

SPORTS

Ag netters can't pull off upset

Close losses prevent A&M from ousting Trinity

By CHAREAN WILLIAMS
Assistant Sports Editor

The Texas A&M women's tennis team came close to defeating nationally-ranked Trinity Monday, but the Aggies just couldn't quite pull off the upset.

The 6-3 loss to the Tigers at Omar Smith Tennis Center drops the Aggies to 8-5 in match play. A&M Head Coach Jan Baldwin said she was pleased with the Aggies' play.

"I thought we played well," said Baldwin. "We played hard and fought a good fight. They're were some real close matches that could have gone either way."

Baldwin seemed most pleased with the play of Kim Labuschagne. Labuschagne won her No. 3 singles match and teamed with Helen Christiaanse to keep the two undefeated in doubles play at the No. 3 position.

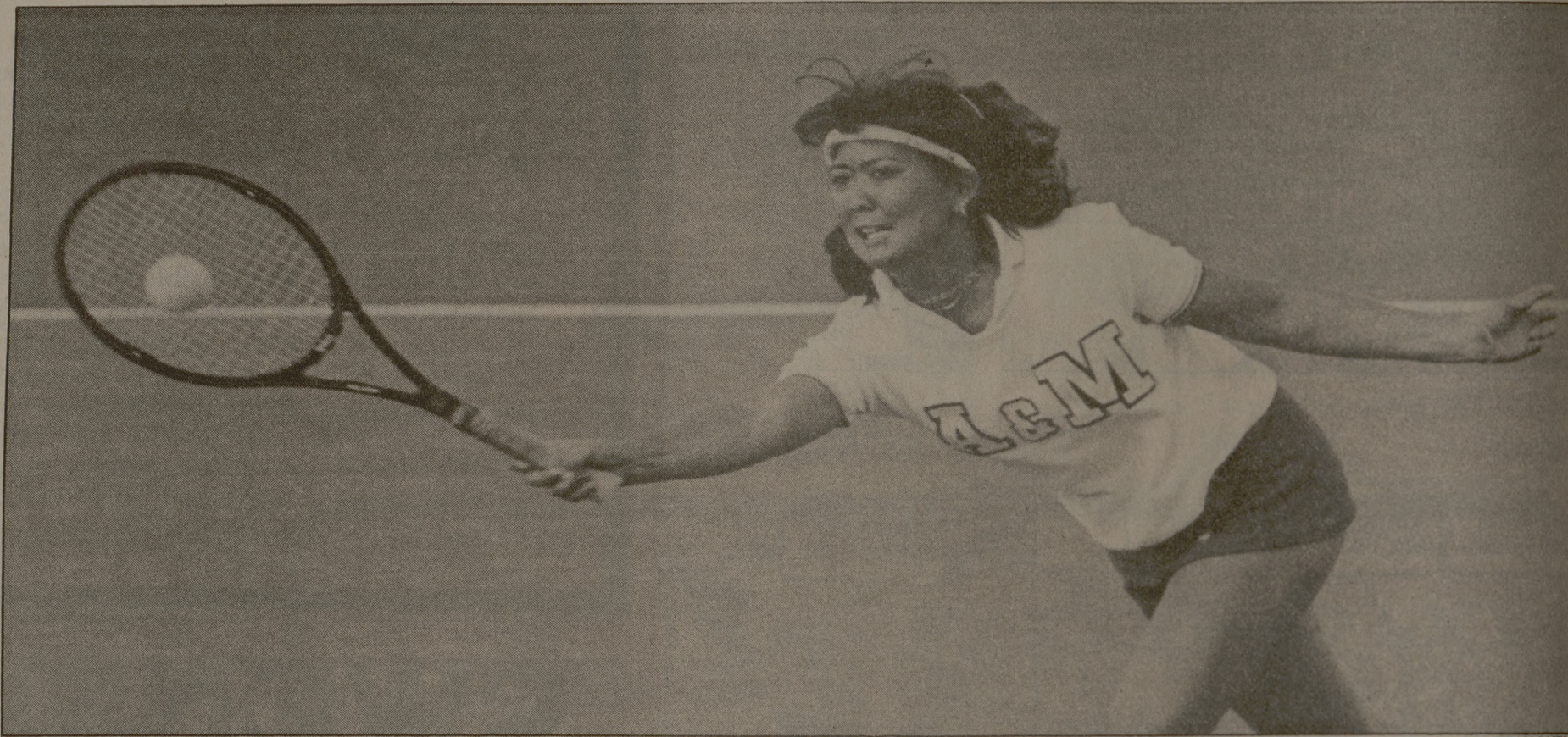
The Aggies will battle No. 3 Texas in Austin on Thursday and then return home to play LSU on Saturday.

Singles results:

No. 1 singles — TU's Gretchen Rush defeated A&M's Vanne Akagi 6-4, 6-3; No. 2 singles — TU's Lisa Sassano def. A&M's Nandini Rangarajan 6-1, 6-0; No. 3 singles — A&M's Kim Labuschagne def. TU's Elvyn Barrable 6-7, 6-4, 6-3; No. 4 singles — A&M's Gaye Lynne Gensler def. TU's Jana Klepac 6-1, 3-6, 7-5; No. 5 singles — TU's Dabney Langhorne def. A&M's Helen Christiaanse 6-4, 6-3; No. 6 singles — TU's Mary Graber def. A&M's Laura Liang 7-6, 5-7, 6-3.

Doubles results:

No. 1 doubles — TU's Rush-Sassano def. A&M's Akagi-Gensler 6-4, 6-3; No. 2 doubles — TU's Barrable-Klepac def. A&M's Rangarajan-Liang 7-5, 6-3; No. 3 doubles — A&M's Christiaanse-Labuschagne def. Graber-Jennifer Potter 6-3, 6-4.



Texas A&M's Vanne Akagi stretches out to run down a fore-hand shot during a No. 1 doubles match against Trinity University at the Omar Smith Tennis Center Monday afternoon.

Akagi and her partner Gaye Lynne Gensler lost their match, 6-3, 6-3. The Aggies, now 8-5 in match play this season, lost to the nationally-ranked Tigers from San Antonio, 6-3.

Photo by DEAN SAITO

Lamar's exotic birds look for cage respect

CHAREAN WILLIAMS
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Now that the Houston Cougar dynasty is dead (at least for one year), Texas has a new basketball king. The crown was passed by the Cougars to the Lamar Cardinals.

Lamar, you say. Who's that? Where's that?

The Cardinals play their basketball in Beaumont under Coach Pat Foster in the Southland Conference. Foster earned his wings under flying ace Eddie Sutton at Arkansas.

Foster is now the most-wanted basketball coach in America. He has turned down numerous jobs to stay at Lamar. The latest was a \$200,000 per year offer from Auburn.

And it's no wonder he's the coach everyone wants. Foster has a phenomenal .763 winning percentage —

116 wins and only 36 losses in five years at LU.

Don't think that he played a weak schedule. The Cardinals played such NCAA powerhouses as Louisiana Tech, Syracuse, Washington and UTEP — all on the road this year. In all, Lamar played seven teams that were in the NCAA tournament, not counting the other two times the Cardinals had to play No. 7 Louisiana Tech in conference play.

What, you say, was their record after that?

Only 20-11.

The Redbirds received a bid to the NIT's first round against Southwest Conference past powerhouse, Houston. Since LU plays in the new \$12.1 million Montagne Center, the Cards were selected to host the game.

Beaumonters love their Cards as much as East Coast fans love Georgetown and St. John's. Ticket lines were long and soon all 10,000 seats and standing-room-only tickets were gone.

The partisan crowd led the Cards to a convincing 78-71 win.

Ho. Hum. Just another day at the office.

You see, the Cardinals are used to success. So much so that they probably wouldn't know how to react if

they had a losing season.

Jack Martin was the school's first coach and kept the job for 25 years, compiling a 334-283 record. His reign ended in 1975 when Billy Tubbs took over the job, outdoing his mentor with a 75-46 record over four years.

The vintage year was 1980. LU whipped No. 16 Weber State and upset No. 5 Oregon State. That put the Cards into the Final 16 where they fell to Larry Nance and the Clemson Tigers.

When Tubbs decided Oklahoma was too good an offer to pass up, Foster went from the Ozarks to the piney woods of East Texas.

He has led the Cards to two NCAA berths and three NIT berths,

including NCAA upsets of Miami in 1981 and Alabama in 1983.

The Cards had an 80-game winning streak alive last season in the last game. That, my friends, is the longest winning streak in the nation at the time.

Few teams could accomplish a feat and still get no respect.

In their history, they have been ranked in the Top 20. In fact, even with a 26-5 record last season they were overlooked by the NCAA.

A second round rendezvous Wednesday with Tennessee-Chattanooga in Beaumont is next. Beaumonters were hoping to get Texas A&M ringing the doorbell, but the Aggies left New Mexico with the heads ringing instead.

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