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# Sports

## A&M chills Houston in 4 games

Aggies look to NCAA bid after victory

By Danny Myers  
 Sports Writer

During the warm-ups before the Texas A&M volleyball team took on the University of Houston Wednesday night, the loud speakers in G. Rollie White Coliseum were playing some tunes from "The Big Chill" soundtrack.

Maybe it was because of the weather, or maybe it was because of the Aggies' performances lately. They had lost four of their last seven matches, but they weren't to be denied against the Cougars.

The Aggies won 15-4, 15-4, 12-15, 16-14 in the last home game for five seniors: Stacey Gildner, Margaret Spence, Laura Hoppe, Stacey Smith and Chris Zogata. They received roses before the match and came out smelling like those roses when it was all over.

The win gave Texas A&M a 23-10 record, while it dropped the University of Houston to 11-12.

The Aggies must have "Heard it Through the Grapevine" that a loss to the Cougars may have meant sitting home during the NCAA play-offs.

A&M shot out of the gate and won the first two games with little opposition. The Aggies couldn't quite muster a shutout, though. In the third game, A&M was winning 12-8, but lost its concentration and the last seven points as the Cougars stayed alive with a 15-12 win.

In the fourth game, the Cougars acted like they didn't want the Aggies to grab the victory, but eventually fell to A&M.

As a team, the Aggies hit .281, while the Cougars hit only .182.

A&M Coach Al Givens had mixed emotions about the match.

"I thought we played well in the first two games," Givens said. "Then they sort of put us to sleep and took

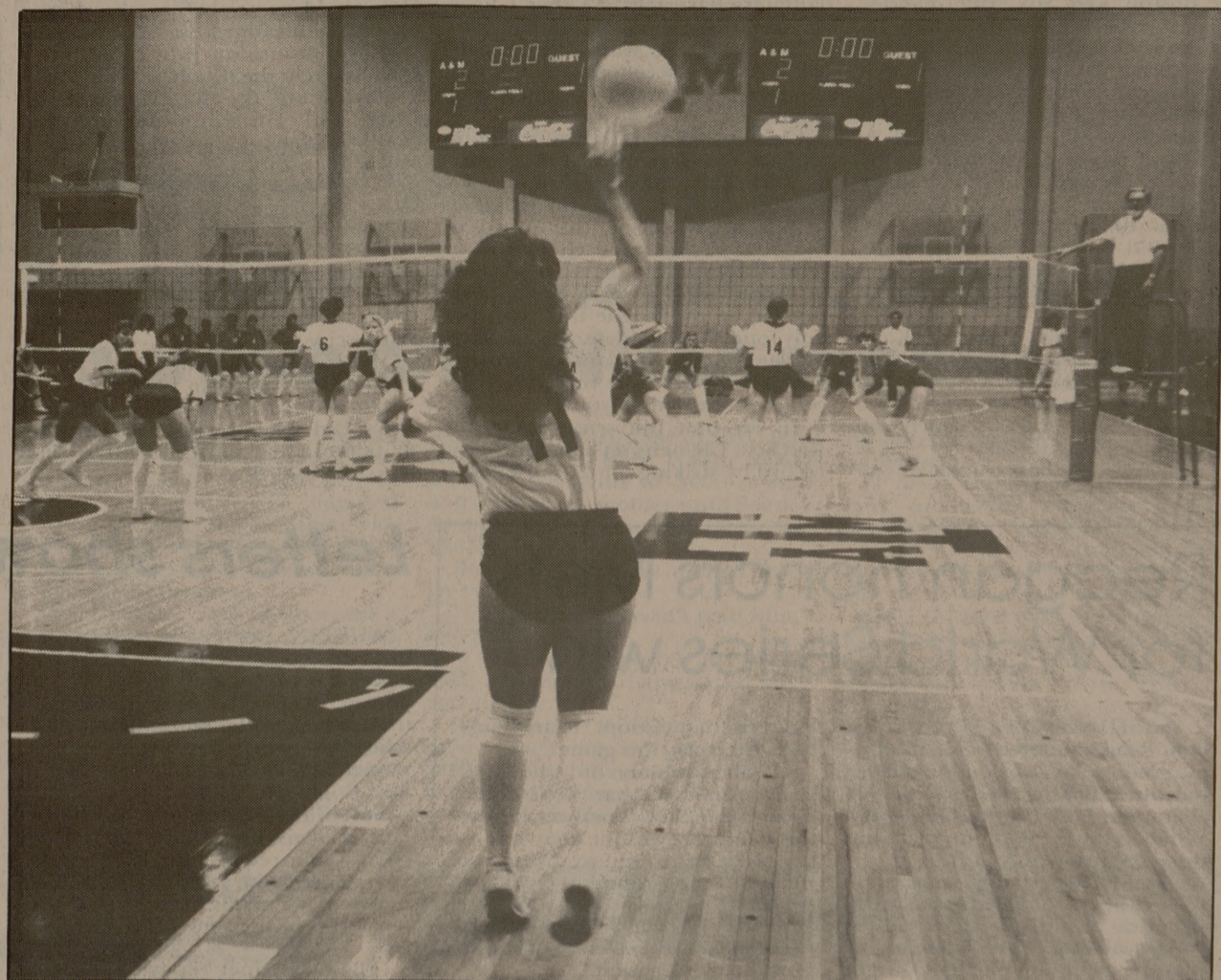


Photo by Mike Sanchez

Texas A&M's Laura Hoppe serves to the Houston Cougars in the second game of the

Aggies' four-game match. A&M defeated the Cougars for the second time this season.

over the tempo of the match. "You're always pleased with the win, but I wasn't extremely pleased with the lack of concentration."

The Aggies were led by Gildner with 17 kills and a .405 hitting percentage, Spence with 15 kills and a .344 hitting percentage and Cheri Steensma who hit .611 with 12 kills.

Givens said if the Aggies are to play in the postseason they have to

do well in the Volleyball Monthly Invitational in Austin on Friday and Saturday. In the tournament with A&M will be fifth-ranked University of Texas (19-4), 11th-ranked California Polytechnic-San Luis Obispo (20-12) and Louisiana State University (24-7).

"We play better against better competition and we'll have tougher

competition this weekend," Givens said.

"I know the type of personalities we have on this team and I think they'll rise to the occasion," he said.

California Polytechnic will be the Aggies' first opponent and Givens said it will be a crucial match.

"If we beat Cal-Poly that pretty well sews up a spot for us in the NCAAs," he said.

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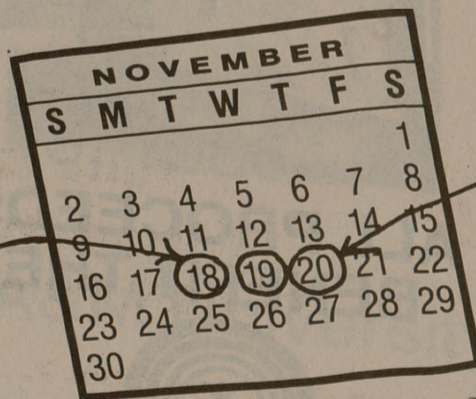
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