

# Coach Stephenson Leaves For Texas A&M

By Steve Vinci  
Sports Editor

Methodist's head women's soccer coach, Phil Stephenson, has taken the position of assistant women's soccer coach at Texas A&M.

Stephenson coached the Lady Monarchs for four years and led them to the 1995 Division III Championship Game. Over the four-year span, the Lady Monarchs went 42-28-3 (.596) and placed among the top three in the Dixie Conference for all four years including a First Place finish in 1995. Stephenson received the DIAC and South Region Coach of the Year awards.

He took the job on January 26 and broke the news to the team on January 27. "I thought I could go in there and be cool. Once I got into locker room, I got this big lump in my throat," said Stephenson. "I

couldn't tell them everything that I wanted to because it was just too hard."

The players were shocked at the unexpected plans of their coach. "The players understood after I explained things to them—They realized what a great thing this was for the program."

"I could have been happy here for twenty years, but this offer was just too good to pass up—There are 270 Division I teams in the nation and 260 could have called and I would have said "No," but at Texas I get to work with a good friend."

Stephenson will be working with Coach G. Guerrieri at Texas A&M. They have worked together in the Southern Region Olympic Development Program and they have been to England together. "We are blessed that we've got the ability to bring on board someone of Phil's knowledge, experience and coaching demeanor,"

Guerrieri said, "I have no doubt that he will step right in and work hard to keep Texas A&M moving toward our goal of winning a National Championship."

Stephenson wanted his players to know that he never sent out an application. An opening happened at Texas A&M and Guerrieri gave him a call. Stephenson stated that he had mixed emotions on leaving Methodist College. He will become involved in recruiting and coaching at A&M.

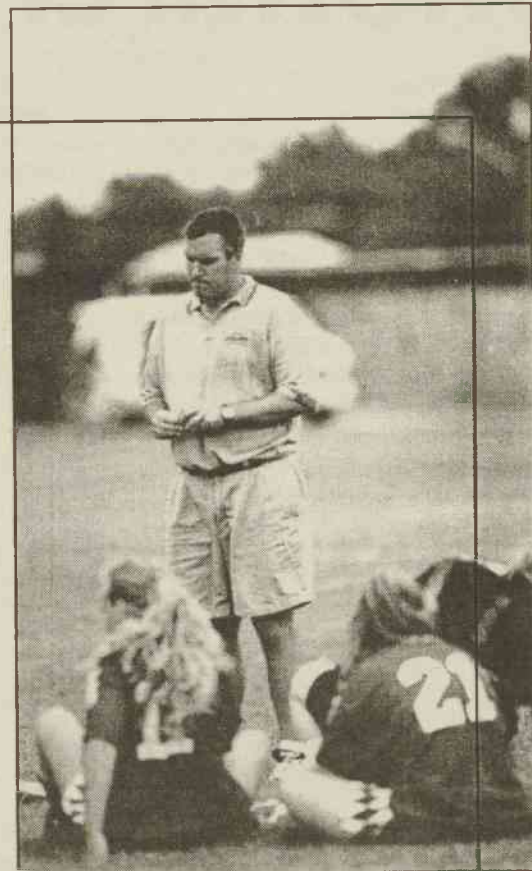
Stephenson is leaving a Lady Monarch team that will return ten of eleven starters including DIAC Player of the Year and Second-Team All-South Region player, Tricia Clinton. Also returning are First Team All-DIAC members Jill Catron and Elizabeth McLeod. "To be really selfish, this is a really bad time to leave," said Stephenson, "This team is dedicated to winning and can go as far as they want next year."

Stephenson said that the program is evolving into a major competitor. This would have been his first real spring with the ladies. "Graduation has been deadly every year."

Stephenson mentioned that he did not recommend a replacement but is confident

about the selection process at Methodist College.

Stephenson is a graduate of Lock Haven University of Pennsylvania where he was a four-year All-Conference and All-Region selection. The three-time captain earned PSAC MVP and First Team All-American honors as a senior.



Stephenson joins a Texas A & M team that was ranked 10th in the nation.



Stephenson instructs the Lady Monarchs.

## Monarch Dancers Excel At Nationals

By Steve Vinci  
Sports Editor

The Monarch Dance Team competed at the Universal Dance Association Collegiate National Championships on January 7-10. The event was held at Walt Disney World in Orlando, Florida.

The team competed in an open division consisting of teams from the NCAA Division I, II and III as well as all NAIA schools. Thirty-two teams competed in their division and the young Monarchs finished fourteenth in the nation!

"The team is thrilled with their accomplishments and has high expectations for next year," said Coach Kim Johnson. "Volunteer coach, Gina Mathis, has added to the growth of the program with her choreography and support." Mathis is the owner of World Of Dance.

Members include: Jennifer Garner, Shelby Hutton, Maria McCrimmon, Shina Miller, Amanda Coffman, Carin Mosciki, Cassandra "Weasel" Stroud, Janique Hudson, Stacy Fabrico and Amy Guzman.



Monarch dancers at Walt Disney World.

## Baseball Ranked First

By Steve Vinci  
Sports Editor

The Monarch baseball team, the defending regular season champion, has been chosen to repeat its title in the preseason poll of Dixie Conference coaches.

The Monarchs, who are ranked 11th nationally, were chosen by just one point over North Carolina-Wesleyan, who is ranked 5th nationally. Defending conference tournament champion, Greensboro, was chosen for third place. Ferrum was fourth followed by Christopher Newport, Shenandoah, and Averett.