Sluggish Aggies no match for Huskies in 19-6 defeat

Photo by Phelan M. Ebenhack

Aggie Aaron Wallace applies pressure to Washington quarterback Cary Conklin.

Husky game plan too much for flat A&M team

By Tom Kehoe

Of *The Battalion* Staff

Although Texas A&M sailed into Seattle with a new national ranking and high hopes when game time arrived Saturday, it appeared they forgot to weigh anchor.

The University of Washington combined strong running and passing to cruise by 15th-ranked Texas A&M 19-6 before 62,434 fans in Husky Stadium in Seattle.

A&M Coach R.C. Slocum confirmed that his team couldn't get the boat moving.

"We just never got in the swim of things," Slocum said.

And as the Aggies floundered on the banks of Puget Sound, the Huskies were able to keep their heads above water and dominate the Aggies on both sides of the ball.

Offensively, Washington piled up 386 yards, nearly doubling LSU's total from last week, a 28-16 Aggie win.

"They did an excellent job of keeping us off balance," Slocum said. "They mixed the run and pass effectively."

That mix included quarterback Cary Conklin, who completed 23 of 37 passes for 224 yards, and running back Greg Lewis, who methodically churned out 133 yards on 29 carries.

Although Conklin was effective, Slocum felt it was Lewis that sunk A&M.

"The passing game is not what beat us," he said. "The key was that we couldn't stop the running game."

But Washington's passing did disrupt the Aggies' defensive game plan. A&M's feared blitz was neutralized by Conklin as he frequently employed two- and three-step drops to flip quick passes to tight end Bill Ames and wide receiver Andre Riley.

"I knew they were going to blitz a lot," Conklin said. "Against A&M, five steps and you're on your back."

But as Washington moved the ball, the Aggie offense sputtered, gaining just 14 first downs on the day, compared to Washington's 24.

Junior quarterback Lance Pavlas felt A&M's difficulty gaining first downs was one of the stumbling blocks.

"We just didn't convert enough third downs," Pavlas said.

Pavlas passed for nine of the Aggies' 14 first downs, as he totalled 182 yards passing, completing 18 of 30. He was frequently pressured and chased out of the pocket.

"They had a pretty good pass rush, but I had time to throw," he said. "I give credit to them — they were more physical today than we were."

While the passing game sustained what little offense A&M could generate, the ground game was negated by the quick pursuit of the Huskies.

Darren Lewis was stymied again as he struggled to 52 yards on 15 carries. Fullback Robert Wilson, who had a career-high 121 yards last week, only was able to gain 24 yards on but ten carries.

> "We just never got into the swim of things."
> — R.C. Slocum,

Offensive tackle Matt McCall blamed the line's inability to clear the way for Lewis' difficulties.

"It's not Darren's fault," McCall said. "It's mostly the blocking. The blockers must catch up to him. We didn't execute today."

With a big start last week, the Aggies were able to set a quick, controlled pace for the rest of the game. They couldn't do it Saturday, though, as they failed to get a first down on their first four possessions.

Washington was sluggish at the start but managed to get things moving on their third possession.

The drive, which started at their own 15-yard line, included four Husky first downs.

Husky Coach Don James combined Lewis' blasts up the middle with Conklin's quick passes as Washington moved to A&M's 22.

On first down, Conklin lofted a pass to the deep left corner of the end zone to connect with split end Mark Bailey for the game's first score.

Bailey got behind cornerback Mickey Washington, who was hung up in the middle as Conklin rolled out, to score the game's only touchdown.

"The quarterback scrambled, he pumped, I froze and then he threw," Washington said.

A&M failed again to gain a first down on their next possession but got a break when Husky punt returner William Doctor was stripped of the ball by Aggie Jeff Shanks. Eric Moore fell on it to give the Aggies a first-down-and-ten at Washington's 21-yard line.

Darren Lewis took the carry on the first play of the new possession and rambled 12 yards to the Washington five, but the offense failed again.

Two running plays up the middle were stopped cold and Pavlas was sacked on third down for a 12-yard loss by Husky defensive end Dennis Brown.

Place kicker Layne Talbot came on to hit a 32-yard field goal to get the Aggies on the board with 13:49 left in the first half.

Both offenses stalled on their next possesions. But with 8:22 left in the half, the Huskies put together a 13-play, 47-yard drive that culminated in John McCallum's first field goal of the day, a 35-yard kick.

A&M took the ensuing kickoff and managed to get only to their own 30-yard line before they were forced to punt. However, the snap from deep snapper Mike Sullivan was too high and punter Kevin Ellis rolled out and attempted to pass. The pass failed and Washington took over.

Five plays later, McCallum added his second field goal with 25 seconds remaining and the half ended with Washington leading 13-3.

The Huskies opened the second half with the ball at their own 27-yard line. Conklin began to engineer a drive that brought Washington to A&M's 12-yard line. Two plays later, a holding penalty left Conklin facing second and 17. The Aggie defense didn't allow Washington to advance and McCallum hit his third field goal of the afternoon from 36 yard to put Washington ahead 16-3.

The next Aggie drive began at their own 25. With Lewis finally able to find some daylight and Pavlas hitting Percy Waddle for 22 yards, A&M found themselves at Washington's 25. But another Pavlas-to-Waddle attempt failed and Talbot attempted a 42-yard field goal that curved wide to the left.

After the change of possesion, the Huskies began a drive that took them to the A&M 19 where McCallum collected his last score of the afternoon. His 36-yard kick ended a 15-play drive and brought the score to 19-3.

A&M took the short kickoff and advanced to the Washington nine. It was there that Slocum opted for the field goal instead of going for it on fourth and six. Trailing by 16 with 14:09 left in the game, Talbot put a 27-yard kick through the uprights to bring about the final score, 19-6.

Lady Aggies beaten in tournament final

By Alan Lehmann

Of *The Battalion* Staff

The Texas A&M Lady Aggie volleyball team chalked up their first victory Friday, but had to settle for second place in the Reebok/Hampton Inn Invitational held here over the weekend.

A&M beat Weber State on Friday 15-13, 12-15, 15-9, 9-15, 15-7 to get into the championship match.

However, A&M lost on Saturday to Southwest Missouri State 10-15, 11-15, 15-10, 7-15.

In the consolation match, Rhode Island swept Weber State 15-11, 15-12, 15-5.

In Friday's win, A&M came out strong in the first game, taking a 6-0 lead behind two kills each by Kelli Kellen and Sheri Hermesmeyer.

However, A&M lost their momentum, and Weber scored seven points on an ace and six A&M errors.

Trailing 9-12, A&M scored six of the next seven points to win the first game.

The Lady Aggies looked flat in the second game, falling behind 6-1, before grabbing a 12-11 lead.But Weber scored four points on two Aggie errors, an ace and a Molli Wilkins kill to win the game.

In the third game, A&M trailed 9-7 before scoring eight unanswered points to gain a 2-1 advantage in the match.

After losing the fourth game, A&M came back to win the fifth. Trailing 5-4, Amy Cumings keyed the Aggie comeback with three kills and a block.

Another of Friday's highlights was Yvonne Van Brandt shattering Chris Zagota's school career-assist record. With the remainder of the season to play, Van Brandt now has 2,985 assists.

"Chris set a high standard," Van Brandt said. "Now, I just want to help the team win and hopefully set the mark higher for someone else to come along and earn it."

The momentum from Friday win couldn't carry A&M past SMSU Saturday night.

The Aggies fell behind 9-3 before several Bear errors and a Kellen block allowed A&M to pull to within a point.

But SMSU used four Aggie errors and kills from Laura Scafidi and Melinda Bingham to end the game.

The Aggies scored the first three points of the second game before falling behind 7-6 on a Scafidi kill.

Trailing 12-8, A&M managed a three-point run behind the strong serving of freshman Raychelle Michalke.

However, it was too late, and SMSU used an ace and two Bingham kills to take a 2-0 lead in the match.

Lady Aggie Coach Al Givens then juggled his lineup in an attempt to give his younger players a chance to play.

"We put a whole different lineup on the court the third game and were successful," Givens said.

Freshman Elizabeth Edmiston, killed three consecutive Bear services to preserve a 6-2 A&M lead.

A&M then played good defensive ball to take a 10-9 lead. Van Brandt, playing attacker instead of setter, added a kill and an ace to give A&M a five point run, and their only win in the match.

In the final game, the young Aggies held onto a 5-5 tie before giving up six unanswered points.

Givens said he saw positive signs in the loss.

"(SMSU Coach) Linda Dollar always has a good team," he said.

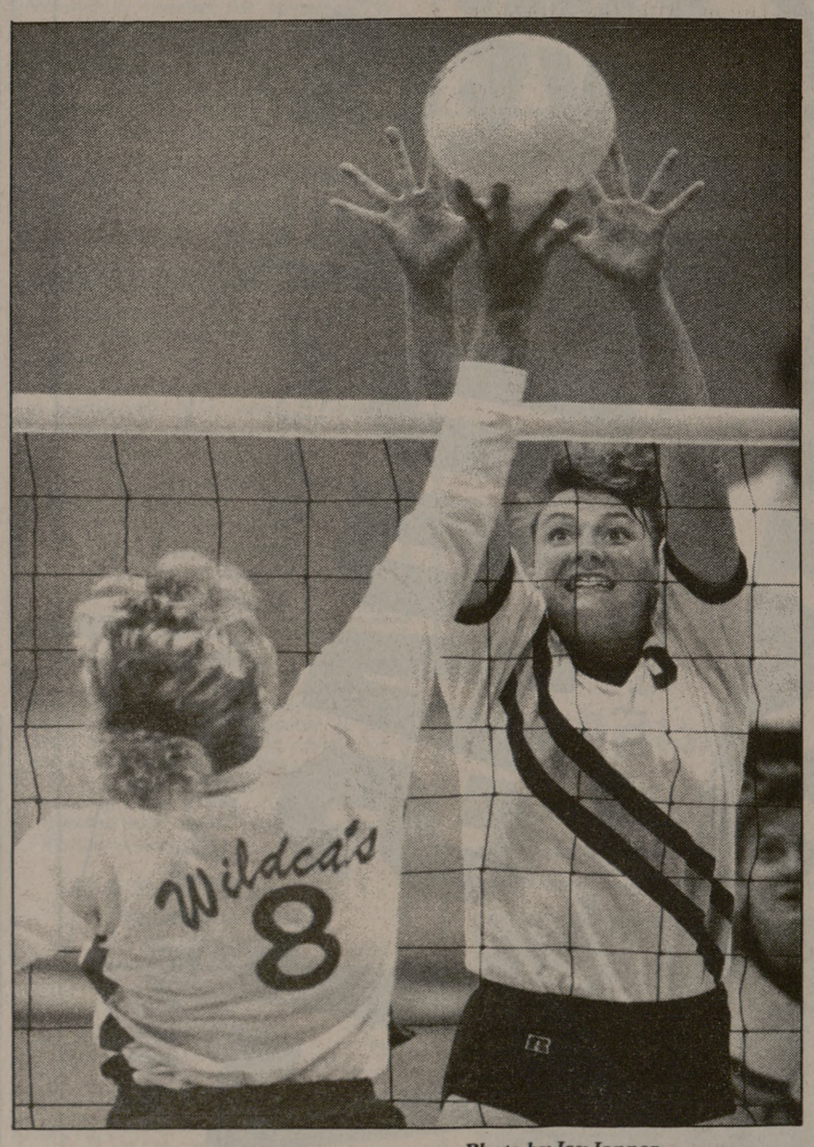

Photo by Jay Janner

A&M's Amy Cummings (6) attempts a block against Weber State's Lora Heissinger (8) in Friday's win.

"They played great defense. Our outside blocking was weak.

"We have plenty of talent, we just need to execute. Some of our freshmen will contribute for us."

Two A&M players recieved honors in the tournament. Van Brandt was named the tournament's Most Valuable Player. Junior Krista Hierholzer was selected to the All-Tournament Team.

Others on the all-tourney team were Kengy Gardiner and Michelle Drerup of Rhode Island, Scafidi and Bingham of SMSU, and Kathy Nickel of Weber State.

The Aggies' next game will be Tuesday night against Sam Houston State in G. Rollie White Coliseum.

Tech victory the lone bright spot for SWC

Texas Tech saved the Southwest Conference from total humiliation.

The Red Raiders sprang a 24-14 ambush on 20th-ranked Arizona Saturday night before some 35,000 fans in Jones Stadium.

The SWC needed the win; the rest of the teams lost on the road.

James Gray scored two touchdowns and had a career-high 234 yards rushing as the Red Raiders stunned the Wildcats.

"It was an excellent 60 minutes of football," said Tech coach Spike Dykes. "James Gray was just tremendous but so was the rest of the team."

Gray has a school record 34 touchdowns and is just three yards short of James Hadnot's career rushing record of 2,794.

Defensive lineman Charles Perry summed the game up for the Red Raiders: "We came out and shocked some people. There is nothing like coming out and beating a Top 20 team to start the season."

Arizona coach Dick Tomey said Tech physically dominated the Wildcats.

"Our missed tackles were Gray's determination," Tomey said. "It was quite a performance."

Otherwise, it was a bad Saturday for the proud SWC, which is celebrating its diamond anniversary.

Oklahoma beat highly regarded Baylor 33-7, Washington upset 15th-ranked Texas A&M 19-6, Missouri beat Texas Christian 14-10 and Tulane nipped Rice 20-19.

Baylor coach Grant Teaff gave his team a chewing out at halftime with the Sooners leading 28-0.

"The loss hit me like a ton of bricks," Teaff said. "We played like a junior high team in the first half. They ran up and down the field on us."

Baylor linebacker James France said, "I've never seen the coach this angry."

Teaff added, "At least I'll sleep better after that second half. If all we'd had was that first half, I think I'd have jumped off the Tallahatchie Bridge. The gate was shut long after the horse was out but at least we shut the gate."

TCU's "triple shoot" offense piled up 487 yards but the Horned Frogs had trouble getting into the end zone against Missouri.

"They could have had 28 points in the first half," said Missouri coach Bob Stull.

TCU dropped a dozen passes and Wacker said "if we make those catches the game isn't close. It's a blowout."

TCU may have lost running back Tony Darthard for the season. Darthard collapsed without being touched in the second period.

"We think he has a cartilage tear," said TCU coach Jim Wacker.

Rice missed a chance for its first consecutive victories since 1972 by blowing a lead and losing to Tulane.

Defending SWC champion Arkansas opens the season at 2 p.m. Saturday in Fayetteville against Tulsa.

In other games, Baylor is at Georgia at noon, New Mexico is at Texas Tech in a roon game, Connecticut is at Southern Methodist at 7:30 p.m, and Texas A&M is at TCU at 7:30 p.m.