

# Sherrill

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offense. We took a lot of things for granted because we had some seasoned defensive players. It was tough (not being in a bowl). But we've been there before and I know that what we're doing will get us there again. If we would have come in and had instant success we might not have been working as hard as we are now. So I think there's a positive thing to everything."

"The season was a disappointment from the fans' point of view, but it was not just another losing season, Sherrill said. "I think the biggest thing I accomplished was probably understanding the students at A&M," he said. "I learned what it really takes to build a successful program here."

"We have to recruit the type of students that fit in here. More so than anywhere else because it's a very tough school academically and it's very family-

oriented where everybody gets involved. The students give so much of themselves to this school."

Another goal achieved by Sherrill during his first year as athletic director, he said, was within the athletic department itself.

"I think the biggest goal that I've achieved is getting the confidence of all the athletic department people from the top all the way down to the trainers and equipment people," he said. "That's very important to me. I think the way you handle your business internally has a lot to do with your success."

Success. A word that has been absent from the Aggies' vocabulary for a long while when it comes to athletics. Sherrill was hired to bring success to the Texas A&M athletic department, he's worked a year trying to fulfill his job and said that, overall, his first year was a step in the right direction.

# Brock: Softball squad 'in good shape,' but hits must pick up

by Joe Tindel Jr.

**Battalion Staff**  
It's been a long road trip for Texas A&M's women's softball team. It started March 17 and ended March 27. Sandwiched between those dates were five losses and a trip to the West Coast that must have seemed longer than it was.

Consequently, Aggie softball coach Bob Brock attributed some of those losses to homesickness. Whether true or not, Texas A&M, now 16-6, brought back to College Station five losses that it didn't have before the trip.

But the Aggies are home, and they've invited some people to come help them celebrate their homecoming. Eleven teams will be down to visit this weekend as the Aggies will host the third Aggie Invitational at Travis Park in Bryan. Play will begin Friday at 9 a.m. and continue throughout the day, and action will continue Saturday and Sunday. Friday's contests will determine the first and second place teams in each of three "pools." A pool will consist of four teams, two of which will receive byes in the first round of the championship tourney, which will begin Saturday and conclude on Sunday. Four of the teams playing this

weekend are ranked nationally. The Aggies, despite those road losses, are ranked second, while Utah State holds the ninth spot. Utah is twelfth and Louisiana Tech is thirteenth.

Texas A&M will begin pool play Friday morning at nine against Baylor. The Aggies will play again at 1 p.m. against Weber State and then host New Mexico at 7 p.m.

Prior to Monday, the Aggies hadn't practiced since March 15, before they left for the Sooner Invitational. While the long road trip may have worn the Aggies down, Brock said, the Aggies may have become a stronger team as a result of that trip.

"If we play the kind of ball that we're playing, even though we've had some ups and downs ... I think that probably we should be in good shape," Brock said. "The biggest question mark we've got right now is (pitcher) Shan McDonald. We don't know exactly what Shan's status is. We're just playing that day by day."

Brock and the Aggies will be hoping for a speedy recovery for McDonald (4-3), who injured a shoulder in one of those west coast games against Cal. State-Fullerton. If McDonald's not able to take the mound this

weekend, the pressure could be on all-America Lori Stoll to handle those chores every game. That, Brock said, could tire her out. Stoll has already pitched in 16 of the Aggies' 22 games this spring.

But Brock said he's also worried about the way the Aggies have been performing at the plate.

"I think our biggest problem right now is not hitting," he said. "When you're not hitting, you're not happy, and I think that affects your defensive play. We have a team batting average right now of .195, and that's about 100 points lower than what we batted all year last year."

Iva Jackson currently leads the Aggies at the plate, batting .283. Cindy Cooper is hitting .259 and Carrie Austgen is hitting .242.

Brock said his team is due a home game or two, since that road trip may have been just a

bit too long. Brock's recollection of the trip began on a gloomy note, but finished on a high note that might indicate he's confident this Aggie team has as good a chance as anybody to capture a national title.

As the story goes ... "We immediately go to Dallas — fly out the next day (after a 2-0 loss to OSU in Oklahoma) — to get to California, and it's raining," Brock said. "And it rains, and it rains, and it rains. So about three days worth of doubleheaders are rained out. We get there on that Sunday and lose a doubleheader to (Cal) Fullerton. I think maybe we were tired. We had spent two and a half hours at the LA airport."

"The worst thing about that day was that was the doubleheader that Shan hurt her shoulder on, and I take most of the responsibility for that. Consequently, (the Aggies suffered) a three-game losing streak, which

is probably unheard of by

of the people who have been here around Aggie softball. Despite wind, weather woes, the Aggies bounced back by sweeping a doubleheader from second-ranked Cal. Pomona, and took second in Fullerton's Pony Invitational in late March.

As Brock recalled: "Not ticing, not throwing, not hitting because of the rain, we got and beat a very talented team a doubleheader. So right there that tells me that we're probably still on the right track."

And for Brock and his players, there's no place like home to help Texas A&M stay on the right track.

"I think you're going to see a lot of problems alleviated this weekend," Brock said. "This is the time for us to get our hitting going and our defense to pick up."

# Future

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like a real team. Chris Lammers, a young (freshman) defensive end for us has really impressed me. He came in weighing 225 and now he's up around 245 or 250."

So far in spring training Sherrill has experimented with many offensive and defensive schemes, including the 3-4 defense, but is still looking for the right running back combination.

"We're doing things both defensively and offensively that we didn't do last year. We're running Sanders (Thomas) at both fullback and tailback trying to find the right combination."

Perhaps some help on both sides of the line of scrimmage will come in the fall when Sherrill crop of recruits take to Kyle Field.

"Really, we just recruited for our needs and were fortunate to get some help all over," Sherrill said. "We got some linemen, both offensively and defensively, and we got some secondary people. So that's going to help us a lot. And of course we got some good quarterbacks and running backs that could help us."

"The thing we got this year that we didn't have last year was speed at the corners (ends and

linebackers) defensively. They're going to put a pressure on the offense when you have that you have some things up for the rest of the defense."

A big challenge next year Sherrill said, will be getting new recruits to fit in with older players. He said he won't hesitate to play a freshman player if he's capable. This past year Sherrill played several freshmen and even started a few during the latter part of the season.

"Sure they'll have the opportunity to play and contribute," he said. "A lot of coaches don't believe that freshman can play, but I do. If they can handle mentally and physically they believe in playing them. Most of them can handle it physically, the mental part is the part that's questionable."

Whether or not a recruit can handle the pressures of college sports, one thing is certain. When next year's recruits arrive, Sherrill's vision of winning in all sports, having notch athletic facilities and better educating the Texas A&M athletes should all be in focus.

# Final Four: Big bucks

**United Press International**  
ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. — Bells are ringing for Albuquerque merchants who continue to tally up the profits that sports-crazed visitors to The Pit dunked into city coffers at the NCAA Final Four tournament.

Each of the 12,000 to 15,000 college basketball fans who flocked to the city spent at least \$84 dollars a day, Convention

Bureau spokeswoman Mary Kay Cline says.

Revenues are estimated at between \$5 million and \$6 million — which comes to \$15 to \$18 out-of-town dollars for every Albuquerque resident.

The estimated \$5 million-plus means that at least \$15 million percolated through the city's economy. Theoretically, every \$1 spent at one business "rolls over" three times as mer-

chants buy supplies to satisfy

hoards of fans. "The best part is we have to spend a dime to get Bob Hoffman, a spokesman for Mayor Harry Kimmer, Wednesday.

Merchants in the "Old Town" district said business nearly tripled during three days the freshest hoops fans were in town.

Merchants Association secretary Betty Skelly, who operates the specialty shop Doolmanas, said business boomed Sunday and Monday, and pace barely slowed Tuesday as out-of-towners rushed to buy last-minute souvenirs.

Joel Sobel, managing partner of the Sheraton Old Town, owner of the adjacent Casa House restaurant, said hotel's Easter weekend occupancy was up 50 percent.

City Hall's single largest contribution to the Final Four is the fleet of gleaming white shuttle buses, paid for with the help of the \$500,000 trip fare paid by the masses. It's the largest contribution between the airport and city's motels and hotels.

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