ryan Plameer, shown at the Texas Valero Open, finished tied for 33rd in the Master's.

Aggie Ryan Palmer wraps up Masters in 33rd place

By Lawrence Smelers

▷ A&M graduate Ryan Palmer finished his fifth Masters Sunday, posting a score of even for the tournament, putting him in a tie for 33rd.

The Aggie shot 1-under par during Sunday's round. He shot a 37 on the front nine and began making a run on the back nine after making an eagle on the 13th and then back-to-back birdies on 15 and 16. He ended up nullifying the birdies, and his round slowed down as he finished with

two fives on the par-four 17th and 18th holes.

Jordan Spieth kept his foot on the gas and shot 19 under par to win his first major. The 21-year-old from Dallas now shares the Masters record for lowest score with Tiger Woods, and he was also the first person to ever reach 19 under par at the Masters.

Tiger Woods finished tied for 17th, his best finish since 2013. The top five was rounded out by Justin Rose and Phil Mickelson, who tied for second, Rory McIlroy and Hideki Matsuyama.

Taplin nearly edges Olympic champ in 400

By Seth Stroupe

▷ Senior Bralon Taplin posted a collegiate leading time in the open 400 at the Sun Angel Classic in Tempe, Arizona, where he finished second to the defending Olympic champion in the event, Kirani James ahead of the reigning Bowerman trophy winner, his teammate Deon Lendore.

Taplin posted a time of 44.89 in his outdoor 400 debut. Lendore finished third behind James with a time of 45.18. Taplin and Lendore now sit at number three and number five on the current world list.

"I went into the race as an underdog," Taplin said to the media after the race. "The race was billed as Kirani vs. Lendore, so there was no pressure on me. My goal was to win and I thought I had the race at 300m. I

kicked pretty hard, but then Kirani kicked hard to pull away. I wanted to win, and I was going for the win. I'm happy that I ran that fast, I've been waiting to run 44 for a long time, so feels good to finally run it."

On the women's side, the quartet of Jennifer Madu, Ashton Purvis, Kamaria Brown and Aaliyah Brown posted a world-leading time of 43.03 in the 4x100 relay. They usurped the previous mark of 43.13 set by Jamaica's University of Technology in February.

Other results saw Shelbi Vaughn claim her fourth straight victory in the discus with a throw of 192 feet, seven inches. Vaughn finished over seven feet ahead of runner up Siositina Hakeai of New Zealand.

ATHLETICS

SPORTS PASS RENEWAL DEADLINE APPROACHES

Friday marks the last day for students to renew their sports passes for next year. This \$290 12th Man Pass will grant access to any A&M football game at the newly renovated Kyle Field and all other home athletic events.

In addition, two four-game packages are available. The Maroon Pack provides access to home football games against Nevada, Alabama, South

Carolina and Western Carolina. The White Pack provides access to home football games against Ball State, Mississippi State, Auburn and Western Carolina. Each four-game pack costs \$150 and includes access to any non-football home athletic event during the 2015-16 school year.

12th Man Passes will also become available for purchase May 6 and 7 for registered A&M students and May 28 for incoming Fall 2015 students.

A&M Quidditch teams compete in 80-team tournament

By Keely Wirries

▷ Two teams of Aggie Quidditch players trekked to Rock Hill, South Carolina, this weekend for a national championship tournament.

The sport, pulled from the pages of popular fantasy series "Harry Potter," has developed a strong following, as 80 teams turned out for the World Cup Tournament. Both A&M teams, Silver Phoenix and Texas A&M Quidditch, failed to advance to bracket play in World Cup 8. Of the two, Texas A&M Quidditch finished highest, landing in 25th.

The comparatively inexperienced team fought hard and did even better than was expected of it, said Rachel Nicoletti, interdisciplinary studies sophomore and Texas A&M Quidditch member.

"We played our hearts out in every game," Nicoletti said. "Considering we are a brand new team and that half of us had never even heard of Quidditch before the MSC Open House, I think more than anything what we wanted out of this year was to gain experience, which we did. We qualified for World Cup and we got fifth in the Southwest Regional

Tournament when no one was expecting us to do that."

The death of teammate Karen Barnett in March — whose jersey number the team recently retired — pulled the team especially close, Nicoletti said.

"The team is definitely a family," Nicoletti said. "With the passing of a teammate, we play for her and under the circumstances we played alright. But instead of letting that defeat us we pulled through and it was a lot of fun for us. We play to have fun, we play for our teammate Karen Barnett who passed away, and I think that is a lasting memory that I will remember forever."

The team finished with a 12-11 record, along with a winning record at the World Cup, 3-2. Still, despite its effort to be recognized as a club sport, the Quidditch team remains a student organization.

"We applied last year and the year before but were turned down both years," said Brady Thomas, wildlife and fisheries sciences freshman and Texas A&M Quidditch member. "Our hope is that we can become a club sport so that it will be easier for us to have a designated place to practice and host tourna-

33-3: TOP-RANKED AGGIES TAKE ANOTHER SERIES

Takeaways from sports reporter Andre Perrard on the series win over Mississippi State.

1 A&M's bullpen is fantastic

The Aggie bullpen has been put in precarious situations this season, but every time it comes through in a big way. Through the series, the pen two runs on only six total hits. In two of the three games, the relievers pitched scoreless baseball. Ryan Hendrix has been a machine in the relief role. This weekend, Hendrix worked a total of five innings, and in those innings, he pitched scoreless, hitless baseball. He has conceded only one earned run all year, and has five saves to his name. Mark Ecker picked up his sixth save this season on Friday, and even in a tough situation still managed to get the outs he needed to secure the win.

2 Logan Taylor is a name all pitchers need to know

Logan Taylor has been putting on a slugging clinic this season. So far in 2015, Taylor has hit .357 with eight home runs, which leads the team, and 30 RBIs. He hit two huge home runs this weekend for the Aggies, and he hit 5-for-11 (454) with three RBIs in the three-game series. Taylor is a powerful hitter who can make any pitcher nervous when he is at the plate.

3 Grayson Long is A&M's ace on the mound

The Aggie pitching staff has had to deal with some injuries this year. Before the year began, the Aggies lost Tyler Stubblefield to an ACL injury, and in the middle of their undefeated run they lost Friday night starter AJ Minter to Tommy John surgery for the year. Enter Grayson Long, who has been lights out for A&M this year. During his start on Friday night, Long worked seven innings, allowing only one unearned run on three hits with four strikeouts on 116 pitches. Long is 7-0 this year with a 2.12 ERA. Moving forward, Long will continue the role of the Friday night pitcher.

4 Nick Banks is deserving of his All-American status

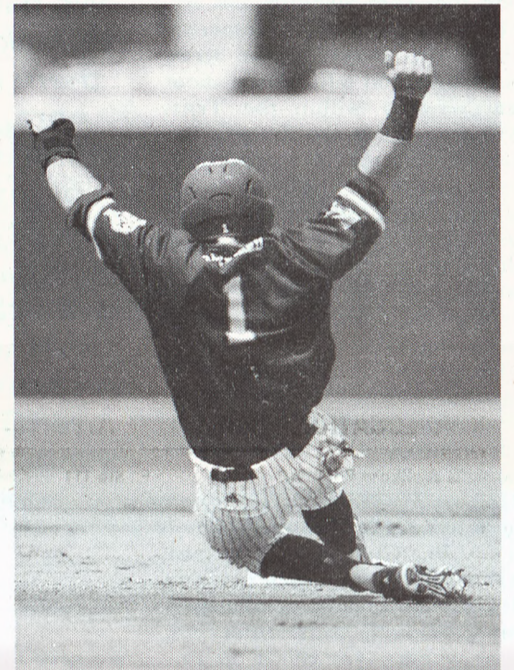
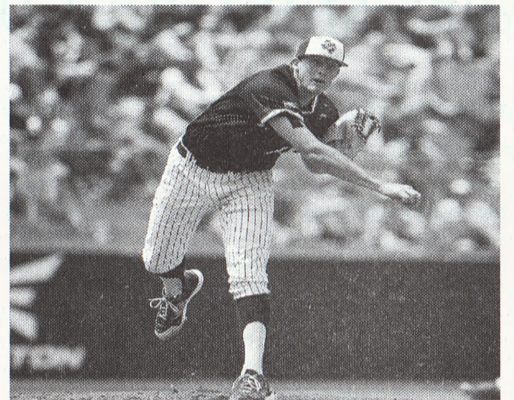
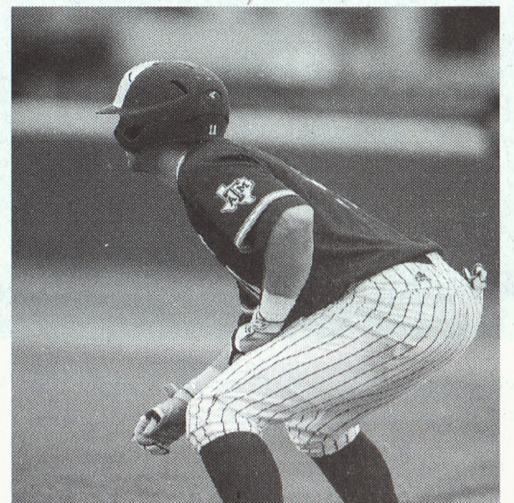
Nick Banks has been tearing up pitchers this season. Banks has a .417 average with 26 RBIs. More impressively, he has reached base safely in all 35 games and is on a 13-game hitting streak. In the series this weekend, Banks hit a grand slam on Sunday, and for the weekend he hit 4-for-12 (.333) with four RBIs. He was named an All-American during the pre-season, and he has proven himself worthy of that title.

5 No matter the score, A&M is never out of the game

All year, A&M has come back from having its back against the wall, but no matter the final outcome, the Aggies always find a way to hang around until the end. Saturday, Mississippi State played its best game of the season, and the Aggies still had an opportunity to win the ballgame in the ninth inning. No matter the matchup, the Aggies will be a tough outing for any team they face for the remainder of the season.

By Andre Perrard

From Top: J.B. Moss, Grayson Long and Blake Allemand



Vanessa Poria — THE BATTALION

BASEBALL CONTINUED

the inning on a passed ball and an RBI from Ronnie Gideon to make it a 2-2 game.

The Bulldogs (22-16, 6-9 SEC) would not go away, capturing an RBI single in the second inning to gain the 3-2 lead. However, A&M earned the lead it would keep in the bottom of the inning. An RBI from Michael Barash tied it, and a sac fly made it 4-3 A&M.

In the fourth inning, the Aggies (33-3, 11-3 SEC) loaded the bases. Nick Banks stepped up and crushed

a pitch over 400 feet for a grand slam, his fourth home run of the season, and the Aggies gained an 8-3 lead after four frames.

"I just got a pitch I could handle and did a little damage to it," said Banks about his grand slam. "Anywhere I hit in the lineup is OK with me as long as we keep getting Ws."

Ronnie Gideon joined in on the home run fun in the eighth inning. After A&M loaded the bases, Gideon smacked a ball over the scoreboard in left to give A&M a 13-5 lead. A&M hit two grand slams on the afternoon.

After getting into a jam in the fifth, Ryan Hendrix came on in relief and

was lights out for the Aggies on the mound. Hendrix pitched 3 1/3 innings of scoreless, hitless baseball to help A&M secure and maintain its lead. Hendrix appeared twice this weekend and did not surrender a hit or run throughout the entire series.

"Give the props to our offense," Hendrix said. "They're the ones who really got me in the game and had me comfortable in the end. So I put it all on them."

The series win improves A&M to 25-2 at home this season. The Aggies will continue their homestand at 6:35 p.m. Wednesday night against Abilene Christian.



Members of the Quidditch team pose for a team photo.

ments because other teams we play already have that and they can do more with their team because of it. I think that it helps our case that even with a team made up almost entirely of freshmen and in a sport that is based on experience, we still did great this season and made it to World Cup."

With only two seniors leaving, the team will almost completely stay intact and the relationships that were built this year will stay strong, said Cody McKenzie, animal science freshman.

"I'm so happy I made the choice to come try out for the team and made the team with all these people

because now my teammates are my best friends," McKenzie said. "We hang out all the time and it builds such chemistry between us on and off the field so we are able to enjoy each other's company wherever ever we go."