

# SPORTS

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ing they're returning to the field with the Nebraska Cornhuskers to all but hand front-running Texas A&M the Big 12 conference baseball championship on a silver platter, the Aggies dropped the platter.

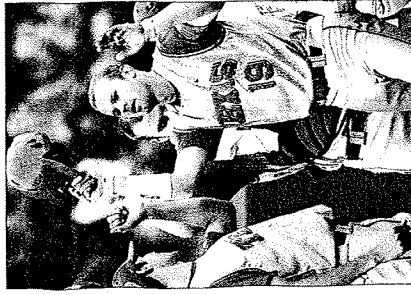
Oh, and welcome back to you, too, Longhorns.

Nice seeing a real Texas baseball team again.

For the first time all season, the 7,430 fans had difficulty identifying just which of the two teams at Olsen Field on Saturday night was in first place and which was clinging to fifth. While the eventual order of the league standings remains in question, and A&M could share the championship with rampaging Oklahoma State, it seems pretty clear

See **BOHLS, C5**

## BIG 12 BASEBALL ■ TEXAS, TEXAS A&M 3



**Stuart Villanueva** (IRVING COLLEGE STATION FILE) Texas' Kyle Russell, center, hit a two-run home run in the sixth inning to break a tie against Texas A&M. The Longhorns won 5-2 to take the series. The final game of the series is today.

## Russell relaxes to help Texas beat A&M again

Home run leader gives Horns win, hurts Aggies' title hopes

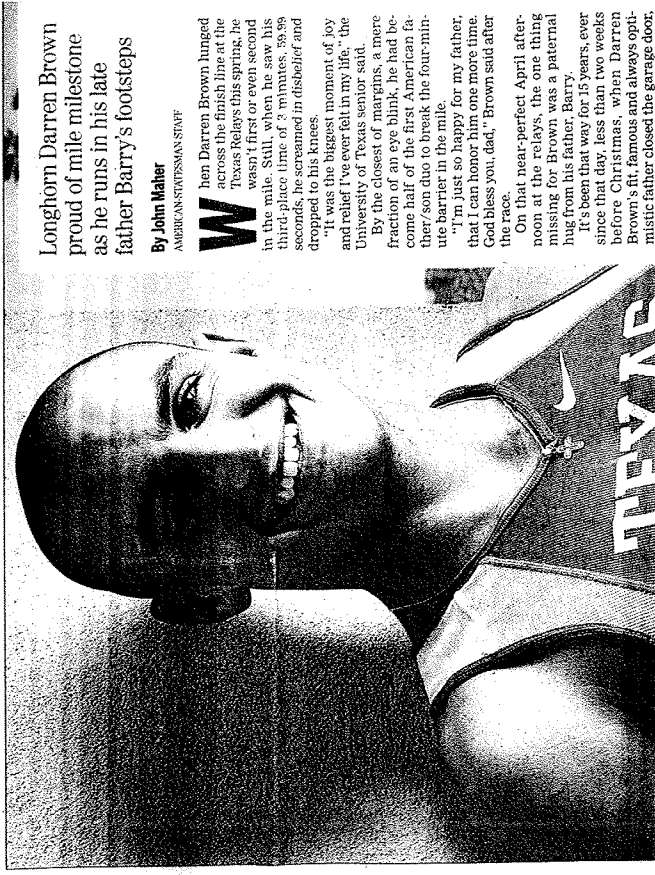
By **Alan Tubow**  
AMERICAN-STATESMAN STAFF

**COLLEGE STATION** — Historically, when the pressure has been on, Texas right fielder Kyle Russell has been off.

The 2006 summer in the Cape Cod Baseball League, last year's postseason and the beginning of this season all were times when scouts and the public had their eyes on Russell. Time after time the number of strikeouts increased as his confidence dwindled.

On Saturday, the pressure was on Russell again. This time, he stepped up. Last year's NCAA home run champion broke open a tie game in the sixth inning with

# Like FATHER Like SON



Longhorn Darren Brown proud of mile milestone as he runs in his late father Barry's footsteps

By **John Maher**  
AMERICAN-STATESMAN STAFF

**W**hen Darren Brown lunged across the finish line at the Texas Relays this spring, he wasn't first or even second in the mile. Still, when he saw his third-place time of 3 minutes, 59.99 seconds, he screamed in disbelief and dropped to his knees.

"It was the biggest moment of joy and relief I've ever felt in my life," the University of Texas senior said.

By the closest of margins, a mere fraction of an eye blink, he had become half of the first American father/son duo to break the four-minute barrier in the mile.

"I'm just so happy for my father, that I can honor him one more time. God bless you, dad," Brown said after the race.

On that near-perfect April afternoon at the relays, the one thing missing for Brown was a paternal hug from his father, Barry.

It's been that way for 15 years, ever since that day, less than two weeks before Christmas, when Darren Brown's fit, famous and always optimistic father closed the garage door.

See **RUNNERS, C11**

■ UT's Donovan Kilmarlin wins decathlon title in Big 12 Championships, **C9**

Jay Jammer photo AMERICAN-STATESMAN

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SUNDAY, MAY 18, 2008 ■ SEC

# RUNNERS: Browns 1st father-son duo under 4 minutes in mile

Continued from C1

"I remember seeing my dad going down the road and out for runs when I'd be going to a friend's house. Then, an hour or two hours later, he'd be coming back, running on that same road and looking just as peppy as ever."

DAREN BROWN



Five days later Brown committed suicide at home. When she realized what had happened, Daren's mother quickly sent him over to a friend's house. As he played, Daren heard the ambulances and firetrucks but didn't realize they were headed to his house.

"About 10 o'clock that night, my mom came back to get me, and my grandfather was in the car. I remember being really excited to see my grandfather, but I didn't understand why he was there and why I didn't know he was coming," Daren recalled.

"We drove over in front of the house, and Mom parked and turned to me and began by saying, 'I don't expect you to fully understand, but I want you to know that it's OK to cry. Your father has passed on, I don't even remember comprehending what she said but my only instinct was to scream and to cry because that's what she was doing.'"

A week later at a memorial service for Brown at the Gainesville track, several of Barry's friends, dressed in suits, decided to jump the water hazard in honor of the stepphichaser. They helped Daren up on the hurdle, and they all leaped off.

"Everybody was applauding and crying and laughing," Daren remembered. "It hit me that it really meant a lot to a lot of people."

## Following in the footsteps

The runner's paradise in Gainesville was soon Daren and his mother moved to Sarasota, Fla., then California, then Houston.

Daren became a soccer player — a sport he loved even though he was short, scrawny and injury-prone, but as a high school freshman, he was sidelined with an injury and turned to running track for rehabilitation. If the sport was in his genes, it wasn't readily apparent.

"I was absolutely awful my first year," Brown said. "I didn't make the varsity. I didn't make any team. I was just there. It was that summer that I got really serious about it. If I'm going to do it, I really want to be good at it."

Brown said his mother and stepfather were supportive but horrified about his choice. "They were scared beyond belief because they knew this pressure would come," Brown said. "They knew people would see me and bring up my father. They knew being in the sport would bring my father back into my life."

The Texas Relays, however, still stages an international mile in honor of Jerry Thompson.

started his Mercedes convertible and waited for the carbon monoxide to fill his lungs. "I remember the last moment I saw him," Brown recalled. "I was standing in our doorway of our house, and I gave him a hug and a kiss and I told him I loved him and that I'd see him after school. He told me he loved me, to have a good day and that he'd see me later, and I left."

"When I got home from school that day I walked in the house, and my mom knew something was wrong ... at that age I didn't fully comprehend that something was really, really wrong."

In the wake of Barry Brown's suicide, a financial scandal surfaced, revealing that Brown had lost the money of family, friends and training partners in investments.

Until then, Barry Brown had been seen as the quintessential runner, an image he had enjoyed for three decades. Suddenly, his death left his son a difficult legacy.

Should he run away from it or toward it?

The place in Gainesville, Fla., where Daren Brown grew up wasn't merely a nice home; it was an epicenter for a movement that altered the lives of millions of Americans.

Daren was born and at a time before downtown 10Ks, elliptical trainers, stair steppers and spinning classes.

"In those days, you didn't have choices. There were no fancy health clubs. You had your shoes and the road," said Gainesville resident Gerald Schackow, a friend who also served as Barry Brown's attorney.

If you were a serious runner, you had only four years to reach your potential, those spent competing in college. After college, runners found that the rigors of a full-time job made serious training impossible.

Barry Brown forged a different path. At 5 feet, 11 inches, and tau 150 pounds, he was a crack stepphichaser at Providence College, and he could run almost any race from the mile to the marathon.

"He had as much talent as anyone, ever ... I'd been reading about Barry since I was in high school," said Frank Shorter, a former training partner of Brown's and the 1972 Olympic gold medalist in the marathon.

In 1969, after graduating from Albany Law School, Brown moved from New York to Gainesville, where University of Florida track coach Jimmy Carnes and distance runner Jack Bachelder had started the Florida Track Club.

The outgoing Brown quickly became the organizer and ace recruiter for the club, luring such talents as 1968 Olympian Marty Liquori.

