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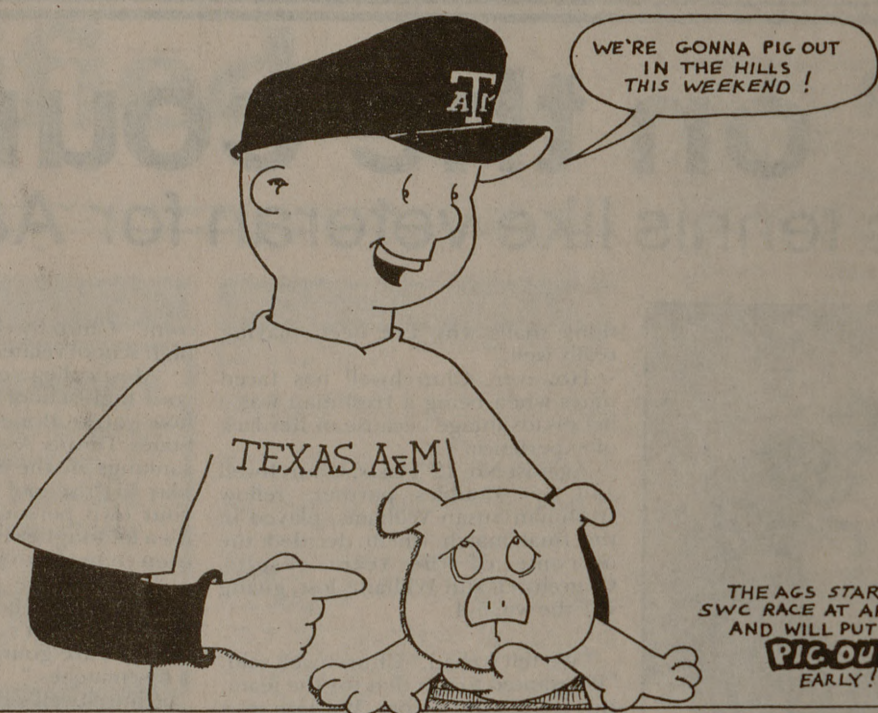
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THE AGS START THE SWC RACE AT ARKANSAS AND WILL PUT THE PIG OUT EARLY!

**Ag baseball opens SWC at Arkansas**

The Texas A&M baseball team opens conference play this weekend as it travels to Cole Field in Fayetteville, Ark. to play Arkansas.

The match-up is more than a contest between two early favorites for the Southwest Conference. It is also a match between nationally ranked teams. A&M is ranked sixth in the country by Baseball America and eighth in the ESPN/College Baseball poll. The Razorbacks are ranked seventh and 15th, respectively.

A&M has had almost all of last year's difficulties on the road. The Aggies are 17-1 at home and 4-4 on neutral fields. They are 5-4 on the road.

A&M third baseman Scott Kingstone has a school-record, game hitting streak going into the Arkansas series. The old record is 19 games, set by Robert Bonner in 1976.

**Lady Ags get 2 wins in Pony Invitational**

By Hal L. Hammons  
Assistant Sports Editor

FULLERTON, Calif. — The Texas A&M softball team won its first two games of the Pony Invitational Thursday over Oregon State and No. 19 Minnesota.

The Lady Aggies now are 19-9 on the year.

Julie Carpenter picked up both wins to extend her record to 16-9.

The first game saw the Lady Aggies come from behind to beat Minnesota 3-2 by scoring all of their runs in the top of the sixth inning.

Tory Parks, Erin Newkirk and Liz Mizera hit consecutive singles to bring in the first run.

Zina Ochoa reached on the third error of the inning for the Gophers to bring in pinch-runner Barbara Kajs.

Karen Robertson followed with a single to score Renee Blaha, who was running for Mizera.

Carpenter threw a two-hitter in the second game to lead A&M to a 3-1 win over OSU.

She did not allow a hit until the fourth, and the only Beaver run of the day came in the last inning.

Rhonda Halbert got things started for A&M in the first inning with a walk.

Parks followed with a single and Mizera reached on an error.

Carrie Heightley singled to bring Halbert home for the first run.

Halbert walked again in the third and moved to second on Mizera's ground out.

Heightley reached on an error on the second baseman that brought Halbert around for the second run.

In the fourth, Stacy Crainer reached on a fielder's choice and moved to third on a single by Robertson.

Crainer scored on another fielder's choice by Blaha.

A&M Coach Bob Brock said,

"We're doing OK now. Julie Carpenter is doing a great job."

"You never know, though, what's going to happen when you have a pitcher pitching every game for you."

"We need to get more hits for the We are coming through with some key hits for her, though."

The Lady Aggies finish off the round-robin play tomorrow.

They play US International 10:30 am PST and second-ranked Cal State-Fullerton at 5 pm.

US International is unranked but beat the Lady Titans Thursday.

**NCAA tourney field down to 12**

**Plansky, West lead Villanova to final 8**

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (AP) — Doug West and Mark Plansky keyed a late first-half run, giving Villanova a lead it never lost as the Wildcats upset sixth-ranked Kentucky 80-74 in the NCAA Southeast Regional semifinals Thursday night.

The lone Big East representative remaining from the six that started the tournament turned aside favored Kentucky with a nearly flawless performance.

Plansky scored five points and West four in a 14-3 burst in the last 4:30 of the half to create a 43-32 lead. Villanova, 24-12, built its lead to 49-36 early in the second half and withstood surges that saw Kentucky get within four points twice.

The victory sent the sixth-seeded Wildcats, who won the national championship in 1985, into Saturday's regional title game against the winner of Thursday night's clash between No. 4 Oklahoma and Louisville.

Kentucky, finishing 27-6, first got within four at 63-59 with just under nine minutes remaining, but a three-point basket by Kenny Wilson ended that threat.

The Southeastern Conference champions got within 74-70 with 2:04 to go, but Villanova milked the 45-second shot clock and West, who finished with 20 points, converted a 12-footer.

Plansky and Wilson each hit two free throws in the final 33 seconds to create eight-point leads as Villanova went 17-of-17 from the free-throw line in the game.

Kentucky guard Rex Chapman led all scorers with 30 points, including five three-point baskets.

**Late Devil spurt carries Duke to win**

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. (AP) — Kevin Strickland scored 11 of his 12 second-half points during a 22-10 spurt that brought Duke from behind for a 73-72 victory over upstart Rhode Island in the NCAA East Regional semifinals Thursday night.

The fifth-ranked Blue Devils, 27-6, play Temple, winners of Thursday night's game against Richmond in Saturday's regional final. It will mark the first meeting of the two teams this season.

Duke, which led by as many as 13 points early in the first half, trailed 51-46 with 15 minutes left in the game.

The Blue Devils, looking to make their sixth trip to the Final Four, responded with their 22-10 spurt in the next 13 minutes, with Strick-

land hitting two free throws to make it 68-61 with 2:13 left.

URI, which finished the season 28-7, closed the gap to 68-65 on free throws by Kenny Green with 1:10 left.

But Robert Brickley, who scored 15 points, hit four straight free throws in the final 1:04 and grabbed a key rebound off a missed free throw by Strickland with 30 seconds remaining.

Brickley's two free throws with seconds left made it 73-69. Rhode Island rushed the ball upcourt without a timeout and got a pointer from Carlton Owens, who with 49 seconds left hit a 3-point goal of the game, with seven seconds to go.

Duke quickly inbounded the ball and no Rhode Island player could stop the clock with a foul before the game ended.

**Temple win ends Richmond's Cinderella story**

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. (AP) — Mike Vreeswyk scored eight of his 19 points in a 20-8 spurt midway through the second half as No. 1 ranked Temple defeated Richmond 69-47 Thursday night in the NCAA East semifinals, ending the Spiders' string of postseason surprises.

The victory was the 18th straight for the top-seeded Owls, 32-1, and moved them into Saturday's regional championship game against second-seeded Duke, which defeated Rhode

Island 73-72. The teams have not played this season.

Temple, which went into the game as the No. 1 ranked team in defensive field goal percentage at 39.5 percent, rarely was threatened against Richmond. The Owls' stingy matchup zone constantly forced the Spiders to shoot from much farther than they wanted.

Richmond, the champions of the Colonial Athletic Association, stayed close for about 24 minutes. Then the

Owls took over behind Vreeswyk and sensational freshman guard Mark Macon, who scored 24 points.

Leading 39-34, Macon hit a 15-foot jumper to start the Owls on their big run, and Vreeswyk followed with two free throws. Point guard Howard Evans converted a layup off a steal, and after Steve Kratzer hit a layup for Richmond, Evans followed with a three-point shot for a 48-36 lead.

Vreeswyk added a pair of three-

point field goals late in the run.

Macon finished it with a turnaround jumper from 15 feet for a 59-49 edge.

Tim Perry and Evans both finished with 11 points for Temple.

Richmond, 26-7, was the 15th seed in the East, the lowest left in the tournament. The Spiders defeated defending national champion Louisiana and Georgia Tech in advancing this far but were no match for Temple.

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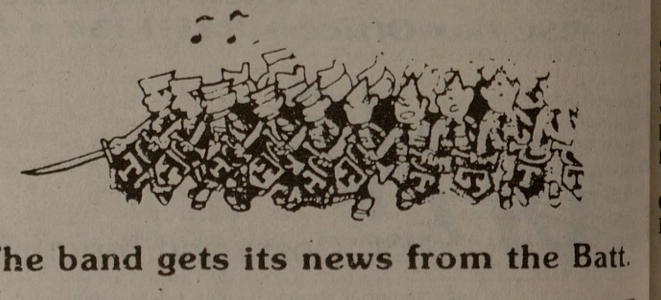
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