

The Battalion Sports

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Texas whips A&M to capture title

Three-game sweep gives Longhorns SWC crown, NCAA tourney berth

by John Wagner
Battalion Staff

The Texas Longhorns, paced by the dual offensive attack of Sharon Neugebauer and Kim Larson, whipped the Texas Aggies in three straight games Wednesday to capture their third straight Southwest Conference volleyball championship in front of an estimated 2,400 spectators.

Neugebauer and Larson finished the match with 14 and 12 kills respectively as the Horns cruised, 15-8, 15-12, 15-10, completing their sweep of conference play with a 10-0 record.

It was an especially frustrating match for the Aggies, who came into G. Rollie White with an 8-1 conference record and hopes of upsetting the Horns. An A&M win would have forced the teams into a playoff match Monday night in Austin, with the winner claiming the automatic bid to the NCAA tournament.

But Neugebauer and Larson made sure the Longhorns would have Monday night off.

"We did all the things we wanted to do," Larson said. "We came into this match really confident."

The Longhorns jumped out to a quick 7-0 lead in the first game before A&M was able to get on the scoreboard. The Aggies had problems blocking, and UT took advantage of it to take the lead.

"I think the crowd made us a little nervous at first," A&M coach Terry Condon said. "It's the first time we've ever played in front of that many people."

A&M cut Texas' lead to 13-8 late in the game, but that was as close as they could get.

In the second game, A&M once again gave the Horns a big lead, this time letting them jump in front 9-3 before staging a comeback attempt.

With the score 9-5 in Texas' favor, the referees

took away an apparent UT side-out and gave the point to A&M on a net call. UT coach Mick Haley, upset at what appeared to be the referees' indecision, came off the bench to complain. He was given a yellow warning card, and the referees stood by their earlier call.

The slight controversy seemed to fire the Aggies up, and they charged back to tie the score at 11-11 before the Horns' attack put the game away. Jo Beth Palmer, Fran Teeter and Neugebauer each had a spike to put A&M away, 15-12.

"We just served out at too many crucial points," A&M's Linda Clausen said.

The third game was all Texas, and only a UT letdown late in the game allowed the Aggies to make it close, 15-10.

Condon was obviously disappointed in the Aggies' play.

"We're supposed to be the No. 1 defensive team in the conference," Condon said, "and we certainly didn't show that tonight."

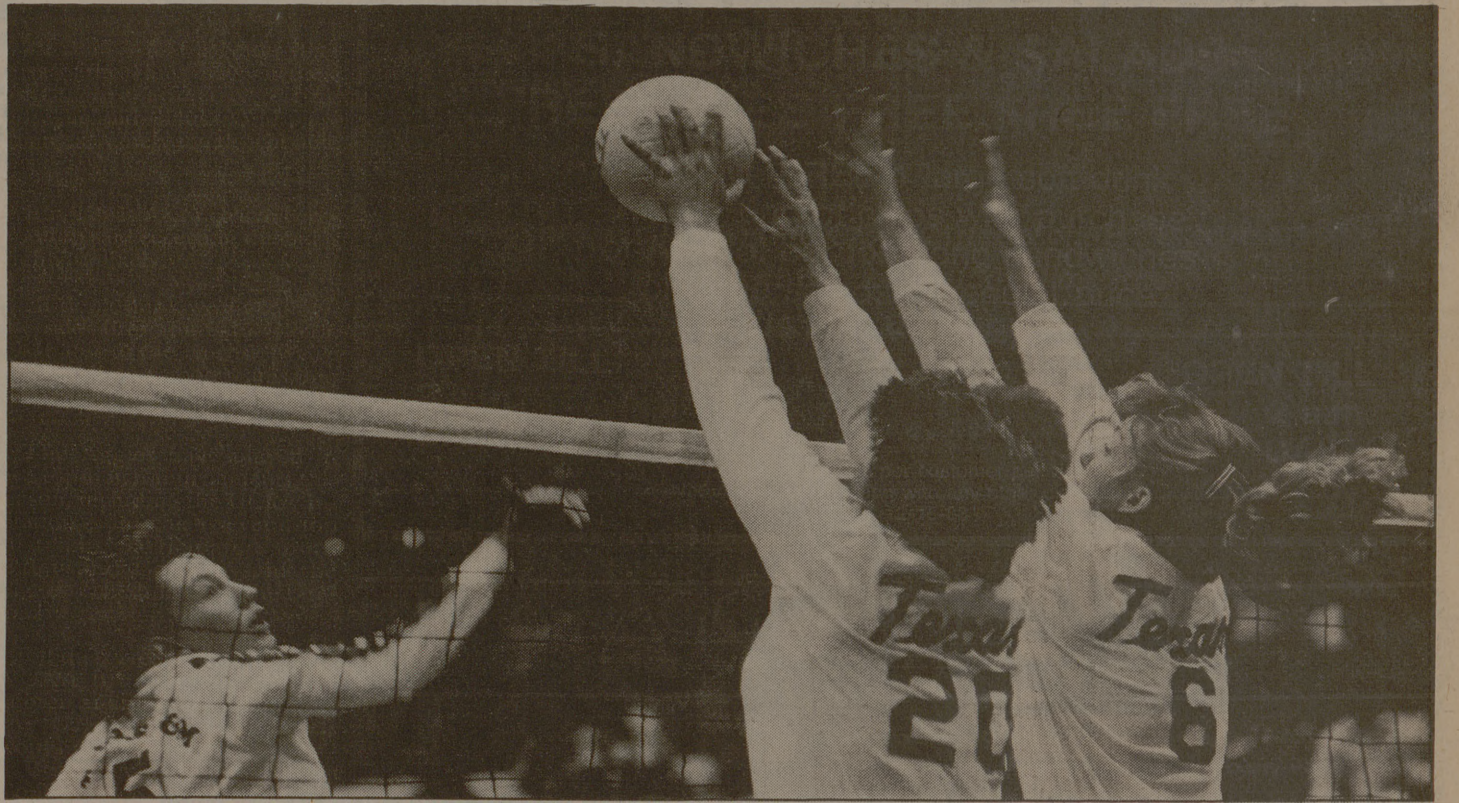
"Some of key players had horrible matches."

The Longhorns came into the match leading the SWC in offense with a .280 attack average, but in the end, it was their defense — not the Aggies' — that clinched the win. Time after time the Horns stood firm against A&M's attack, and UT's blocking caused major problems for the Aggies throughout the match.

"We played a little bit higher at the net than they (the Aggies) did," Haley said. "We were successful in doing what we wanted to do."

The win boosted Texas' season record to 30-6, with games against Purdue, Ohio State and a tournament appearance at the Northwestern Invitational tournament left on the schedule.

The Aggies dropped to 23-21 on the season.



Dave Scott, Battalion photo

Texas Longhorn volleyball players Jo Beth Palmer (20), and Kim Larson reach up to block Chris Zogata's spike Wednesday night.

The Longhorns captured the Southwest Conference championship and a berth in the NCAA playoffs with a three-game sweep.

Haley says Ags should get bid

by Kay Mallett
Battalion Staff

Texas A&M's preseason goal of reaching the NCAA regional playoffs this year can still become reality despite losing the Southwest Conference title to the University of Texas Wednesday, Longhorn coach Mick Haley said.

In fact, Haley said A&M has a better-than-average chance for an at-large bid to the playoffs.

"I think A&M is better than three of the teams that won their conference and are getting bids," he said. "Plus, A&M played an extremely tough schedule this year."

But Texas A&M coach Terry Condon said receiving the bid is highly unlikely.

"I don't think we'll get one," she said after the 8-15, 12-15, 10-15 loss to the Horns. "We've played a lot of good teams, but our record isn't that good."

The Aggies have played in five top-notch tournaments this season, including the UCLA Invitational, in which several top 20 teams participated. Both Haley and Condon said the Aggies' schedule hurt their record.

Of the 24 teams that make the NCAA tournament, six are chosen at at-large. Condon said the California teams likely would get those bids.

But Haley said the Southwest Conference is underrated when compared to the well-known west coast teams. He added that

tradition also helps the California's teams when it comes to handing out invitations.

"The Southwest Conference has some of the top talent across the country," he said. "That ta-

lent should be recognized. We're not the patty-cake conference the west coast coaches think we are."

A&M finishes up its season at Louisiana State University over

the Thanksgiving holidays. Haley predicted that if A&M defeats either LSU or the University of Southern California, the Aggies would get a bid for regionals.

Prediction

UPI picks Michigan over Ohio State in annual battle for money, prestige

United Press International

Even when there's no Big Ten title on the line, the Michigan-Ohio State game keeps the bowl-watchers waiting. The winner of Saturday's battle at Ann Arbor, Mich., goes to the Sugar Bowl while the loser settles for the Fiesta Bowl.

The difference in the Sugar and Fiesta Bowls is \$900,000, as if bragging rights weren't enough to get the Wolverines and Buckeyes ready to bang heads.

No. 8 Michigan's attack revolves around the passing of Steve Smith, while No. 10 Ohio State's offense is more balanced. The Buckeyes can run 1,000-yard rusher Keith Byars or let Mike Tomczak throw. The Wolverines counter with a strong defense against both the pass and rush, the home field advantage and revenge motive (Ohio State won 24-14 last year and 14-9 in 1981).

Prediction: Michigan 20, Ohio State 14.

In other games Saturday:

East

Penn State 24, Pittsburgh 17 — Lions have one more upset in them.

West Virginia 31, Syracuse 14 — Orange won't pull off another shocker.

Boston College 40, Holy Cross 22 — Good test for Holy Cross.

The difference in the Sugar and Fiesta Bowls is \$900,000, as if bragging rights weren't enough to get the Wolverines and Buckeyes ready to bang heads.

Harvard 34, Yale 6 — "The Game" becomes "The Mismatch."

Also, Rutgers 18, Temple 14; Penn 21, Dartmouth 14.

South

Clemson 21, South Carolina 15 — Tigers aren't as hungry for non-league foe.

Tennessee 27, Kentucky 24 — Vols shake off last week's upset.

North Carolina 31, Duke 17 — Pair of three-game streaks end.

Maryland 30, North Carolina State 12 — Terps snap slide with ease.

Also, Virginia 19, Virginia Tech 16.

Midwest

Illinois 34, Northwestern 6 — Illini has fun against overmatched Wildcats.

Iowa 44, Minnesota 16 — Another Big Ten mismatch.

Missouri 25, Kansas 10 — Tigers keep faint Big Eight hopes alive.

Notre Dame 24, Air Force 14 — Irish outrush run-happy Falcons.

Also, Oklahoma State 28, Iowa State 20; Wisconsin 21, Michigan State 10.

Southwest

Texas 34, Baylor 14 — Longhorns surprise by winning big.

Southern Methodist 29, Arkansas 7 — Angry Mustangs stamped Hogs.

Louisiana St. 28, Tulane 14 — Small consolation for Tigers' miserable season.

Also, Texas A&M 20, Texas Christian 8; Texas Tech 18, Houston 16.

West

Washington 25, Washington State 12 — Huskies avoid repeat of '82 to clinch Rose Bowl.

UCLA 24, USC 16 — Trojans write this year off.

Brigham Young 46, Utah 19 — Cougars offense no match for Utes.

California 18, Stanford 14 — Bears won't need help from the band this time.

Arizona State 26, San Jose State 14 — Wildcats stopped slide last week.

Also, Nevada-Las Vegas 10, Long Beach State 7.

Last week: 22-6

Totals: 234-85

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