

Tuesday, April 25, 1989

## Ags fall from top of national polls

### Mississippi State ESPN's new No. 1 team, A&M drops to third

FROM STAFF & WIRE REPORTS

The Texas Aggie baseball team fell from No. 1 to No. 3 in the ESPN-Collegiate Baseball national poll after losing one of three games to

(36-12-1), the new No. 1 and No. 2 teams. Mississippi State completed last week with eight wins and no losses to move up from the last week's No. 2 ranking. Arizona was victorious in

LSU stayed at No. 6 and Oklahoma State made the biggest jump of the week, going from 13th last week to No. 7 after a 5-0 mark over the week.

Wichita State remained at No. 8 and Texas completed a 5-0 week to move up from 10th to No. 9. Florida State completes ESPN's Top 10, moving up from 12th last week.

Two teams fell from the Top 10. Fresno State dropped from No. 7 to 13th after going 1-2 and Clemson also fell six spots, from ninth to No. 15, with a 2-5 record for the week.

Teams to play in the Southwest Conference Post-Season Baseball Tournament are falling in place as Arkansas, A&M and Texas have clinched spots. All three teams are contenders for the regular season championship.

The fourth tournament spot is undecided with everyone except Rice having a shot at the final position.

Arkansas (14-1 in SWC) lost one of three games to Rice this weekend for their only conference loss. Texas

(11-4 in SWC) swept Houston in their three-game series. The Cougars (6-9 in SWC) are currently the fourth-place team and have six conference games remaining.

A&M (13-2 in SWC) faces the Cougars this weekend in Houston and hosts Arkansas the following week in the teams' final conference series.

Texas and the Razorbacks square off this weekend in Fayetteville. The Longhorns finish up with TCU in Austin the following weekend.

The six- or seven-game tournament, depending on the need for a tie-breaker, will be at A&M's Olsen Field May 17-20.

Reserved seats are \$30 for the tournament and a general admission tournament pass is \$15. A&M season ticket holders have until May 4 to reserve their seats.

Single-game reserved seats go on sale May 8 at the Athletic Ticket Office and single-game general admission tickets will be sold at Olsen Field beginning two hours before each game.

## Five A&M gridders picked in NFL draft

FROM STAFF & WIRE REPORTS

Linebacker John Roper and offensive guard Jerry Fontenot led a group of five Texas A&M football players selected in the National Football League draft which ended Monday.

Roper, a second-round pick of the Chicago Bears, and Fontenot, a third-round pick of the Bears, were the 35th and 65th selections overall.

Roper, an outside linebacker in A&M's four-linebacker scheme, was an All-Southwest Conference selection in 1987 and 1988. He was named SWC Defensive Player-of-the-Year while earning first-team All-America status in 1987. He finished his A&M career second on the career quarterback sack list with 36.

Fontenot was a first-team All-SWC selection in 1986 and 1988. Roper, Fontenot and wide receiver Rod Harris were the Aggies selected Sunday, the first day of the draft.

Harris was selected by the Houston Oilers in the fourth round as the

104th player chosen overall. Oilers General Manager Mike Holovak said Harris was selected for his work as a punt return specialist.

"We took him with the thought that he'd be very competitive for the job," Holovak said. "He did a good job at that at Texas A&M."

Harris finished his A&M career as the holder of eight school records in the returns department.

Linebackers Dana Batiste and Adam Bob were the other Aggies selected in the draft. Both were picked up Monday.

Batiste, an inside linebacker who went in the ninth round to Miami, was awarded All-SWC honors by several newspapers in 1988 while leading in total tackles and unassisted stops.

Bob, picked by the New York Jets in the 10th round, added 60 total tackles from the inside linebacker position opposite Batiste.

Offensive guard L.B. Moon and defensive back Alex Morris were other A&M players expected to be drafted. However, they were not selected as the draft ended Monday.

Team	Record	Rank
1. Mississippi St.	38-7	31-15
2. Arizona	36-12-1	33-15
3. Texas A&M	46-3	35-9
4. Arizona St.	39-12	31-18
5. Arkansas	40-6	31-13-1
6. LSU	39-9	36-11
7. Oklahoma St.	35-10	31-9
8. Wichita St.	41-8	32-19
9. Texas	42-12	28-9
10. Florida St.	38-12	34-12
11. Miami	32-12	34-12
12. Long Beach St.	38-9	31-12
13. Fresno St.		33-21
14. Florida		
15. Clemson		
16. Loyola Marymount		
17. Pepperdine		
18. San Jose St.		
19. Michigan		
20. Hawaii		
21. Iowa		
22. South Florida		
23. BYU		
24. UNLV		
25. USC		

Texas Christian over the weekend.

A&M also fell from the top spot of the Baseball America poll, settling in at the No. 2 spot behind Mississippi State.

The Aggies (46-3) had spent eight consecutive weeks at the top of the ESPN poll before dropping below Mississippi State (38-7) and Arizona

all three games during the week to move up from No. 4.

A&M took two games from Stephen F. Austin and won two of three against the Horned Frogs to complete the week 4-1.

Arizona State moved up one spot to No. 4 and Arkansas dropped two places to No. 5.

## Aggie coaches give character, integrity to A&M sports teams

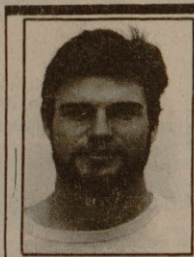
Over the last year as a sports writer and assistant editor, writing a column for *The Battalion* has been one of the toughest chores. Writer's block is never as strong as when sitting down at a computer to tap out my opinion.

But writing a weekly column has challenged me to really think about a lot of things I wouldn't consider otherwise. It's amazing what topics you can come up with when facing a deadline.

Writing opinions has also taught me a lot about sharing what I believe with others — who sometimes don't want to know what I think.

I've always been a person who doesn't want to offend anyone with my beliefs. I remember the first letter I got in response to one of my columns. I almost called the two girls to apologize for what I said. But I have learned the past year that people need to be challenged with some of the things I have to say.

So I have learned to enjoy writing my column. But more than being my opinion, I want what I write to be the truth. With all the corruption in the world of sports, there



**Jerry Bolz**  
Assistant Sports Editor

is a need for the truth to be voiced.

I want to comment on the state of A&M athletics, which has come a long way in my three years at this school.

Corruption may have discolored true maroon the last few years. But I am thankful that things are changing at A&M.

Under R.C. Slocum, the football program looks like it is taking a stand for integrity. I don't fault Jackie Sherrill for all the immoral dealings that went on here in his stay. I'm afraid he was a victim of the political clout of those who truly make the decisions for the athletic teams — the

former students. I just hope Slocum stands against Old Ags who try to manipulate him — I know he's strong enough to do it.

And I think new Athletic Director John David Crow has the character to run a program free from the influence of those who shouldn't have any say in athletic matters. Even though Crow is a former student, I believe his concern for A&M athletics is sincere and won't be touched by outside influences.

I hope these men and the rest of the football staff will be quality role models for the football team. The team has picked up a bad guy, rebellious attitude the last few years — it needs to change. It's not going to get them anywhere.

There's really not enough you can say about the baseball team under Coach Mark Johnson. Johnson cares for his players current well-being and their futures. He commands respect and discipline — not as a tyrant, but because he has character.

And I hope the players grow in the self control that is Johnson's trademark. I believe great things are in store for the baseball Ags.

The volleyball and women's basketball teams are also taking good steps forward. They are just a step away from greatness. These sports' coaches are the reason they are prospering.

Lady Ag basketball Coach Lynn Hickey won't compromise right ways for dishonesty. And she has taken her team almost to the top of the Southwest Conference in just a few years.

This recruiting season, Hickey has signed four of the top 30 athletes in the state. It just shows that people are attracted to honesty and sincerity — and Hickey's program represents these traits.

The same thing goes for the volleyball team. They are on the move up because of Coach Al Givens and assistant Cindy Alvear. They care enough for their players to ask a lot of them. They want their players to be the best they can.

Charlie Thomas has been a portrait of perseverance as mentor of the track teams. After 30-plus years as A&M's coach, Thomas is getting close to the national

championship he wants. And I believe his patience will pay off. He's put a ton of work into the program.

The same thing goes for Shelby Metcalf's men's basketball team. Shelby is truly concerned with his players — you could see it on his face and here it is in his voice when the Aggies were in the middle of a slump this past season.

I think Shelby has a lot more potential to produce a big winner than he is given credit for. His day may come soon.

I could say something good about the state of all the sports programs at A&M as I get ready to graduate.

It all has to do with Aggieland being under a great transformation. I think God must be looking down with a lot of favor on this school. But much will be required of A&M in the future.

The sports programs at this institution have a responsibility to go on with integrity, character — and humility — or I'm afraid they won't go on at all.



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