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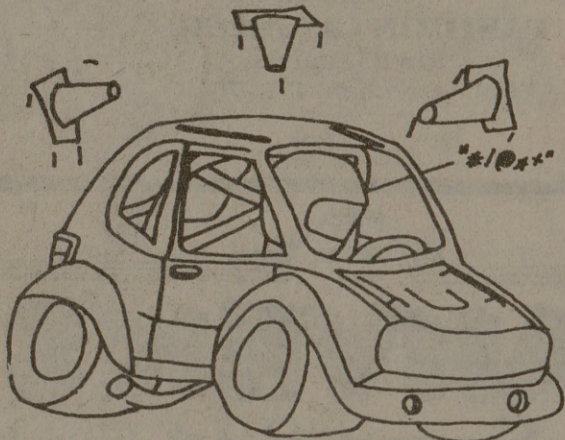
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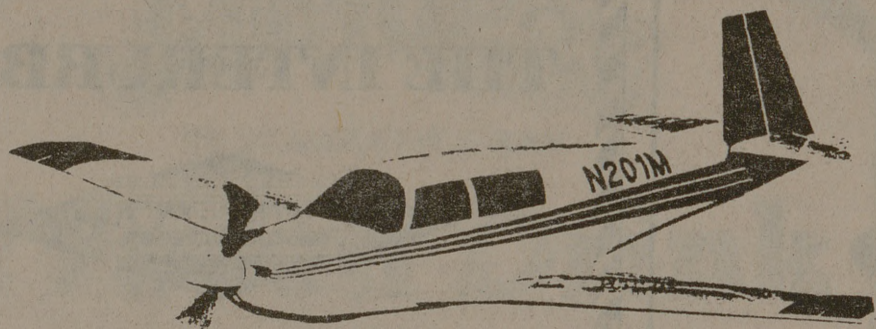


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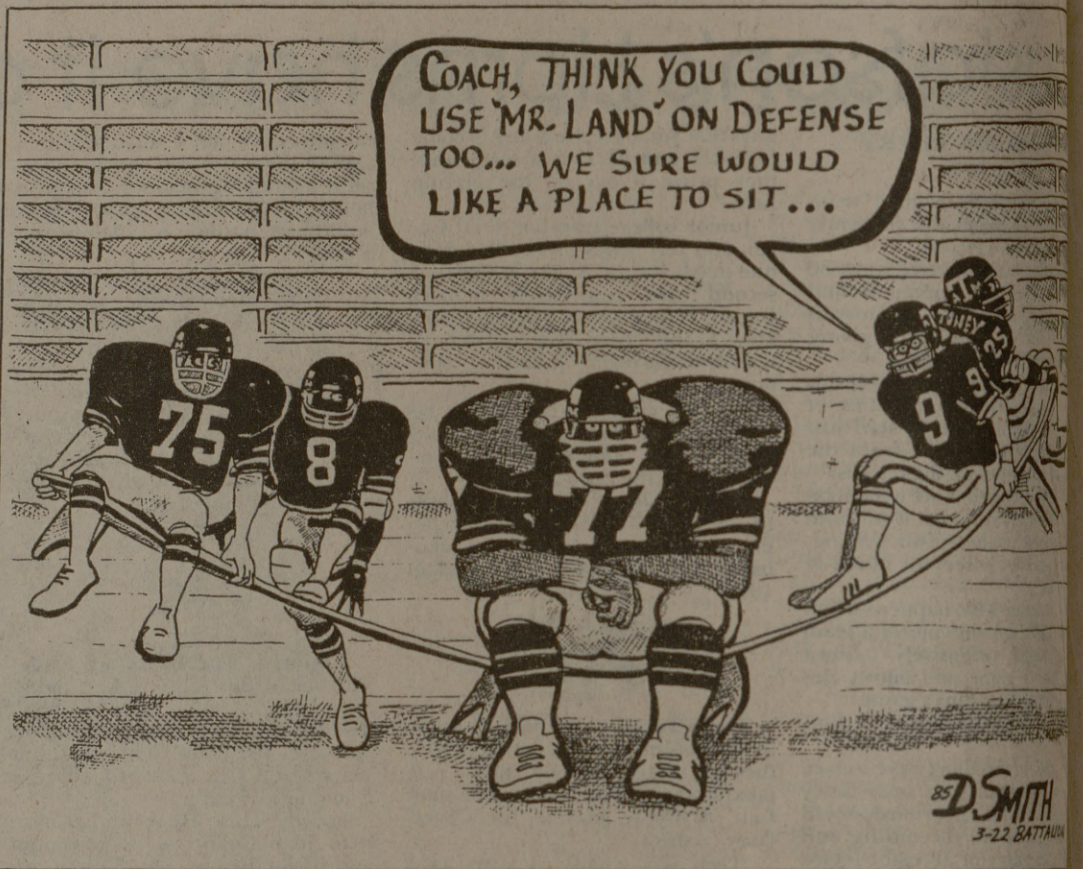
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No. 3 Horns cruise past Ags, 'Hawaiian Punch'

By MARYBETH ROHSNER
Sports Writer

Vanne Akagi trekked over 3,000 miles to play tennis for Texas A&M. She's living proof that surfing isn't the only sport in Hawaii.

Akagi, A&M's top singles player, is from Wahiawa, Hawaii. The junior computer science major was 1982's high school state champion during her senior year. And, although College Station is a long way from the Hawaiian Islands, Akagi has found her niche in the ranks of the A&M women's tennis team.

Akagi provides A&M's "Hawaiian Punch" so to speak. "Vanne is playing really well," said A&M Coach Jan Baldwin. "She's looking better and better as her confidence level rises."

Baldwin said Akagi has been challenged by the nation's best tennis players, and that experience will help her in future matches.

"The competition in the number one spot is incredible," Baldwin said. Baldwin said that just the chance to play Trinity University's No. 3-ranked Gretchen Rush this past Monday will prove to be an asset for Akagi, even though she lost 6-4, 6-3.

"I think playing well against Rush did make Vanne feel much better," Baldwin said. "She didn't win, but it boosted her confidence. She's just not getting breaks when she needs them."

Akagi felt good about her performance against Rush.

"I thought I played pretty well," Akagi said. "(Rush) was really good."

Akagi faced No. 1-ranked Beverly Bowes Thursday when the Ags traveled to Austin to play No. 3 Texas. Bowes defeated Akagi 6-1, 6-4. But, as Akagi said before the match, she had "nothing to lose" by playing the nation's top-ranked woman collegiate player.

"All the pressure is on her," Akagi said.

Akagi, who was named to the 1983 All-Southwest Conference team, isn't sure what she plans to do after graduation. She says she'd like to try pro tennis.

"It's hard to say," Akagi said. "It all depends on how I do this year and next year."

For now, Akagi seems content to work on her degree and practice for the Aggies' upcoming matches.

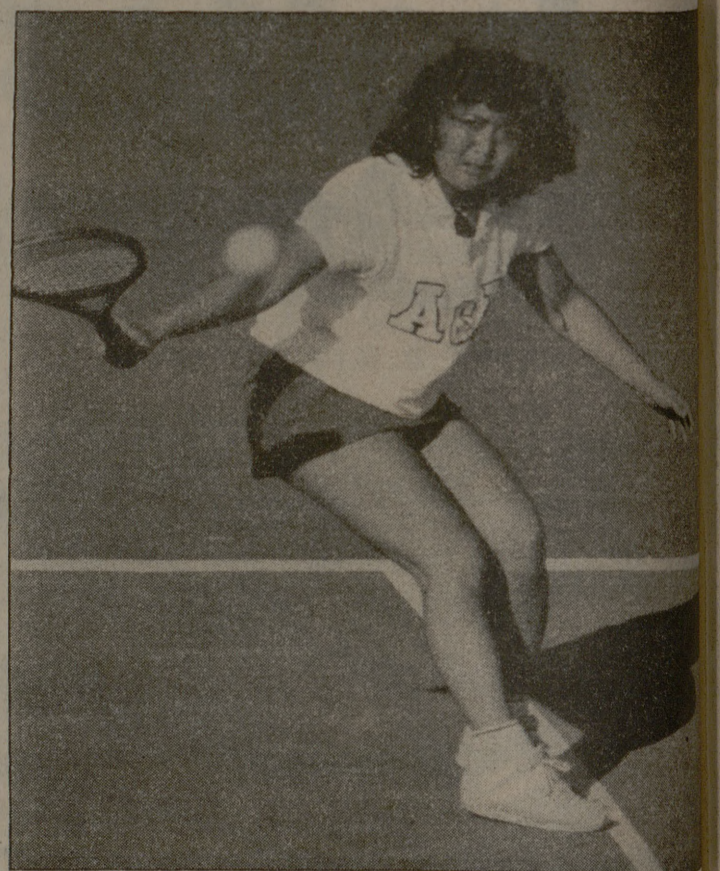


Photo by GREG BALDWIN

Texas A&M's No. 1 singles player Vanne Akagi hits a slicing backhand down the line during a match earlier this season. Akagi and the rest of the A&M women's tennis team were overpowered in Austin Thursday, losing to No. 3 Texas 9-0.

A&M will battle LSU at Omar Smith Tennis Center on Saturday and then travel to Waco to face the Baylor Bears on Tuesday. Coach Baldwin is optimistic about both matches.

"We're ready to go," Baldwin said. "We're trying to break into the Top 20 and right now we're No. 25 in the rankings. We can't afford to lose (these next two matches)."

A&M vs. Texas singles results:

No. 1 singles — UT's Beverly Bowes defeated A&M's Vanne Akagi 6-1, 6-4; No. 2 singles — UT's Michelle Carrier defeated A&M's Nandini Rangarajan 6-2, 6-3; No. 3 singles — UT's Diana Dopson defeated

A&M's Kim Labuschagne 6-3, 6-4; No. 4 singles — UT's Heather Dredge defeated A&M's Gave Gensler 6-2, 7-5; No. 5 singles — UT's Robyn Field defeated A&M's Helen Christiane 6-3, 6-0; No. 6 singles — UT's Jen Greivy defeated A&M's Laura Liang 7-5, 7-6.

A&M vs. Texas doubles results:

No. 1 doubles — UT's Bowes-Greivy defeated A&M's Akagi-Gensler 6-3; No. 2 doubles — UT's Dopson-Greivy defeated A&M's Labuschagne-Rangarajan 7-5, 6-5; No. 3 doubles — UT's Carrier-Field defeated A&M's Christiane-Labuschagne 4-6, 6-4, 6-2.