

Aggies lose to Texas 2-0

The largest Texas A&M crowd to watch a soccer match saw the Texas A&M soccer team defeated by the University of Texas 2-0 on Sunday. The loss was disappointing, especially because the team has been performing well in practice. In spite of the loss, the team looked its best since 1976, when they entered the play-offs with a 1-1 record. This was the Aggies' first game in the newly formed Southwest Conference Soccer League. The league's not officially recognized by the SWC, but all SWC schools are participating. MU was scheduled to play the Aggies here on Saturday, but forfeited.

The Aggies could have gained an advantage in the first half when they won the toss and went with a strong wind at their backs. However, Texas scored from six yards out when the ball bounced off an A&M defender and was shot in by a Texas forward. Texas played physically, while A&M tried to work a technical type of game to no avail. The wind was too strong and Texas was too fast. The Aggie passes, which are usually crisp and accurate, fell too often into Texas' possession. Texas was in definite position to score again in the first half when awarded a penalty kick after defender Eduardo Palomo tripped a

Texas player in the penalty area. The kick is taken 12 yards from the goal, with only the kicker and defending goalkeeper involved in the play. Goalkeeper Rafael Saca made an astonishing save by diving to the left and grabbing the ball. Saca had the best game for A&M, making numerous dives and catches.

During the middle of the match, the Aggies began to regain their composure. Center forward Steve Gill scored on a fast break, but his goal was nullified when the referee said Gill pushed a Texas defender on the play. The Aggies continued to run, but could not coordinate as a team.

Texas made the final score 2-0 on a penalty kick. Their center halfback beat Saca this time, putting the ball into the top right corner of the net. Because the match was a close one, many felt the referee was in error to award the penalty kicks to Texas so easily. This second kick was given to Texas after center fullback Lloyd Legg made a slide tackle and stole the ball 10 yards out from the A&M goal.

The team's next home game is a money raising scrimmage to finance trips to Lubbock and Arkansas. They'll play selected ex-pro players from Houston's division one amateur league. It should be a highly skillful and exciting game on March 25 at 2 p.m. The next league game is also at home, April 1 at 2 p.m., against the University of Houston. The game field is north of Olsen Baseball Stadium.



Battalion photo by Pat O'Malley

Texas A&M left wing Kahlid Fityani dribbles past a Texas player during the soccer game Sunday. The Aggies lost their first match of the season 2-0.

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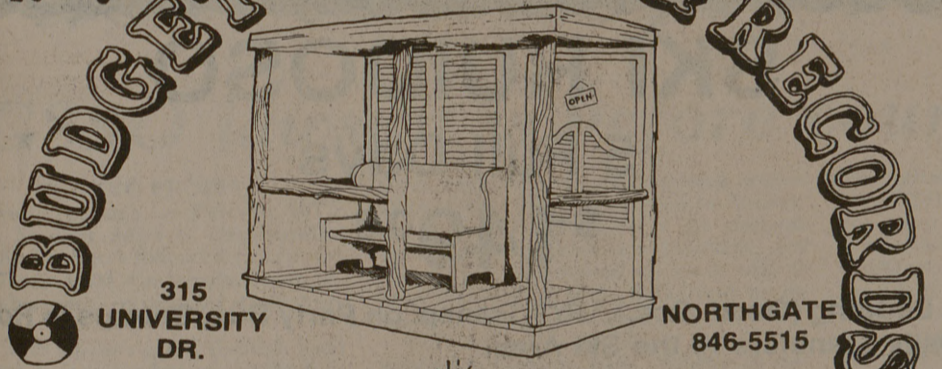
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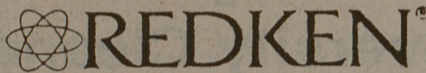
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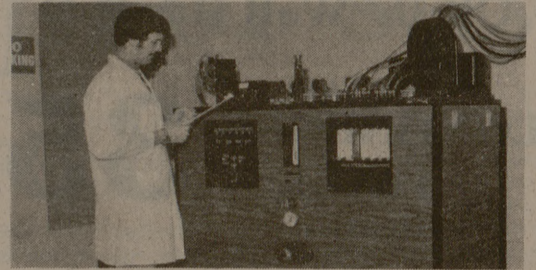
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