



Buckingham Palace announced yesterday the engagement of Prince Andrew, second son of Queen Elizabeth II, to Sarah Ferguson, daughter of Major Ronald Ferguson. The couple, pictured here at Royal Ascot last summer, have been childhood friends since the age of 4 or 5. Story at right.

AP Photo

British playboy prince to marry childhood friend called 'Fergie'

Associated Press

LONDON — The royal family said yesterday that Prince Andrew, whose flings with models and actresses delighted gossip columnists, will marry a childhood friend with red hair and freckles called Fergie.

Buckingham Palace's announcement said Andrew, second son of Queen Elizabeth II and fourth in line to the British throne, is engaged to Sarah Ferguson, daughter of Prince Charles' polo manager, Maj. Ronald Ferguson. Both Andrew and Miss Ferguson are 26.

No date or place was set, but Andrew said he hoped the wedding would be in the summer at Westminster Abbey. His parents were married there in 1947, and it is the site of all coronations since the crown was placed on William the Conqueror's head in 1066.

Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and Archbishop of Canterbury Robert Runcie, spiritual head of the state Church of England, were among the first to offer congratulations.

Prince Charles, the 37-year-old

heir to the throne, whose marriage to Lady Diana Spencer in 1981 was televised around the world, said he "could not be more delighted" by his brother's choice. "I think she is wonderful," he told reporters.

Soon after their engagement was announced, the couple had their first joint interview with British newspaper and television reporters in the prince's study at the Palace.

Andrew and Sarah kissed for the benefit of the cameras, giggled, teased one another and displayed the engagement ring, a large ruby set in a circle of diamonds.

She replied, when asked what they like about one another, "wit, charm . . . looks." He said, "the same, and the red hair."

After marriage, Sarah will be Her Royal Highness, the Princess Andrew. They probably will become Duke and Duchess of York, the dukedom traditionally reserved by tradition for the monarch's second son.

Andrew, a Royal Navy lieutenant and helicopter pilot, saw action in the 1982 Falkland Islands

war with Argentina. Ferguson is a sales executive with a London graphics and printing firm.

Both said they would continue working.

The engagement was announced in a brief statement handed to reporters outside Buckingham Palace.

It said, "It is with greatest pleasure that the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh announce the betrothal of their beloved son, Prince Andrew, to Miss Sarah Ferguson, daughter of Major Ronald Ferguson and Mrs. Hector Barrantes."

The Duke of Edinburgh is Prince Philip, the queen's husband.

Ferguson's parents were divorced 11 years ago, and her mother, Susan, married Hector Barrantes, an Argentine polo player.

His romantic escapades made newspaper headlines for years and earned him the name "Randy Andy" in the gossip columns. The most notable was a long relationship with American actress Kathleen "Koo" Stark, who appeared in soft-porn films during her early career.

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WATCH OUT! THEY'RE HERE MARCH 21!

Holtz's ND debut to be televised as ABC announces TV schedule

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Lou Holtz's first game as coach of the Notre Dame football team will be nationally televised by ABC, the network announced yesterday. The Sept. 13 home game against Michigan will be televised at 3 p.m. EDT (2 p.m. EST).

Defending national champion Oklahoma will open its 1986 season on Sept. 6 against Rose Bowl king UCLA as part of a day-night college football double-header, ABC also announced.

The UCLA-Oklahoma contest in Norman, Okla., originally was scheduled for Sept. 13. Instead, it will be played a week earlier, with ABC-TV's national telecast begin-

ing at 3 p.m. EDT, and the kickoff at 3:30.

Oklahoma, 11-1, captured the 1985 national championship by defeating Penn State 25-10 in the Orange Bowl. UCLA, 9-2-1, finished seventh in the Associated Press rankings following a 45-28 rout of Iowa in the Rose Bowl.

On the night of Sept. 6, ABC will televise Florida State at Nebraska at 8 p.m. EDT. Both teams were 9-3 a year ago, with Florida State finishing 15th after defeating Oklahoma State 34-23 in the Gator Bowl and Nebraska winding up No. 11 after losing to Michigan 27-23 in the Sunbist Fiesta Bowl.

In order to watch the Florida State-Nebraska game from Sept. 13 to Sept. 6, the University of Toledo

agreed to move its game with Florida State from Sept. 6 to Aug. 30.

The Michigan-Notre Dame game on Sept. 13 will air at 3 p.m. EDT, with the kickoff at 3:30. Michigan, 10-1-1, finished second nationally last year. Notre Dame was 5-6 and Coach Gerry Faust's contract was not renewed.

ABC, currently in the second of a two-year contract with the College Football Association, said it will televise a game every Saturday from Sept. 6 through Dec. 6.

Most games will be announced 12 days in advance, although there are a number of exceptions when the network can withhold its announcement until the Sunday or Monday before a game.



AP Photo

Georgia Tech's John Salley tries to get around Villanova's Mark Plansky in a second-round game of the NCAA Tournament. Details of this weekend's regional action appear below.

NCAA sweet 16 to get underway; four from ACC and SEC still alive

Associated Press

ATLANTA - Georgia Tech is the odd team out - but the sixth-ranked Yellow Jackets will feel right at home tonight in the Southeast Regional semifinals of the NCAA basketball championships.

Georgia Tech, 27-6, will play Louisiana State, 24-11, in the second semifinal at the Omni in Atlanta, after third-ranked Kentucky, 31-3, meets Alabama, 24-8.

LSU, Kentucky and Alabama are from the Southeastern Conference. Georgia Tech left the SEC 22 years ago and now belongs to the Atlantic Coast Conference.

Also tonight in the West Regional semis at Houston, Auburn, 21-10 (afourth SEC team), plays Nevada-Las Vegas, 33-4, and North Carolina, 28-5, faces Louisville, 28-7.

Tomorrow night, in the East Regional semifinals at the Meadowlands in East Rutherford, N.J., Cleveland State, 29-3, plays Navy, 29-4, and top-ranked Duke, 34-2, opposed DePaul, 18-12, while in the Midwest Regional semifinals at Kansas City, Mo., North Carolina State, 20-12, plays Iowa State, 22-10, and Kansas, 33-3, plays Michigan State, 23-7. Like Georgia Tech, Duke, North Carolina and North Carolina State are in the ACC.

The Omni isn't Georgia Tech's home court - the Yellow Jackets

normally play on campus at the 8,000-seat Alexander Memorial Coliseum elsewhere in Atlanta - but Coach Bobby Cremins says his team still has the home-court edge.

"We won't have to travel and we

NCAA bracket, page 14

should have good fan support," Cremins said.

Tech has third-team All-American Mark Price - and Cremins no doubt wishes he also had LSU sophomore John Williams. Price leads Tech in scoring with a 17.3 average and Williams is averaging 18.3 points and 8.6 rebounds.

Cremins calls the 6-foot-8, 237-pound Williams "a young Magic Johnson. He is a superstar. He can

do anything - rebound, assist, score. He is truly, truly an incredible basketball player. You're not going to be able to stop him. The only thing you can hope to do is control him."

The Yellow Jackets are big favorites to turn back LSU. Kentucky is only a slim favorite over Alabama, despite the fact the Wildcats have beaten the Crimson Tide three times this season and have won 75 of the 100 games between the two schools.

North Carolina was No. 1 in the nation most of the season, before guard Steve Hale went down with a collapsed lung and took the Tar Heels with him. Now that he's healthy again, so is North Carolina, a slender favorite against Louisville.

The Observer

The independent student newspaper serving Notre Dame and Saint Mary's is accepting applications for the following positions:

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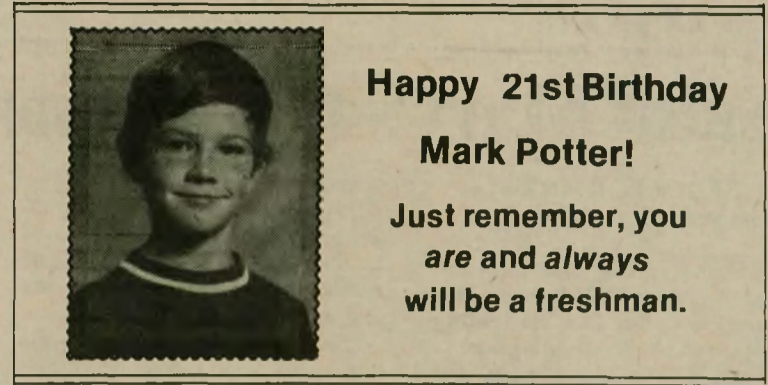
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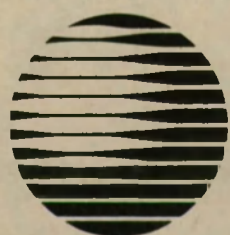
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Saint Mary's softball season starts with trip to Florida

By **KELLY PORTOLESE**
Saint Mary's Sports Editor

When a softball team loses seven starters from a 23-9 team, it's a pretty good bet that the following season will be a rebuilding one.

Not so, for the Florida-bound Saint Mary's softball team. With eight returnees and as many rookies, Head Coach Scott Beisel is looking forward to mixing the old with the new and thinks he will come up with just the right combination for a successful year.

"We're still experimenting," said Beisel. "The team may not realize its potential yet because of all the combinations we've been trying out. If we go with our strongest group right away, we won't know what the others can do."

Beisel, in his seventh season with the Belles, sees many players' ability to adapt to several positions as a definite plus.

"We add strength to our ball club with our versatility," said Beisel. "a lot of people can play at two or three spots. If injuries become a problem we won't be at such a loss."

Assistant coach Sue Becker has also been please with the team's

progress thus far.

"They are very coachable," said Becker. "Even when we've wanted to make the slightest adjustments they've been very cooperative and enthusiastic."

One player who has got a position pretty well locked up is pitching ace Cathy Logsdon. The senior finished last season with a sparkling 17-3 record and credits Beisel with giving the team a positive outlook for the upcoming season.

"Some coaches would have been worried, but he took it as a challenge and saw a lot of potential," said the Sewickley, Pa., native.

Logsdon should have a solid pitching staff to back her up this season, according to Beisel.

"We will be stronger this year than last," predicted Beisel. "We should have more consistency and control."

Katy Boldt, in her fifth year because of a year abroad, has made great improvements with her speed and control on the mound.

Sophomore Betty Mihalik, who saw a lot of pitching action last season will also put in some time at second base and in the outfield.

Newcomers Tammy Shelor and Mary Malina are also working hard at picking up the fundamentals on the mound and should make solid contributions.

Rounding out the battery should be junior Janine Adamo, who had never caught a game before arriving at Saint Mary's and yet managed to earn all-district honors the past two years while batting above .500 through most of the season.

Freshman Jeannette O'Neill, who is doubling on the track team, is also looking strong at the catching position.

Last year's first baseman, Barb Theiss, graduated with a .987 fielding percentage and will definitely be a tough act to follow. Lorri White and Julie McNish will most likely fill the void while contributing in the outfield as well.

Junior Kris Pantelleria, who played second last year, is also working at the shortstop position, while classmate Marge Reynolds and freshman Laura Danch are practicing at third. Sophomore Diane Schroeder, who saw limited action last year, has improved a great deal and should also put in some time at second base. Sharon Hegg is also a junior but in her first

year with the team because of her sophomore year abroad and other commitments freshman year.

"She has improved a great deal since the beginning of tryouts," said Beisel. "She will be a definite utility-type player for us in the outfield and infield."

In the outfield, Beisel also will look forward to freshmen Ann Cuti and Trish Tierney for their speed and accurate throwing ability.

Because of the recent unspringlike weather the Belles have only been able to get in one hitting practice outdoors, and a game scheduled with Notre Dame was rained out yesterday. As a result, Beisel doesn't have much of an early indication of his team's offensive capabilities.

But the South Bend weather will no longer plague the Belles this month because tomorrow they will head south with a final destination of Florida to play the University of Tampa at Kissimmee, Fla., and Bethune Cookman College at Daytona.

Before the team gets out of Indiana, however, it has a date with IUPUI, the district's number one team the past few years.

According to Beisel it will be a

"real test," especially since IUPUI will just be returning from its spring trip and have 14 games behind it.

But it won't be all work and no play. Once they reach Florida, a trip to the beach and Disney World is also planned.

On the way home the Belles will stop in Louisville, Ky., where they will take on Indiana University and Bellarmine College of Louisville.

"The trip will get us together as a team," said Boldt. "It will help us get to know each other both on and off the field."

When the Belles return they will head right into NAIA play. And if their level of play matches their enthusiasm, another successful year is in store for the Saint Mary's softball program.

Celtics down Pacers

Associated Press

BOSTON — Robert Parish scored a season-high 28 points and grabbed 17 rebounds as the Boston Celtics set a franchise record of 22 consecutive home victories by crushing the Indiana Pacers 127-108 in an NBA game last night.

The Celtics surpassed the mark set in 1980-81. It was broken by the Pacers on March 13, 1981.

Larry Bird got the first two baskets of the game on layups and Boston never trailed as it rolled to its sixth straight triumph and boosted its home record to 31-1.

Champs

continued from page 16

Dame's Don Johnson took fifth in the division and was named to the second-team All-American.

Edwards finished 17th for the Irish.

DeCicco said he couldn't single out any one fencer as the hero of yesterday's title-winning effort.

"There were just too many heroes to point at one," said DeCicco, who completed his 25th year as head coach of the Irish. "We proved that overall team effort is what it takes to win."

The women's NCAA championship takes place today in Princeton, and DeCicco says he hopes that yesterday's men's performance will spark the women's squad.

"I'm hoping that the women catch this winning fever," commented DeCicco. "I expect them to finish in the top six but just where in the top six, I don't know. They're a longshot to win it all, but no more of a longshot that these guys."

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Tennis travels to Texas

Coach Fallon starts 30th year

By RICK RIETBROCK
Sports Writer

The Notre Dame men's tennis team will embark on an eight-match road trip to Texas over spring break, with Head Coach Tom Fallon once again leading the charges. Fallon, in his 30th season as men's tennis coach owns a career record of 467-180.

This record is particularly impressive given that the tennis team is allotted only two scholarships, which keeps some of the top players with pro aspirations from coming to Notre Dame. Fallon says that may change, however, with the construction of a new indoor tennis facility that is scheduled for completion in the fall.

"With the new facility, we will be able to offer year-round tennis and, therefore, we will be able to attract better athletes," Fallon says. "It's hard to attract players from warm-weather states when our only indoor courts are being shared with so many other organizations."

The new facility will aid a program that has already enjoyed tremendous success under Fallon. His teams have enjoyed eight 20-win seasons and have had only one losing campaign. It will also be a symbol of the amount of change that Fallon has seen during his tenure.

"When I got the tennis coaching job, I was also the wrestling coach," he recalls. "The end of the wrestling season and the beginning of the tennis season overlapped so I had both teams work out together."

"Our tennis teams were known for being in great physical shape in those days," he notes.

"For tennis practice, I had to stretch elastic to make lines for the

court in the old Fieldhouse, and we had to schedule practice around the basketball team as well as the other sports practicing there," he says. "It was quite a zoo."

But Fallon and his troops managed to have consistently successful seasons. In fact, Notre Dame is the only school from the Midwest to have won at least a share of the national championship twice. Fallon's championship squad of 1959 was particularly rewarding

Memorial. Fallon says he has been fortunate to coach for 30 years, but it is obvious that Notre Dame is far more fortunate to have the benefit of his services.

Even though the upcoming road trip does not feature any powerhouses, Fallon sees the teams that the Irish were able to schedule as quite formidable in their own right.

"We would like to play the toughest teams like Texas and Trinity College, but the big teams usually schedule only teams that will help them earn a bid to the NCAA tournament," he says. "They don't want to get upset. Nevertheless, we have a good schedule of teams from the second echelon with Texas-San Antonio, Pan American University, Rice, Southwest Texas University and Baylor being the toughest."

Other teams the Irish, featuring four freshmen, will face on the road trip are St. Mary's University, St. Edward's University and Texas Lutheran.



Tom Fallon

to the 1942 Notre Dame graduate.

"We won the championship with serious students on the team," he says. "The members of that team are doctors, teachers, psychologists and judges today. That was before the lure of money and professional opportunities controlled the sport."

Just as he enjoys the success that the 1959 championship team has attained, Fallon also looks forward to the reunions that the tennis team holds every two years "to talk with his former players, and to see what successful people they have become."

Fallon currently holds the rank of associate professor and is director of activities at the Rockne



The Observer/File Photo

Irish pitcher John Gleeson could see a lot of action during break as the Irish baseball team heads to California to compete in the California-Riverside Invitational. Terry Lynch previews the road-trip in his story on page 16.

Skins' Gibbs cuts Riggins

Associated Press

WASHINGTON - Washington Redskins head coach Joe Gibbs said yesterday that after reviewing game films from last season he has put running back John Riggins on waivers and suggested he retire.

Gibbs said that he gave Riggins two options - either announce his retirement or check around the league for a team that might be interested in him.

"Whether I'm right or wrong, I'm convinced that it is time for him to retire," said Gibbs.

However, he said that if the 36-year old Riggins found a team to play for, the Redskins would not ask for compensation from that team.

"John's meant an awful lot to the Redskins. He's been a tremendous part of our success and I think the world of him," said Gibbs.

"We never wanted any compensation for John. I just wanted to do this the right way."

NWIT

continued from page 16

percentage at 63.3 percent.

Sophomore guard Mary Gavin has run the show all year at the point and should have her hands full defensively trying to stop the USIS press. The Irish bench should also come into play, as the long trip and the tight schedule of games might take their toll in the form of weary legs.

The championship game is slated for Saturday, meaning the two competitors will be playing three games in three days. DiStanislao is not worried about that possibility, emphasizing that her squad is prepared to do what has to be done.

"We've played three games in three days earlier this year in the Miami Tournament," she says, "and we're definitely ready to do it again. The key now is to stay sharp, to keep playing consistently and to review the things that need reviewing."

"We're going to have to play. that's all there is to it."

Other teams in the tournament, on the other side of the bracket, include second-ranked Duke, West Texas State, Tennessee Tech, and Northwestern. (la.)

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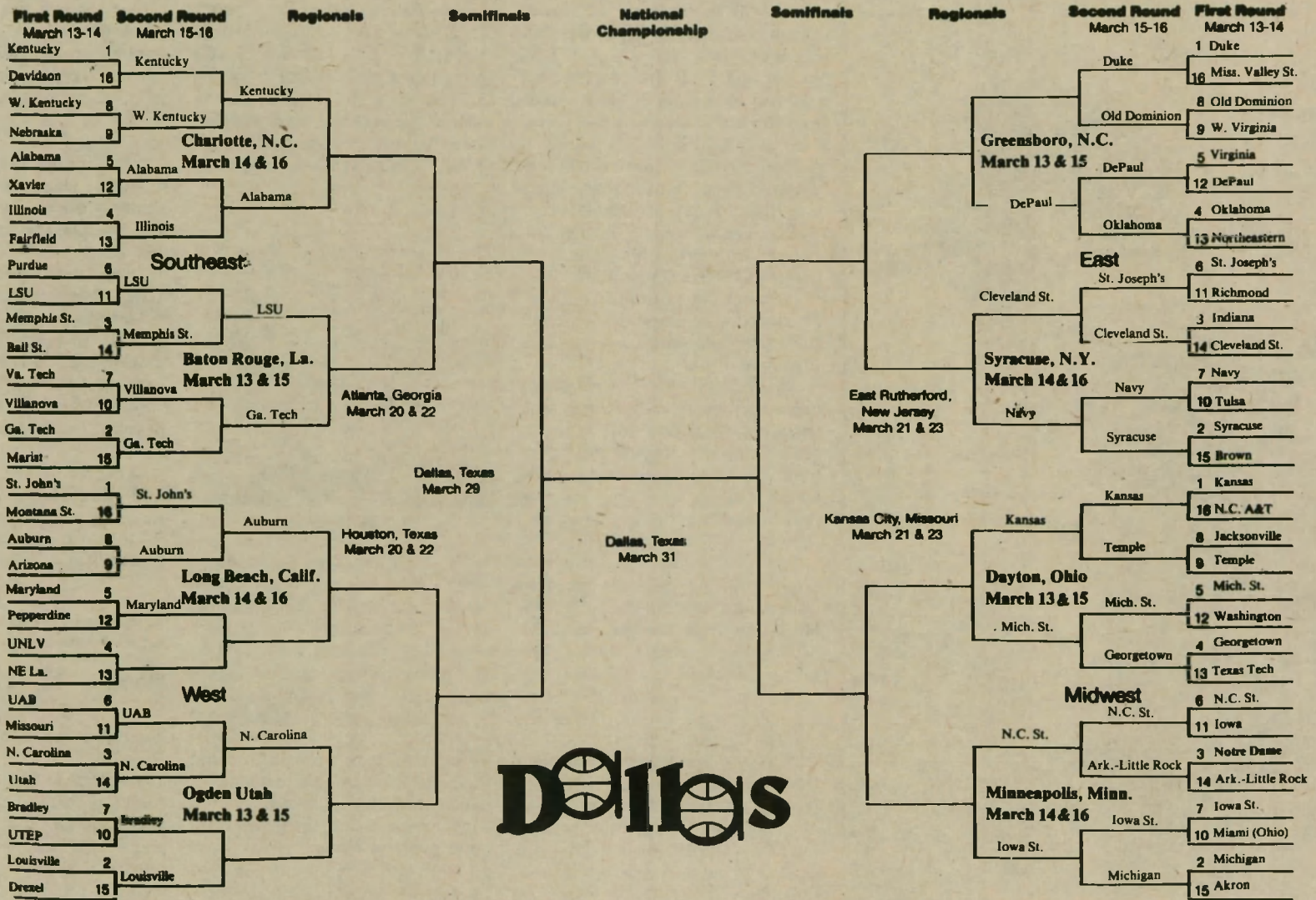
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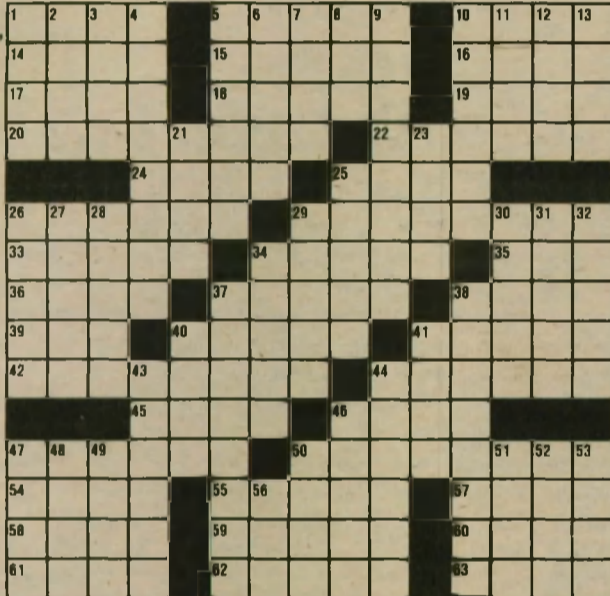
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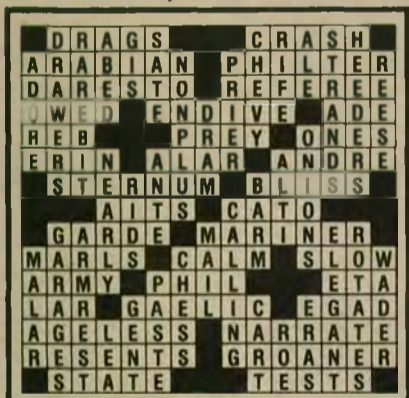
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 - Top-notch
 - Certain election loser
 - Showed ennui
 - London gallery
 - Astonish
 - TV street
 - Certain rug
 - Those against
 - Callas of opera
 - A Cantor
 - Obscure
 - Assessment in Eng.
 - Printer's word
 - Sea bird
 - Seaweed
 - Before shop or band
 - Like some pages
 - Posh
 - December celebration
 - Tribe
 - Mother of Minos
 - Items in a Fr. restaurant
 - Nail with an eye
 - River hollows
 - "It's a sin to tell —"
 - Bean curd
 - Choleric
 - Cabbage cousin
 - Social insects
 - Appeased fully
 - Pass receivers
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 - "Damn Yankees" girl
 - Cheese
 - Fit together
 - Greet
 - Ecclesiastical garment
 - Bond
 - Mariner's dir.
 - Hair style
 - Generates
 - Word with fist or hand
 - Hollywood's Franchot
 - Raced
 - Stops up
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 - Scoria
 - Uris novel
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 - Gr. island
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 - Atop
 - Huck Finn's transport
 - Apartment
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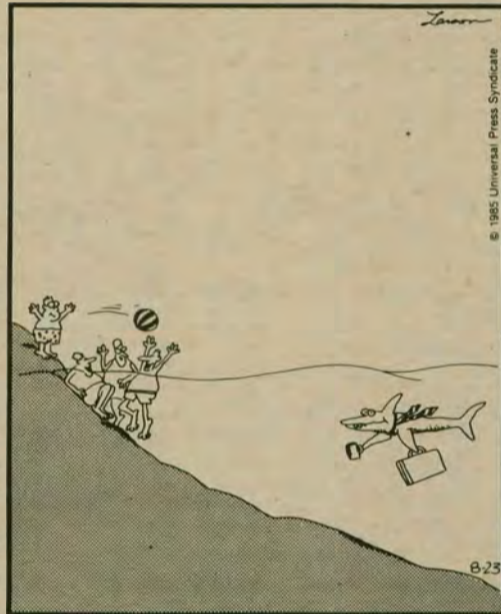


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Yesterday's Puzzle Solved:



3/20/86



The shark on the go.



"Hey! I'm coming, I'm coming—just cross your legs and wait!"

Campus

- *3 p.m. - Lecture, "The History of the Self: Primates to Present," Prof. Norbert F. Wiley, University of Illinois, Urbana, Library Lounge, Sponsored by the Graduate Sociology Dept.
- *3 p.m. - Lecture, "Recent Advances in the Representations of Algebraic Groups," Prof. John Sullivan, University of Washington, Seattle, Room 227 Computing Center and Math Building, Sponsored by the Kenna Lectures in Mathematics
- *4 p.m. - Seminar, "The Free Radical Chemistry of Sulfite Autoxidation," Dr. Robert Huie, National Bureau of Standards, Conference Theatre Radiation Laboratory
- *4:30 p.m. - Lecture, Prof. Charles Curtis, second floor of the Computing Center and Math Building, Sponsored by the Kenna Lectures in Mathematics

Dinner Menus

- Notre Dame**
- Southern Fried Chicken
 - Beef Stuffed Pepper
 - Hungarian Noodle Bake
 - Speidano Romano

- Saint Mary's**
- Roast Beef Au Jus
 - Spaghetti with Meat or Marinara Sauce
 - Vegetarian Quiche
 - Reuben Sandwiches

SPONSORED BY: THE STUDENT ACTIVITIES BOARD

SPRING BREAK



Wednesday, March 19th,
Thursday, March 20th
7:00, 9:00, 11:00 p.m.

Please, no food or drinks in Auditorium

\$1.00

The Nazz Competition is coming . . .

On Friday, April 4th
you will compete for:

QUESTIONS?
Call Liz 283-2985

- ★ CASH PRIZES!
- ★ A position in the Saturday showcase performance (April 5th)
- ★ A chance to play with MAX WEINBERG

Irish men's fencing team captures NCAA crown

Four named All-Americans as DeCicco snares 3rd title

Special to The Observer

After Wayne State nosed out the Notre Dame men's fencing team by a single point in last year's NCAA championship, the Irish made it their goal this year to get back to the finals and win it all.

Yesterday in Princeton, N.J., the Irish did just that, beating Columbia, 151-141, to win the 1986 NCAA fencing championship. Defending champion Wayne State finished sixth with 83 points.

For Head Coach Mike DeCicco, what happened yesterday still hasn't struck home.

"Right now, it hasn't sunk in yet," DeCicco said when reached last night. "We talked about it before, but we didn't expect this. It was great competition, and anyone could have taken it."

"The sabre was the best I've seen in 10 years. When we lost John Edwards and Columbia had all six, we knew it would be a struggle. But I talked to the kids and they fought

all day long for what they got. I'm just so proud."

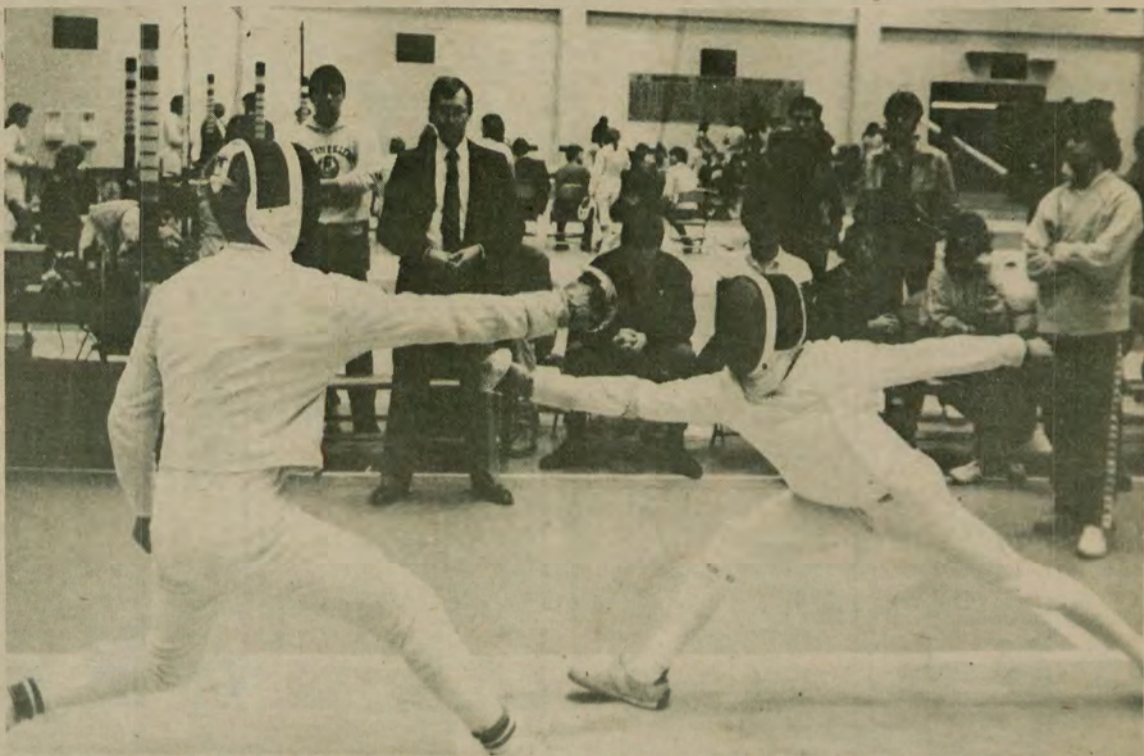
The title was Notre Dame's third under DeCicco, whose 1977 and 1978 squads were repeat winners. In addition, the national championship was the first in any sport for Notre Dame since the 1978 title.

The foil championship was won by Adam Felman of Penn State (which finished third with 124 points.) Notre Dame's Yehuda Kovacs and Charles Higgs-Coulthard finished second and third respectively. Both were named to the first-team All-America squad by virtue of their finishes.

Notre Dame's Mike Gostigan finished third in the epee division behind Columbia's Steve Trevor and Penn's Chris O'Loughlin. Gostigan also was named a first-team All-American.

Mike Lofton of NYU (which finished fifth behind Penn) won his third-straight sabre title. Notre

see CHAMPS, page 12



Notre Dame's men's fencing team clinched the 1986 NCAA championship yesterday at Princeton, N.J. The title is the team's third under Head Coach Mike DeCicco. Details on the men's win and DeCicco's comments on today's women's meet appear at left.

NWIT begins; Notre Dame set to face USIU

By MARTY STRASEN
Sports Writer

It's not that Notre Dame women's basketball coach Mary DiStanislao does not like being ranked No. 1 in the Women's National Invitational Tournament. She just doesn't take much stock in rankings.

As the Irish prepare for the tournament, which begins tonight in Amarillo Texas, Di Stanislao realizes that rankings don't mean a thing in post-season play.

"I don't even think about being ranked No. 1," she says. "It's very flattering but you still have to go out and put the ball on the floor. As everyone saw from what happened to the men in the NAAs, a high-ranking and 25 cents only get you a

cup of coffee. We can't afford to look past anyone."

Notre Dame's road to the WNIT title begins tonight against a quick team from the U.S. International, which is ranked eighth in the eight-team tournament. But once again, rankings can be deceiving.

USIU won the West Coast Athletic Conference with a 23-7 overall record and an 11-1 conference mark, averaging over 84 points per game with a devastating running attack.

"U.S. International is a running team much like Detroit," says DiStanislao. "They're second in the nation in point production and they've also got an extremely quick and talented player named Toya

DeCree. We expect a lot of running."

DeCree, a 6-1 senior, averaged over 21 ppg. and added nine rebounds per contest. Freshman guard Sonya Carter chipped in over 16 ppg. during the season while sophomores Fiona Murray, 6-4, and Amanda Spry, 6-2, each averaged double figures.

And USIU was running up the scoreboard all season long, Notre Dame stressed defense, finishing second in the nation in field goal percentage defense as they held opponents to under 38 percent. Limiting the opposition to an average of 59 points put the Irish ninth in scoring defense.

Whether or not Notre Dame gets

past its opponent from San Diego Calif., tonight, either Fresno State (21-6) or Idaho (23-5) will be next in a game tomorrow. DiStanislao would like tomorrow's contest to be a winners-bracket matchup rather than a consolation game, but sees the road to a tournament victory as a potentially rocky one.

"All of these teams are talented," she explains. "The thing that's different now, as compared to the regular season, is that they are all either conference winners or second-place finishers. Every one of these teams is coming off a good season and has been playing well down the stretch."

But the Irish have also played well in the latter half of the season, win-

ning the North Star Conference title and heading into the NWIT sporting a nine-game winning streak. Their 21-7 record is the best in the team's six-year history as a Division I competitor.

In addition, 6-1 senior Trena Keys has established herself as the top scorer in Notre Dame history, and 6-2 sophomore Sandy Botham has been on fire in the last part of the season.

Botham has set an Irish record by scoring in double figures in 18 straight games and has averaged 15 points and eight rebounds over that stretch. She is currently ranked sixth in the nation in field-goal

see NWIT, page 13



Irish forward Trena Keys defends against a Tennessee player in a game earlier this season. Keys will lead the women's team as it begins play in the NWIT today. Marty Strasen previews the tournament in his story above.

ND baseball team goes to Calif.

By TERRY LYNCH
Sports Writer

The Notre Dame baseball team will be packing its bags for California today as it takes a six-game winning streak into the prestigious California-Riverside Baseball Invitational for seven games during spring break.

It won't be sunshine and palm trees for the Irish, however, because the competition they will face over the next week will be some of the toughest in the country. Brigham Young and Tulane headline the invitational that will also pit the Irish against Cornell, Oregon State, Washington, Wisconsin and host Cal-Riverside.

"I'll be happy to come back with a .500 record in California," said Irish head coach Larry Gallo. "Of course, we're going to go in there trying to win them all, but with teams like Brigham Young, Tulane and Oregon State, it'll be tough. And we'll probably get to see everybody's number one (starting pitcher)."

Both Brigham Young and Tulane appeared in the Baseball America Top 25 and the ESPN Collegiate Baseball poll. Tulane started this week 18th in Baseball America and 25th in the ESPN poll with a record

of 16-4. Brigham Young, at 8-5-1, is ranked 22nd by Baseball America and 20th by ESPN.

Gallo is pleased that his Irish, at 6-2, were fortunate enough to be able to play all eight games on the schedule before spring break.

"We've never had a team here, at least since I've been around, that has played eight games by March 17," he said after Monday's doubleheader sweep of St. Joseph's.

Gallo may be also just as fortunate to have a seven-day hiatus to heal his injury-plagued team. Steve Skupien (flu), Mike Rogers (pulled hamstring), and Ken Soos (bad ankle) all played with injuries in Monday's doubleheader.

The outlook on Tom Shields does not look promising. Shields, the senior shortstop and co-captain of the team, is still recuperating from some off-season surgery on his knee.

"The problem with Tom is that he's had the kind of surgery that I think makes you feel better than you actually are," said Gallo.

Shields is not likely to play on the trip.

Rich Vanthournout leads the team in hitting with a .414 average, runs RBIs (13), hits (12) and three stolen bases. But on the defensive

end, Vanthournout accounts for four of the five Irish errors so far on the team. Tim Hutson follows closely in the RBI category with 12, a good deal of those coming in from his team-leading three home runs.

As a team, the Irish are batting at a .317 clip, 22 points higher than their opponents. They have scored 70 runs in eight games while stealing 10 bases in 11 attempts.

On the pitching end, the Irish staff has a 5.68 ERA, but only Kevin Chenail (9.24 ERA) has pitched more than 10 innings. Irish opponents, as a testament to the devastating hitting so far, have compiled a less-than-impressive 10.02 ERA.

Coach Gallo's yardstick for measuring the quality of the Irish team will come in the form of the California-Riverside Invitational and afterwards should be able to see if his prediction of the Irish as "a sleeping giant" will come true.

After the tournament, the Irish play host to Chicago State on April 1 and then travel to Valparaiso on the second and a doubleheader at Bethel on the third. The next Irish home baseball game after the break will be four games against Wisconsin on April 5-6.