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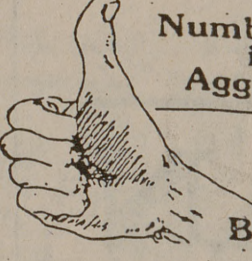
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Ags lucky to have Foster's No. 13

By Charean Williams
 Assistant Sports Editor

Texas A&M left fielder Cindy Foster wears No. 13 "just for luck."
 "I had personalized plates on my Toyota that said 'TOY 13,'" Foster said. "That's why I made it through. I was lucky."

What Foster made it through was the night of July 10, 1983, and the many months of pain that followed.

"I had been out of town and was driving home on the Gulf Freeway in Houston Sunday night," the Friendswood native said softly. "I was coming over a hill in the left-hand lane, and, I don't remember this, but I met a drunk driver. He was driving on the wrong side of the road. We met at the top of the hill."

Foster's car was pinned underneath the truck and she was trapped inside.

Her list of injuries were numerous — massive scalp lacerations across her face and head; broken right arm with the tendons leading to her arm totally severed; broken and dislocated hip; internal bleeding; lacerations on both knees and one posterior cruciate gone.

She had 180 stitches all over her body, spent 6½ hours in surgery, three days in intensive care and 31 days restrained on her back in the hospital.

Orthopedic surgeons told Foster she would never walk again much less play softball.

"I had been really down, wondering why it happened," Foster said. "It had to have happened for a reason. It was a challenge sent to me, trying to see what I could be."

Foster accepted the challenge and beat the odds.

"I got out of the hospital on August 10," Foster said. "My parents



A&M's Cindy Foster, who was critically injured in a car wreck three years ago, is trying to lead the Ags to the national championship.

Photo by Anthony S. Casper

told me there was no way I was going back to school in the fall, which started at the end of August. I said, 'By God, I'm going to go back.'"

When the Aggies took the field for the first fall '83 game, Foster was suffering mentally as well as physically.

"I could barely stand to go out to

the field," she said. "Right then I thought I would never play again. But that night I went out to Kyle Field. I just wanted to run one lap. I went 150 yards and I was cringing."

But with trainer Karen Tong's help, Foster's long and often painful rehabilitation was completed. In fact, being used as a designated hit-

ter in the spring of '84, Foster what she calls her best hitting season.
 "I knew I was going to do it when no one else thought I would," Foster said. "I put a lot of pressure on myself — I always have. I would be bored if it was any other way."

Now, three years later, Foster has a new outlook on life, most of it speed back and the same old pain.
 "This season, I have already won as many bases as I did in my freshman season," Foster said. "My speed is as good as it's ever been, which is about 95 percent."

"I still have the pain in my back there's not a day we run and I hit in second. I hate to lose."

This season, Foster is hitting for the No. 3 Aggies, who are ranked in Columbia, S.C., for a four-game series with South Carolina Saturday and Sunday.

Having been on the Aggie national championship team her freshman season, Foster would like to do better than to end her career the same way.

"I don't think we're going to win another game," Foster said. "I'm not a team in the nation that we're going to win it all."

Following the season, the senior will undergo surgery to have an artificial hip.

"It's at this point in the season I pray that we remember all the sacrifices we made," she said. "You think back to all you put in gives you a boost. You know you make it one more time."

"I know where I've been and I can do. But you never get to a point where you're satisfied. How I feel about this season, I'm proud about what we've accomplished, but there's a lot of left unfinished."

Netters commence SWC road swings

A&M faces tough matches with No. 1 SMU, No. 9 Arkansas

By Ken Sury
 Assistant Sports Editor

The Texas A&M men's tennis team got a big confidence builder when it knocked off No. 10 Texas Christian Saturday, and the Aggies will need every bit of that confidence against No. 1 Southern Methodist today.

A&M is in Dallas for a Southwest Conference match with top-ranked SMU, which drubbed No. 7 Texas,

Men's Tennis

6-3, Tuesday at the Longhorns' new tennis complex.

The Mustangs are 5-0 in SWC play and have only lost five of their last 45 conference matches.

A&M Coach David Kent knows the Aggies, currently ranked No. 24 and 2-2 in the SWC, will be in for an uphill battle.

"They're No. 1 in the country,

and deservedly so, so it'll be tough," Kent said. "Right now they've been treating everybody like a stepchild."

Kent said he hopes the confidence-building TCU win will carry over into the SMU match.

"We're not going down there to lose," he said. "We have nothing to lose and everything to gain (by beating SMU)."

A&M's No. 1 singles player, Kimmo Alkio, will be in for one of his toughest matches of the year as

he takes on SMU's Richey Boren currently the No. 3 singles player in the nation. Alkio is ranked 28th.

A&M's weekend action will ease much Saturday as it travels the Ozarks to play No. 9 Arkansas. The Razorbacks handed the Aggies a 7-2 setback Tuesday.

In singles play, Arkansas has a 1-2 punch with Joey Blake, ranked seventh in the nation, and Blair, who is No. 8.

Ags need big win over Owls to keep pace in conference

The Texas A&M women's tennis team is no longer calling the shots in the Southwest Conference race, but neither is it out of the running.

No. 18 A&M faces Rice Sunday in Houston and needs to win seven matches to keep pace with SMU, which beat the Owls 7-2 Thursday.

The Mustangs are 7-0 in SWC action with a dual match with TCU re-

Women's Tennis

maining. But Texas, which finished at 6-2, is in first place because the conference standings are based on the number of individual matches won. UT's match-win mark is 50-22, while SMU is in second at 46-17.

A&M and TCU are tied for third place with 4-1 records and a match-win mark of 33-12.

A&M Coach Bobby Kleinecke said it will be tough for the Aggies to win since their remaining matches are on the road, but believes his team's depth in the singles competition is superior to Rice.

The toughest match for the Ag-

gies will be the No. 1 singles player, A&M's Vanne Akagi plays Vanne Wood, who is currently ranked 13 in the nation.

Both Akagi and Wood are off victories over SMU's Jean Sterling, and Kleinecke said Akagi will have to play at least a good match as she did against Sterling she hopes to beat Wood.

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