

Zechman recruits 33, 11 from JC ranks

Steve Rivera
Sports Editor

Fred Zechman hopes he's struck gold in California.

Zechman, New Mexico State's third-year head football coach, went to the West Coast looking

for some much-needed strength and experience for his Aggie squad. Of the 33 recruits announced by NMSU on Wednesday, 22 are from California.

The 33 newcomers include 11 from the junior college ranks, 21

from the high school level and one red-shirt transfer. Zechman used all the scholarships that were available to him.

He split his allotment almost evenly, signing 17 defensive players and 16 offensive players.

Zechman said he concentrated on the West Coast because the Aggies play in the Pacific Coast Athletic Association and he felt California players would like the idea of playing away games on familiar turf.

He said he recruited heavily at the junior college level because "in the Pacific Coast Athletic Association you have to have JC players in order to compete."

All of the 11 junior college transfers were signed from winning teams and all but one are from California.

Zechman said he needed at least 30 to 40 players of junior or senior status to give leadership. Only seven seniors return from last year's 2-9 team.

Among the California signees were D'Andre Collins, a 6-foot-1, 198-pound strong safety from Los Angeles Southwest City College. He was touted by the National College Rating Service as one of the top JC recruits in the nation.

Other defensive standouts from junior colleges are: Bobby Antee, a 6-4, 235-pound tackle from Cerritos College; Boo Merritt, a 6-3, 215-pound linebacker from San Mateo College; Clay Orrison, 6-3, 210, a linebacker and honorable-mention All-American; and Brian Williams, a 5-11 defensive back from Fresno, Calif.

Zechman is hoping his recruits can help shape up a defense that allowed more than 30 points a

game last season.

The Aggie offense, on the other hand, sputtered to a mere 16 points a game in 1984. California aid may be on the way there, too.

Coming to help the offense is highly touted quarterback David Giannini, a 6-foot, 185-pound JC transfer. While at San Mateo College, Giannini passed for more than 4,600 yards and 42 touchdowns. He was named the Bay Area player of the year.

The junior college players recruited for the offense include three wide receivers: Sadao Langfeldt, a 5-10, 185-pounder from San Francisco City College; Luis McDonald, 5-10, 165, Valley College; and Paul Schroeder, 6-foot, 175, from Utah.

Among the high school standouts Zechman signed Wednesday is Carrizozo's Steve Stearns, a 5-10, 160-pound running back. Stearns led the state in rushing last season with 1,953 yards.

Other running backs include Jonathan Jackson of Carson High School in Carson, Calif.; Jesse Mims, 5-11, from Encinal High in Alameda, Calif.; and Anthony Singleton from Hamilton High in Los Angeles.

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Bikes Plus has third series

Duwayne Fritz finished first Sunday in the third Zia Velo and Bikes Plus Race Series of 1985.

Rick Brode, Fritz, Paul Clark, David Gerbitz and Glen Blankenship led the Category A racers up the first hill and for the

first few laps. Gerbitz stayed with the main pack for quite some time, but lost control of his bike after hitting Fritz's rear wheel.

The race continued with Fritz, Clark and Rick Brode all keeping an eye on each other. On the last

lap, Fritz was able to open a small gap in the hilly section. He managed to expand this gap to a 10-second winning margin. Brode followed Clark to the finish line, where he was unable to outsprint the Texan.

Zia Velo is having a meeting this Wednesday at 7 p.m. at the Branigan Library. The meeting is open to the public. Bob Romero, an athletic trainer with the NMSU men's football and women's volleyball team will be speaking on injury prevention and training methods.

The Zia Velo team members will also discuss race strategies for the Inaugural Race in Juarez this Sunday. Team members are encouraged to participate in next Sunday's trip to Mexico.

The last race in the Bikes Plus Race Series has been postponed due to the Inaugural Race. The last race in the Series will be held on Sunday, March 3rd, with racers to meet at 1:30 p.m. in front of Bikes Plus.

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