

Aggies have new tennis star

Profile of the Week
Gustavo Espinosa

By Doug Walker
Assistant Sports Editor

Shaun O'Donovan . . . Craig Whitteker . . . Steve Kennedy.

These are familiar names to anyone who follows Texas A&M tennis.

However, Aggie tennis fans may want to reserve space for another name on the list—Gustavo Espinosa.

The junior from Mexico City has been a pleasant surprise for A&M Tennis Coach David Kent. Espinosa, known as 'Gus' to teammates, has shown exceptional ability as both a doubles and singles player.

He earned the No. 2 singles position for the Aggies by winning the singles title and teaming with Whitteker to take second in doubles play in the A&M 4-Way Tournament two weeks ago.

One of Mexico's top juniors adjusts to life in Aggieland

Espinosa and the Aggies travel to Austin this weekend to play in another four-team meet at the Westwood Country Club. Texas, Trinity and Texas Christian, all ranked teams, provide the opposition.

Kent couldn't hide his excitement about one of his newest players.

"It was incredible!" Kent said. "I wanted to put a Superman cape on him."

Espinosa earned the "incredible" label by playing 11 hours on Sunday of the weekend tourney and defeating some of the Southwest Conference's top players. Espinosa faced competition from TCU, Rice and Northeastern Louisiana in the A&M tourney.

In winning the singles, Espinosa defeated five opponents. One of Espinosa's victims, TCU's Clint Banducci, entered

the tournament ranked 17th nationally in singles and was the tourney's top seed. Gus dispatched him after losing the first set by a 6-7 count as he won the last two sets 6-2, 6-3.

The comeback win was typical of his day as he lost the first set in four of the five matches he played. He won the title by beating Rice's Larry Pearl (2-6, 6-2 and 6-4) in the finals.

Gus says he has matured as a player since coming to the United States and has learned to control his temper on the court much like his tennis idol, Bjorn Borg.

Like his hero, Gus' cool has helped him in pressure situations like those he faced in the A&M tournament.

"What I like about Gus is that he can play under pressure," Kent said. "He

likes pressure — he welcomes it. A lot of people shirk away from it, but he excels in it."

"I always give 100 percent," Espinosa said. "I used to have trouble controlling my temper on the court, but I've learned that it only hurts me when I get mad and I start making mistakes. Since I've come (to the United States) I've learned that I can't afford to lose my temper. The level of play here is much higher."

The level of play apparently hasn't affected his performance. He earned Junior College All-American honors in singles and doubles while at Alvin.

Espinosa has had little trouble settling at A&M in his first semester since transferring from Alvin Community College.

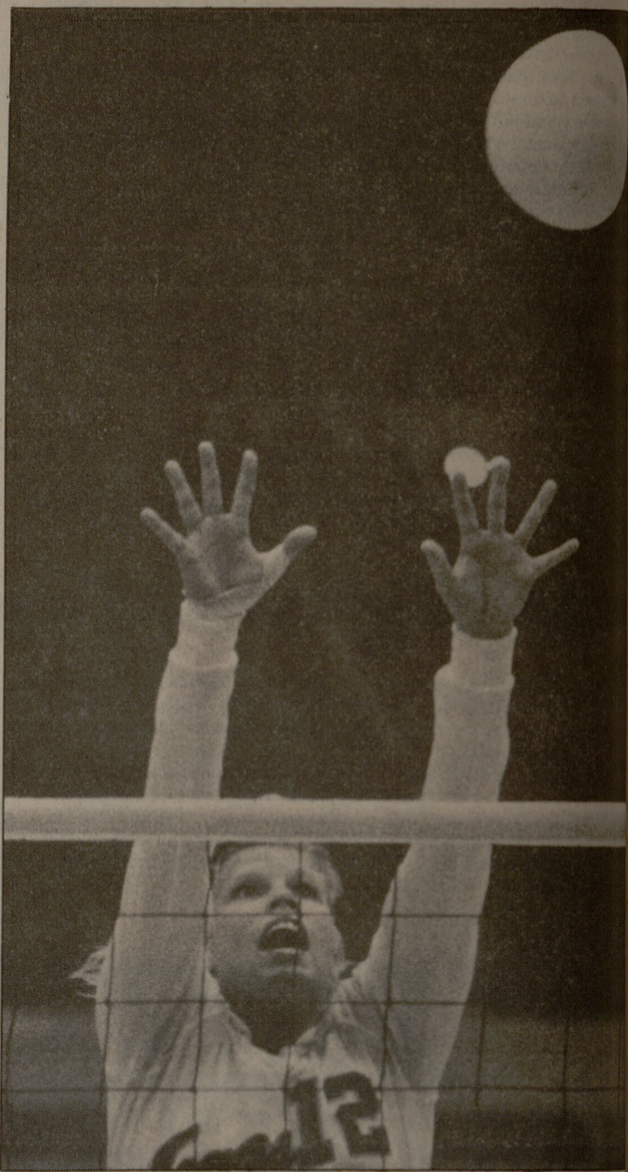
He has made the transition both athletically and academically.

"Gus is a super kid," Kent said. "He's a very smart young man and he works very hard in practice and at his studies."

The modest Espinosa, a business major with a 3.4 grade point average,

See Espinosa/Page 13

Lady Aggies drop 5-game marathon



Cheri Steensma attempts a block during the second game of the Lady Aggies' five-game loss Wednesday night against Houston.

By Stanley Golaboff
Reporter

The Texas A&M Lady Aggies took 2 hours and 45 minutes to lose to the Houston Lady Cougars Wednesday night at G. Rollie White Coliseum.

Houston won 10-15, 12-15, 15-6, 15-7, 15-8 in the longest match A&M has played all year.

A team-record 31 kills and 95 kills by UH's Tina Johnson highlighted a record-setting performance by the Lady Cougars.

Houston improved their record to

17-10 on the season and 4-4 in the west Conference play. The Lady Aggies fall to 16-12 and 5-3.

The UH team set records for (95) and digs (439). Lori Baker team record with 33 digs of her own and teammate Julie Gates also passed the old team record of 29.

Johnson's record was even more impressive considering she was playing with a sore shoulder and a bad ankle.

See Lady Aggies/Page 13

Can the Aikman-Peete Heisman talk OSU's Barry Sanders deserves it more

Forget about Troy Aikman and Rodney Peete. The best player in college football is Oklahoma State's Barry Sanders.

If Sanders doesn't deserve the Heisman Trophy, they should stop giving it and take away the voting rights of those who vote against him.

No player in college football is more important to his team than Sanders. Aikman and Peete may be quarterbacks and may go high in next year's NFL draft, but Sanders has done more than either of them.

Sanders did not receive the hype the other players had before season started and had to earn the respect he has gotten this year by coming through on the field. He has earned the Heisman by racking up big yardage through kick returns, punt returns and rushing attempts. Sanders has also shown ability as a receiver out of the backfield.

He leads the nation in all-purpose yardage, rushing and scoring. And he has accomplished much of this in situations where the opposing team was looking for him to get the ball.

Don't get me wrong. Aikman and Peete have both had excellent years and have led their teams to high national rankings by defeating some excellent opponents. Both players rank among the top rated passers in the nation and have not faltered under the constant media attention they have received throughout they season.

The difference is that both of these guys are among the top passers in the country and not at the top of the categories which rate the best at their position.

The top-rated passer in the NCAA happens to be Washington State's Tim Rosenbach with a rating of 172.5. Rosenbach also leads Aikman and Peete in passing yardage with 2,477 yards compared to Aikman's 2,147 and Peete's 1,879. He also happens to direct the offense of a team which defeated Aikman



Doug Walker
Assistant Sports Editor

and UCLA 34-30 two weeks ago on UCLA's home field.

How can anyone consider naming someone the best player in college football when he isn't even the best player at his position?

At 5-8 and 195 pounds, Sanders is a bundle of muscle who ripped A&M for 159 yards rushing and three touchdowns. One score came on a 68-yard punt return. He only played three quarters and barely played at all in the third period.

In the Cowboys' 63-42 loss to Nebraska, Sanders rushed for 189 yards on 35 carries and scored two touchdowns.

He did this against the same team that shut down his predecessor at OSU — Thurman Thomas — with seven yards rushing in 16 attempts last year. That miserable day ended Thomas's Heisman hopes he had in 1987. Thomas now is starring for the Buffalo Bills in the NFL.

Apparently, Sanders still hadn't convinced the Heisman voters after the Nebraska game. I guess I can forgive that. However, I can't understand how anyone calling himself an "expert" on college football who watched the Oklahoma State-Oklahoma game last Saturday can deny that he's not the best college football has to offer this year.

Sure, the Cowboys lost another crucial Big Eight game to a top-ranked team. However, it wasn't Barry's fault.

Sanders rushed for 215 yards on 39 carries and scored on a pair of one-yard runs. It was the first time anyone had rushed for over 200 yards against the Oklahoma defense since Barry Switzer has been the Sooners coach. The last person to do it against the Sooners was Allan Thompson of Wisconsin who gained 220 yards in a game in 1969.

Sanders showed both speed and power against the Sooners. On a run leading to the Cowboys' second touchdown, Sanders raced 69 yards and outran three defensive backs before being caught.

A seven-yard carry preceded the score, which gave OSU a 28-24 lead, showcased his power. Sanders took a handoff from quarterback Mike Gundy and broke three tackles on the play. He almost shirked a fourth before being dragged down just short of the Sooner goal.

Sanders has rushed for 1,691 yards, returned kickoffs for 287 yards, added 82 yards on punt returns and has 105 receiving yards. He has scored 26 touchdowns, one on a kickoff return and another on a punt return (against you know who) and averages 19.5 points per game.

He needs only four more touchdowns to break the all-time record for single-season touchdowns and three games to do it.

But, above all else, he is known by both teammates and sportswriters as a great guy. He's quiet, he doesn't do some dippy dance after he scores and, according to OSU receiver Hart Lee Dykes, he even occasionally goes to the library to study after games!

With all the obnoxious athletes around today, what more could anyone ask for?

LADY AGGIES BASKETBALL TEAM VS. CANADIAN OLYMPIC TEAM

Game time 7:30 pm
G. Rollie White Coliseum

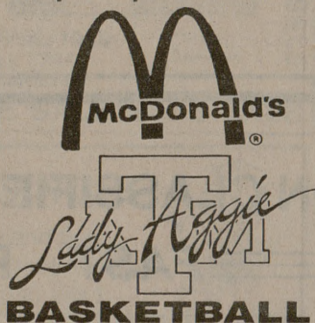
Join the Lady Aggies, A&M Yell Leaders
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LAST CHANCE

ALL STUDENTS
(Freshmen, Sophomores, Juniors, Seniors and Grads)
can get their pictures taken for the 1989 Aggieland until
the end of the week.

Monday - Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
YBA Studio on Northgate above Campus Photo
846-8856

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