

Sul Ross Group (SRG) Bulletin Twenty-Seven

12 February 2021

National Signing Day – “Championship Recruiting”

On Wednesday, the 3rd of February, the final 2021 National Football Signing Day was a great news day for Coach Fisher and the Fightin’ Texas Aggies! Coach and his staff topped off their recruiting efforts by adding a great group of athletes to our team. The class was ranked nationally in the top ten, with one recruiting service (Rivals) rating the Ags at the #3 spot. As reported by Olin Buchanan of TexAgs, it is the first time that the Ags have recruited three consensus top ten classes consecutively! It was, as Billy Liucci of TexAgs described the result – “championship recruiting!” Here are a few quotes from Coach Fisher about the 2021 class:

“I just wanted to say thank you to the 12th Man, our fans, for the support you gave us this year. There were a lot of opposing teams complaining about the [noise] and we were only a quarter full, so I cannot wait until we fill that thing up next year and make it really memorable for the guys that are coming in here. Just wanted to give a shoutout to those guys and all of the people who support us. It’s second-to-none and I’m very happy about what we are doing.”

On signing (5-star RB) LJ Johnson...

I’m very happy about today, as of right now we have signed LJ Johnson. Today is a little anti-climactic with all the [previous] numbers, but it was really big to get him. He’s a great player and we are very excited about what he can bring to us. First of all, he’s a great young man, a very intelligent young man and a great student, and he’s one heck of a back. He’s big, physical, fast and very, very smooth. It’s almost like you don’t realize how good he is by how his little nuances are making people miss, there’s not wasted motion. He gets vertical and can catch the ball, and he can block. He’s just a tremendous player and we are just blessed to have him. We are very excited about what the future will bring.

On compiling three straight top-10 recruiting classes...

We are chasing our ultimate goal. We are going to keep recruiting and hopefully that translates to our performance on the field, which I think it’s starting to here. We are enhancing that with the culture we are creating and the things we do, and hopefully that can lead to SEC championships and national championships. Those are our goals and where we are trying to get to. We want to be the best we can be and create competition from within. Hopefully the toughest games we play are the days we have in practice, when you are going against another great player across the ball from you. We want to be embracing that challenge and doing it every day to create championship habits. You have to stack these classes together to create the competition and create the depth to do what you want to do.

One can find the summary of each player at 12thman.com (go to “quick links” and then to “national signing day”)

For Coach Fisher’s entire interview, go here: [Jimbo Fisher National Signing Day Press Conference - Texas A&M Athletics - 12thMan.com](https://www.12thman.com/news/2021/2/3/coach-fisher-national-signing-day-press-conference-texas-am-athletics)

TAMU Recruiting Incentive – The Aggie Network!

We have been reminding our readers about who specifically “The 12th Man and The Aggie Network really are, and it seems from Coach’s “thank you” and what follows here, that it is now better understood! We like it, and him too!

The coaching staff also got a great start on the beginnings of recruiting the 2022 Texas Aggie football class! One of them was the commitment of a two sport (football and baseball) outstanding QB quarterback, Conner Weigman. This is his answer to a question about the impact of his decision regarding the Aggie Network:

Question: How important was the Aggie Network in your decision?

Answer: “It was of huge importance. When I sat down with my dad to talk about committing, he said A&M was a 40-year decision. It was a big reason why I chose the Aggies.”

Texas Aggie Women’s Basketball Team are In the Hunt!



Ranked #6 nationally, the Aggie women are playing great against some tough SEC competition! Sunday afternoon at Reed Arena was no exception against a really good Arkansas team ranked # 16, and who we beat in Fayetteville previously in overtime.

Point guard Jordan Nixon drove the lane with 8 seconds remaining and made a great play and layup to put the Ags ahead by two. That turned out to be the deciding shot to win 69-67! The Ags have now won six straight and are 7-0 against ranked teams.

There is still plenty of basketball to play (and to play for) as we approach the post season. The last game of the regular SEC season is scheduled at Reed Arena on 28 February against South Carolina. They are currently ranked #1 nationally. There will be a LOT on the line regarding the SEC regular season championship as Coach Blair has often mentioned.

Texas Aggie Women’s Indoor Track Team Ranked #2 Nationally

The nationally 2nd ranked Aggie women’s track team came into the first iteration of the National Rating Index with nine top-10 marks. Leading the way is **Athing Mu**, who clocked the fifth-fastest performance in collegiate indoor history in the 800 with her NCAA-leading time of 2:01.07 in her collegiate debut. Texas A&M also has strong performances early on in the jumps: **Deborah Acquah** is No. 2 in the long jump (6.65m/21-10), while **Tyra Gittens** has the No. 2 mark in the high jump (1.87m/6-1½) and No. 3 in the long jump (6.62m/21-8¾).

On Saturday the 6th of February, Texas Aggie **Athing Mu** dazzled fans when she broke the World **U-20** 400m record at the Gilliam Indoor Stadium during the Charlie Thomas

Invitational. Mu clocked 50.52, breaking Sanya Richards-Ross World U-20 400m record of 50.82, pending USATF ratification. Mu also broke 2011 Bowerman winner Jessica Beard's 10-year-old school record of 50.79. It was No. 4 all-time in American and collegiate history!! **Congratulations!!!!**

Note: To understand the significance of her accomplishment, here is what U-20 is about: ***“World U20 Records in the sport of athletics are ratified by World Athletics. Athletics records comprise the best performance of an athlete before the year of their 20th birthday. Technically, in all under 20 age divisions, the age is calculated “on December 31 of the year of competition”[1] to avoid age group switching during a competitive season. These age category records were formerly referred to as world junior records.”***

Reveille X Selected



TAMU announced on Friday the 5th of February that Reveille X had been selected after a year and a half search process. The 18-month-old Collie will be coming to her new home at Aggieland from Kansas where she was born and raised. A ceremony was held at the Sanders Corps of Cadet Center to make the welcome official – General Ramirez presiding.

Reveille X will take over from Reveille IX in May following Final Review. This spring, Reveille X will “shadow” IX, and Ray Cotton, IX’s handler last year, will be the main person working with X during the acclimation period.

Mia Miller was the first woman to serve as Reveille’s handler back in 2018. She was involved with the search committee. She gave “candidate” Reveille X high marks in all attribute categories.

Reveille IX has served in her “five-star” position since May 2015. She will retire to the Stevenson Life-Care Center operated by the Texas Aggie Vet School (College) for a happy life. She will be eight years old in November.

President Junkins Responded

TAMU President, Dr. John Junkins, wrote us after we offered our full support to his Eight Actions (and also after our SRG Board’s session with him). He expressed his appreciation for what we wrote about it in Bulletin 26 (of 3 February) and our commitment for support. Additionally, he accepted our invitation for him to address SRG members during our annual (virtual this year) SRG reunion. It will be on 8 March 2021 and, importantly, we shall also induct the Class of ’66 into our ranks.

Our membership will shortly be receiving, from The Association, information about that event and how our members can access it via the internet. And as a reminder, our members will also be asked sometime before the 8th to vote on confirmation of the

nominated 2021-22 Board of Directors; and to ratify recommended changes to the SRG Constitution as proposed by the Board of Directors. Again. We again thank Dr. Junkins and salute his service as our interim President!

Charlie Krueger – Teammate at Aggieland of Coach Wright, an Epitaph



"Charlie Krueger was our All-American tackle and a great NFL football player with the 49ers for 15 years. He's in the 49ers Hall of Fame with his name on the stadium, up there with Joe Montana and Steve Young. Charlie was a three-year starter for us and made All-American two years and All-Conference three years. He was a great, great football player who played during the time where you had to play both ways. He weighed about 220 pounds and that was big during those days back in the 50's. Charlie and I kept our friendship for a long time, ever since we met at Walton Hall in 1954. He was a great player and a wonderful Aggie – and we will miss him."

Of note: Charlie Krueger's Texas hometown was Caldwell.

Muster Closing Options

We were enlightened by several of our members that now, Aggie Muster organizers and chairpersons, have two new offered "Muster closings" as options – on The Association website at: https://www.aggienetwork.com/muster/song_closings.aspx.

Muster Ceremony - Traditional Closing: Muster chair motions everyone to stand and then recites slowly (should be memorized):

"The (year) Texas A&M Muster at (place) is now complete. I charge you each to remain firm in your loyalty to your country and your God... To keep warm in your hearts your affection for each other and for our Alma Mater. The Muster is dismissed until April 21 (year) and may God be with us all until we meet again."

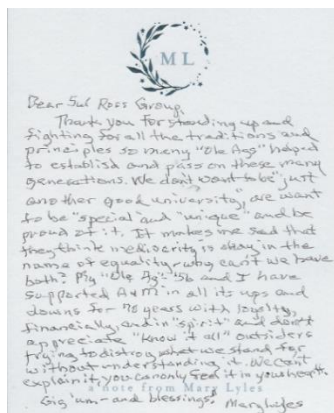
Muster Ceremony - Alternate Closing: Muster chair motions everyone to stand and then recites slowly (should be memorized):

"The (year) Texas A&M Muster at (place) is now complete. I charge you each to remain firm in your loyalty to humanity and to your country. Keep warm in your hearts your affection for each other and for your Alma Mater. The Muster is dismissed until April 21 (year) and may good fortune smile upon us until we meet again."

The Association provided the following explanation and background for clarity: *Re the alternate Muster Closing that we provide to Muster Chairs and Club Presidents,we assure everyone that The Association is not attempting to change anything about the Muster ceremony. The alternate Muster closing has been included in the Muster Chair resources for more than 15 years and was done so to provide options for some of the international Musters where participants might be of different faiths. We provide the traditional closing as the preferred closing but offer an alternate for unique situations such as Qatar. Please understand that nobody is forcing the alternate closing on any group."*

Mary Lyles' Note to SRG

This is a note that Mary Lyles wrote to us. Her late husband was Bill Lyles '56



Dear Sul Ross Group

Thank you for standing up and fighting for all the traditions and principles so many "Ole Ags" helped to establish and pass on these many generations. We don't want to be "just another good university." We want to be "special and unique" and be proud of it. It makes me sad that they think mediocrity is okay in the name of equality-why can't we have both? My "ole Ag"- '56 and I have supported A&M in all its ups and downs for 70 years with loyalty, financially and in "spirit" and don't appreciate "know it all" outsiders trying to destroy what we stand for without understanding it. We can't explain it, you can only feel it in your heart.

Gig 'em and blessings, Mary Lyles, 4 February 2021

The Task Force on Iconography (President's action Item #7)

The TAMUS Regents approved Dr. Junkins' recommendations as outlined in their Statement of 25 January 2021. There were eight Actions to be accomplished. The 7th Action was to establish an Iconography Task Force (TF) which will be appointed to redesign Academic Plaza beginning with the LSR statue (which will remain in place) and work westward with additional "iconography" so as to tell a narrative continuum about the history of AMC and TAMU – not about a person or persons per se. But what persons in their eras accomplished to affect the outcome of TAMU's transcendence today.

We, the SRG Board, have given this some constructive thought and have some things to say about it to the members of the TF when appointed by the TAMU President. In fact, we have one of our members, Edis Oliver '63 who would be an outstanding choice as one of the TF members! If not chosen, he will certainly be our SRG Board representative contact person to interface and support the TF toward accomplishment the TAMU "Presidential intent" and tasking!

During our SRG board session with President Junkins, he was very clear and specific about his "President's intent" regarding elements of what he expected in the design. He shared that the iconography (and accompanying plaques) must convey a story – a continuum – so as to present a historical narrative about the ascendance to transcendence which sets our institution apart. This obviously prompts a question about this project's "first step?" Is it the narrative leading to the design (not about persons but during their era at AMC/TAMU, what they did to make or preserve the Institution's transcendence); or is it vice versa? The former is the answer. But both have to be melded together and the "designers" need to have the continuum narrative first. We

believe we can help with that. The question, then is, who's the lead point person for the President?

Dr. Junkins also gave some specific direction about the "bounds" and already existing pieces of iconography that all involved need to hear, understand and heed. Beginning with the LSR statue, he mentioned the Rudder and Gaines statues which would have to be "integrated" into the Plaza design somehow which may involve re-siting those statues. Then he said that "one and not more than a maximum of three could be considered for addition as the design works toward the west." Our inputs will include:

- The Ross statue decision has been made and it is time to remove the fence from around it and provision the necessary security for it!
- As LSR was President of AMC, he was also the President of Prairie View Normal (PVN), led by an on-site "Principal" and chief administrative official, reporting to LSR. This was Dr. Blackshear, a distinguished African American educator who was not only a close colleague of Ross but also a good friend. Of note – this reporting arrangement did not change until 1947 when the Chancellery was established, and the "principal" became the PVC President reporting directly to the Chancellor. That, we believe, is a piece of narrative which needs to be woven from the narrative into the iconography design!
- The Gaines statue – the SRG has previously made multiple recommendations on his story and how it contributes to this effort, way before this project was approved and directed. We want that considered.
- Simpson Field (not necessarily part of this project but lies directly west of the Plaza) is history of AMC and TAMU in itself. For over a year we have reviewed the iconography on it, making specific recommendations on parts that need to be corrected, updated and repaired. We want those to be included in the considerations.
- We have studied "eras" of great leaders during our history and believe that Cushing, for sure, is a figure that deserves serious consideration because of what happened during his time and involvement; and perhaps Gilchrist also.

You can reach us at: SRGpresident@aggienetwork.com

Opt-In Reminder: Anyone (Ags and non Ags, SRG Ags and all other Ags too) can "opt in" by going to <https://www.aggienetwork.com/theassociation/sulrossgroup.aspx> and simply putting in your name and email address, and then clicking on "submit." You will then automatically receive all the SRG Bulletins.

If you wish comment to Those who decide:

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The Board of Regents: vickie@tamus.edu or jbell@tamus.edu

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