Lady Ag netters compete in tourney

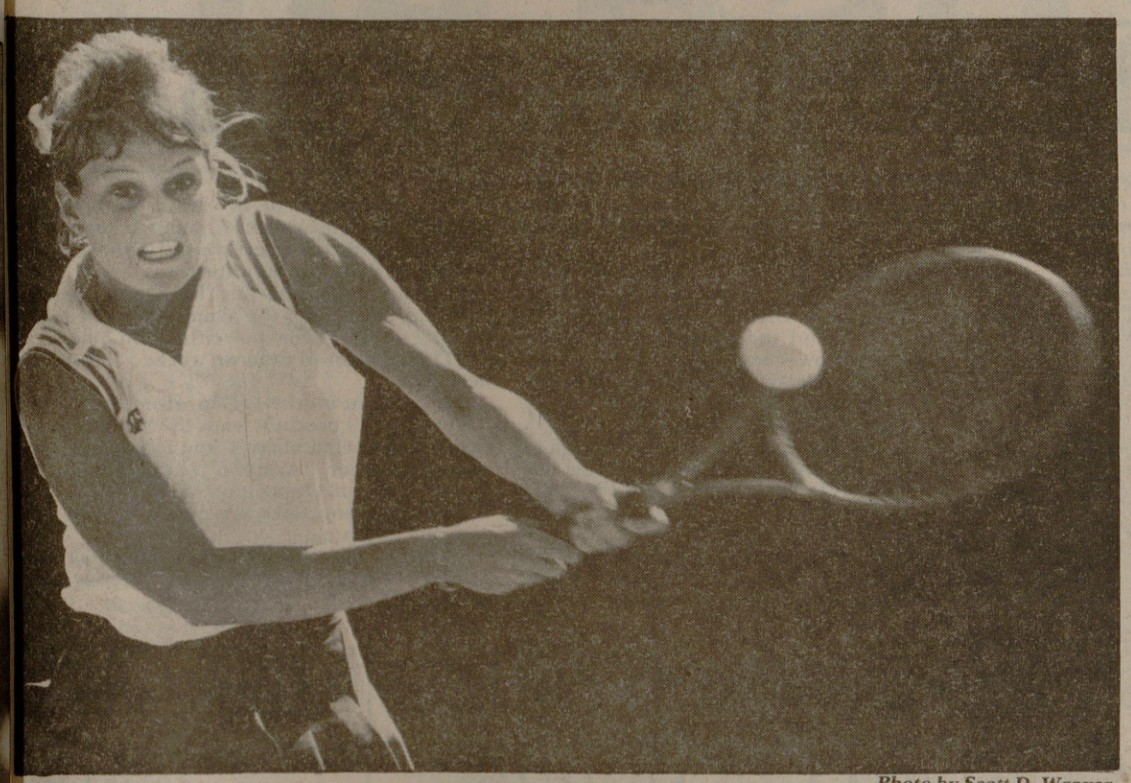

Photo by Scott D. Weaver

A&M's Susan Williams returns a Lady Longhorns' shot with a powerful backhand Sunday, Feb. 25 at Omar Smith Tennis Center. The Lady Aggies compete in Wisconsin today.

By VINCE SNYDER
Of The Battalion Staff

The Texas A&M women's tennis team will compete in the United States Tennis Association/Intercollegiate Tennis Coaches Association's National Indoor Team Tennis Championships starting Thursday and continuing through Sunday.

The tournament will be held at the Nielsen Tennis Stadium on the University of Wisconsin campus in Madison, WI.

The Lady Aggies will face Oklahoma State at 9 a.m. Thursday, in the first round of the 16-team field. A&M is ranked 19th in the Volvo Tennis/Collegiate Rankings, while OSU is 9th.

"This is a great opportunity for our team," A&M Coach Bobby Kleinecke said. "We need to go all out and we need to upset some teams. That would make up for our slow start in Utah."

This will mark the Lady Aggies first appearance in the event's three-year history. Top-ranked and top-seeded Standford University won the title last year.

The 16 teams involved in the tournament include 13 of the top 14 teams in the Volvo rankings. Each team is quaranteed to play at least three matches during the four day event. The championship match is scheduled to begin at noon on Sunday.

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Lady Ags at home

Softball team opens home season today as it plays host Nebraska

The Texas A&M women's softball team will open the home portion of their 1990 schedule today as they host the Nebraska Huskers in a doubleheader at Lady Aggie Softball Field in College Station. First pitch is scheduled for 5 p.m.

The Lady Aggies will carry a 5-2 record into today's game with all seven of those games being played on the road. A&M beat Texas-Arlington, Tuesday, by 3-1 and 7-0 counts in Arlington. The Lady Aggies went 3-2 last weekend to finish second in the Louisiana Classics Tournament in Lafayette, La.

"I'm excited about this team. We're doing real well right now," A&M Coach Bob Brock said. "But Nebraska is always one of the top teams in the country, and I'm sure they'll come here ready to play."

The Huskers will be seeing their first action of the 1990 season when they square off against the Lady Aggies today. Nebraska went 32-28 last year and posted a 7-3 conference record to finish second behind Oklahoma State in the Big Eight.

A&M holds an 11-2 edge in the series with Nebraska. Last year, the Lady Aggies split the last two games of the season with the Huskers, winning 3-2 and losing 4-2 in the final contest of the 1989 campaign.

O'Donovan leads Ags to Corpus Christi tournament

By NADJA SABAWALA
Of The Battalion Staff

The Texas A&M men's tennis team travels to Corpus Christi this week to participate in the 22nd Annual H.E.B. College Tennis Team Championships, Thursday through Sunday.

Twenty-four teams, including five from the Southwest Conference, will compete in the four-day event in the H.E.B. Tennis Center.

The Aggies start off the tournament against 4-1 Harvard at 2 p.m. The winner will go on to face No. 13 Clemson while the loser will play the loser of the Southern Methodist versus Southwestern Lousiana game.

"Harvard is always tough," A&M coach David Kent said. "They're the best team in the East, but we've got a pretty good team.

"I feel like we'll do well."

A&M's No. 1 singles player, senior Shaun O'Donovan (14-6), will attempt to keep his 1990 year his hottest. O'Donovan is 7-0 in dual match and 7-6 in tournament play.

The Aggies' dual match record is 6-1, including an impressive win over 25th-ranked Trinity.

"We need to beat some people in the Top 20 to get into the poll," Kent said."This will be a good chance to do that."

A&M's top three singles players are O'Donovan, senior Gustavo Espinosa and junior Matt Zisette.

Shaun O'Donovan

The Aggies' doubles lineup is Espinosa/Zisette, O'Donovan and sophomore Doug Brown, and junior Steve Kennedy/junior Mike Castillo.

"This is a big weekend for us," Kent said. "There are 24 teams and they're all tough."

Other teams in the tournament include top-seeded South Carolina, eighth-ranked Texas Christian, No. 10 Mississippi and No. 20 Arizona.

The Aggies return to College Station to meet Wake Forest March 6 at 1:30 p.m. at the Omar Smith Tennis Center.

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Ag swimming team visits Austin for SWC tourney

The Texas A&M men's swim team will be hoping for the chance to hold on to their postion as the No. 3 team in the Southwest Conference standings when they compete in the SWC Swimming and Diving Championships this weekend in Austin.

The three-day meet is scheduled to start today and continue through Saturday at the Texas Swimming Center on the University of Texas Campus.

The Aggies will be hoping to repeat their third place finish from 1988 and 1989 while also qualifying several individuals and relays for the NCAA Swimming and Diving Championships, scheduled for March 22-24 in Indianapolis. The Texas Longhorns are favored to win their 11th straight SWC crown while SMU is expected to finish second.

A&M rugby squad competing for kicks

By CLAY RASMUSSEN
Of The Battalion Staff

If you're missing football, and baseball just isn't providing you with the rush of excitement that comes from a contact sport, then the Texas A&M rugby team has just what you need.

Students can get a dose of A&M rugby this Saturday at the Rugby Fields, as Texas A&M hosts the Texas Collegiate Rugby Championships. Teams from around Texas, including Texas Tech, Houston, Rice, Texas and Southern Methodist, will compete for a shot at advancing to the Western United States Collegiate Championship in April.

"Rugby is 80 minutes of running, passing and hitting," junior winger James Goodman said.

Goodman, an animal science major, graduated from A&M Consolidated after transferring from Australia in 1983. He brought with him a burning desire to continue his rugby carrer.

Not many people on campus are aware of the rugby team, or its winning tradition. Formed in 1975 as an extramural sport, the rugby team dominated Texas, winning 12 consecutive titles.

However, times have been hard on the team since winning its last Texas Collegiate Tournament in 1986. Goodman, the Aggies' team representative, said the 1986 team was one of the strongest until it lost most of its starters to graduation.

But Goodman said 1990 looks promising for the Aggies.

"In 1987, the team that had won the '86 tournament graduated, leaving us with a serious shortage of quality players," Goodman said. "We lost the title in 1987 to Southwest Texas State University.

"We've been rebuilding since then and I think the 1990 team is the most promising team since 1986."

If their records any indication, the Aggies are well on their way to establishing a dominance in the Texas Collegiate Organization.

A&M is 4-0 this spring, with one-sided wins against the University of St. Thomas (58-3), Rice (11-7), Sam Houston State (11-0) and Houston (16-9).

"This years crop of players is a good one," Goodman said. "The depth we've aquired should provide us with good years to come."

The bulk of A&M's rugby team comes from students that have become interested in the game and showed up to give it a shot.

Goodman said that anyone interested in rugby, with a willingness to run and drink beer is a candidate for the team.

"We get a lot of people who don't really know rugby," Goodman said. "They want to get involved in contact sports, and we provide that for them.

"We get all types, from the high school athlete to the collegiate athlete."

Rugby has it all for the sports fan. A little bit of football, shades of basketball and pieces of hockey. And for those people needing a sports fix, the A&M Rugby team has what they crave.

"It's an exciting, fast-paced spectator sport," Goodman said. "It's just plain exciting."

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