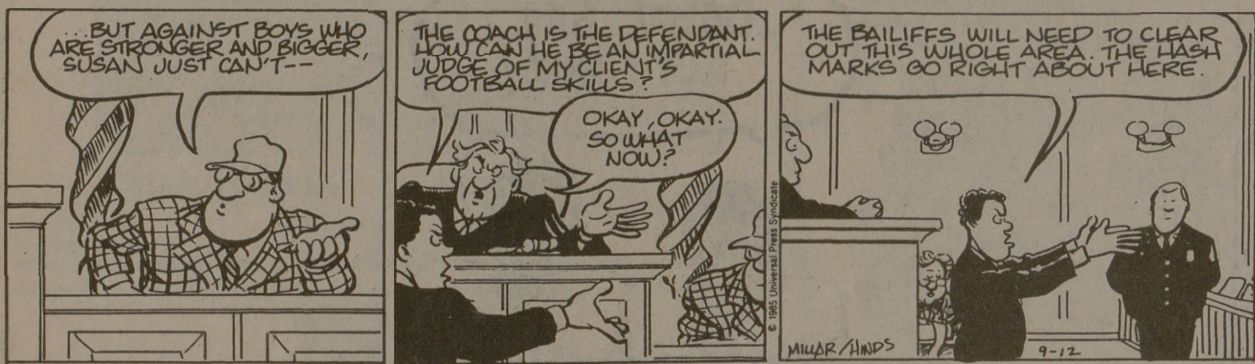


TANK McNAMARA®

by Jeff Millar & Bill Hinds



Coaches' poll ranks Aggie spikers No. 15

By CHAREAN WILLIAMS
Assistant Sports Editor

Despite an upset loss at the hands of Sam Houston State in its first game of the season, the Texas A&M volleyball team still found a way to earn more national recognition.

The Aggies, who lost to the Bearkats 18-16, 17-15, 15-12 Monday, are ranked in this week's Tachikara Coaches Top 20 Poll. Terry Condon's spikers came in at No. 15 this week, down a spot from last week's No. 14 ranking.

Although the Aggies had a 33-4 record and were No. 15 in the NCAA Top 20 last season, the Tachikara poll failed to rank A&M even once last season.

"It's nice to finally get recognition from them," Condon said. "But, the most important poll is the NCAA poll. We want to be ranked in that one."

A&M leaves Thursday for a weekend jaunt to Illinois, where it will compete in the Southern Illinois Tournament.

Condon said she was expecting her players to respond to their upset loss.

"We need to play better, obviously," Condon said. "All the teams in the tournament are about even. I think we're ahead in experience. I expect a tough tournament with some good matches."

A&M assistant coach Mardi Alexander said the Aggies toughest



Volleyball Top 20 Poll

Here's the Tachikara Coaches' Top 20 Poll with overall record in parentheses through Sept. 9.

1. UCLA — (3-0)
2. USC — (2-0)
3. Stanford — (0-0)
4. Pacific — (1-0)
5. Nebraska — (2-0)
6. San Jose St. — (5-0)
7. Cal-Poly SLO — (0-0)
8. Hawaii — (2-0)
9. Texas — (3-0)
10. San Diego St. — (3-0)
11. W. Michigan — (1-0)
12. Colorado St. — (1-1)
13. BYU — (0-1)
14. Pepperdine — (1-2)
15. Texas A&M — (0-1)
16. Northwestern — (4-0)
17. Arizona — (1-0)
18. Oregon — (1-3)
19. Tennessee — (0-0)
20. Wyoming — (3-2)

opponents would probably be Minnesota and Kentucky.

Alexander added that, mentally, the Aggies seemed to be better prepared since the loss to Sam Houston.

"We talked things out and worked out some things," Alexander said. "I think we really have a positive attitude about things and are in a better state of mind since the Sam Houston game."

"I just kept waiting for us to wake up — to hit some serves over the net instead of in the net — and we never did."

AGGIE VOLLEYBALL NOTES:

Condon said that the only player who played well in the Sam Houston game was Stacey Smith, the Aggies' new starter at middle blocker. All-American Sherri Brinkman looks like a new person since arriving in College Station Sept. 3. The Aggies' middle blocker is much thinner since playing in the World University Games in Japan this summer. The Aggies will return home from Illinois early Sunday evening and will hit the road again Tuesday afternoon for San Diego. A&M plays host and No. 10 ranked San Diego State in its first round match at 9:30 p.m. (CST) Sept. 19. Remember, the Aggies upset SDSU last year at G. Rollie White. No. 9 Texas gets a shot at No. 1 UCLA this weekend. The teams play Friday in Austin and Saturday in San Antonio. Last year, the Bruins beat the Horns for a Final Four berth.

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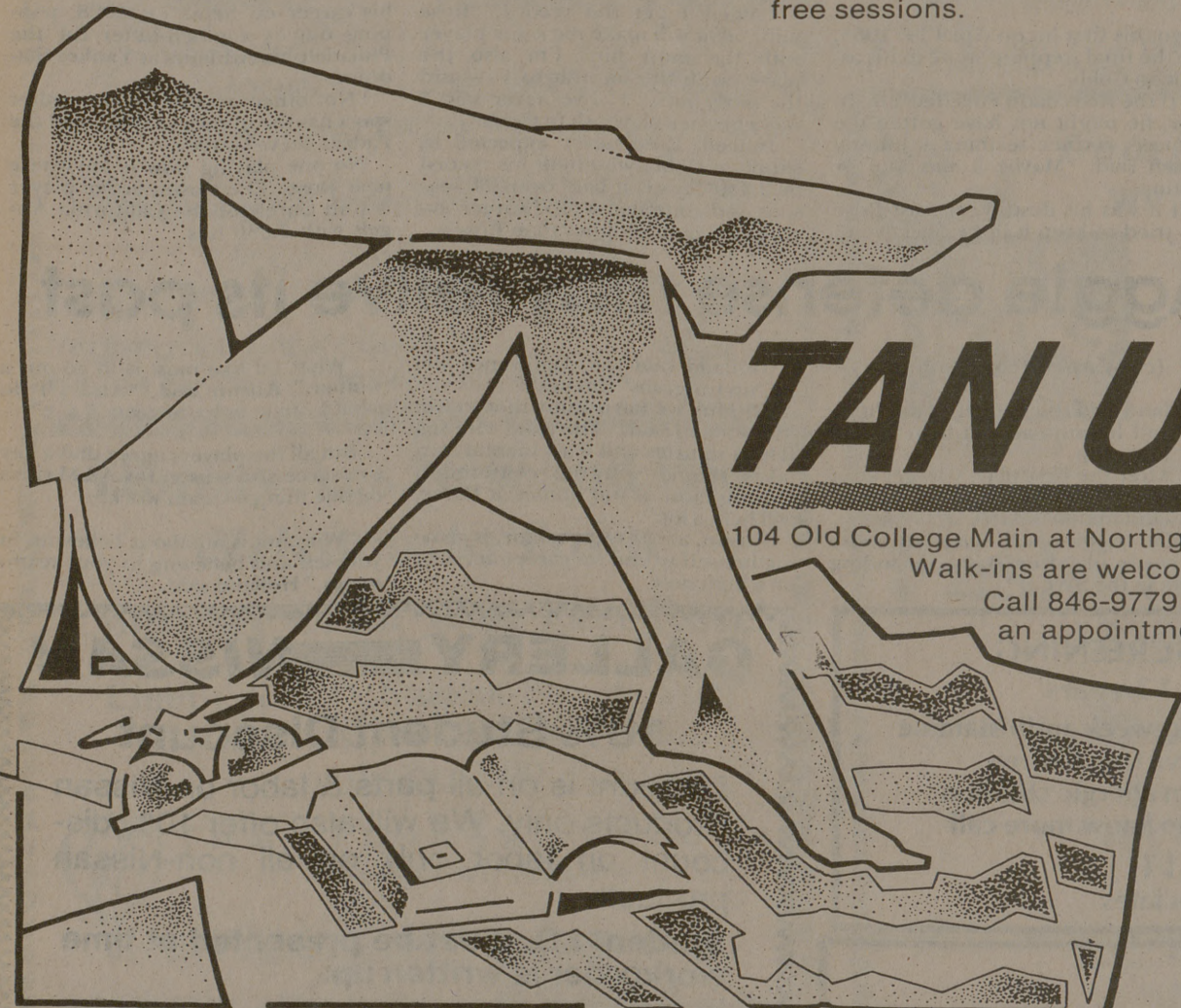
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