

SPORTS

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The Battalion

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Money is the reason for post season tourney

With the majority of the major conferences cranking up their basketball tournaments this week, we get to revel in the most exciting part of the college hoops season. Competition in these tourneys regularly reaches a fever pitch, with upsets and last-second wins becoming almost commonplace.



DON NORWOOD
Sports Editor

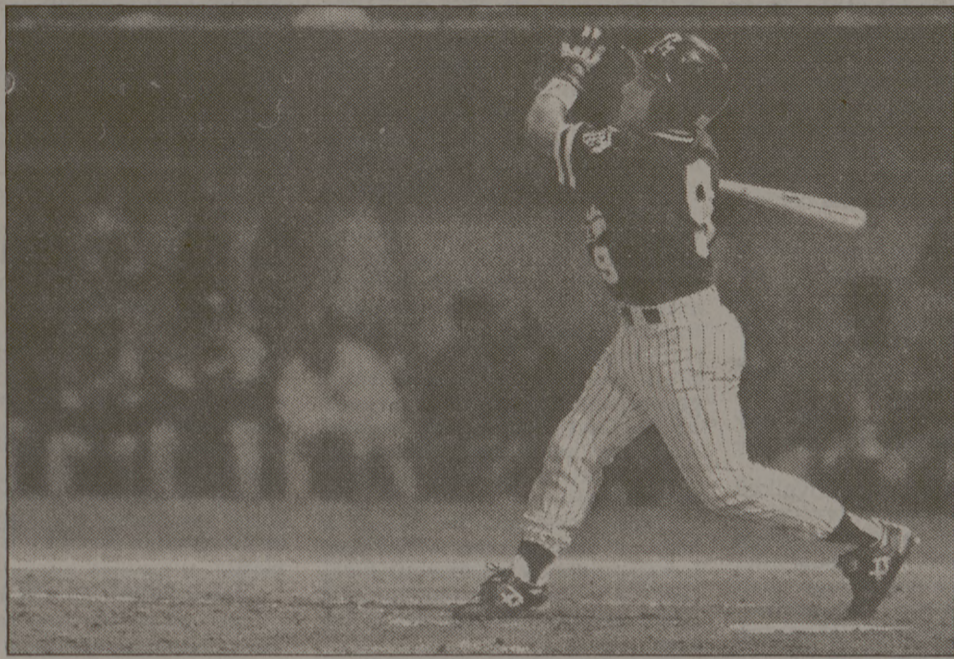
The qualities of conference tournaments that make them appealing also hurt them, however, because in so many cases, the postseason destinies of several teams often ride on the outcomes of their respective tournament performances.

Realistically, the worst thing about conference basketball tournaments is the motivation behind them - money. Squeezing several games into a three-day span at the same site is almost assured of at least above-average attendance. That means more money for the conference.

Take the Southwest Conference, for example. When Arkansas was still a member, the legions of fans that made the trek from Fayetteville to Dallas poured in money to the SWC through ticket sales, to Reunion Arena through concessions, and to the city of Dallas through increased use of hotels and restaurants. Any SWC official who says that he or she doesn't miss Arkansas

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Aggies pummel Illinois State 12-3



CRAIG FOX/The Battalion

Aggie second baseman Eric Gonzalez takes a cut Tuesday night against Illinois State. Gonzalez hit a homerun in the 12-3 A&M victory.

Lady Aggies ready for tournament

By MICHAEL PLUMER

The Battalion

Southwest Conference women's basketball starts its second season today with the tipoff of the postseason tournament in Dallas.

Texas A&M opens against the Baylor Bears at noon, a team the Lady Aggies defeated twice during the regular season by scores of 89-73 in Waco and 92-72 at G. Rollie White Coliseum.

A&M head coach Lynn Hickey said she has some reservations about playing the Bears for a third time.

"We have had good success against Baylor and the kids are loose," Hickey said. "But you always hate to play a team again for the third time, especially at this

time of the year when so much can happen."

A&M is the fourth seed in the tournament and a third win over the Bears could set up a possible showdown in the second round with the top seed, the seventh ranked Texas Tech Red Raiders. The Lady Raiders, who are led by consensus SWC Player of the Year Sheryl Swoopes, face eighth-seeded Texas Christian at six p.m.

"Texas Tech is probably the class of the league and we know we will have to beat them at some time," Hickey said. "First, we have to beat Baylor but so far we have come out on top when we have played them."

In other action, third-seeded Southern

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Curl, Gonzalez go deep for A&M as Codrington racks up second victory

By MICHAEL PLUMER

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Illinois State's first ever game against the Texas A&M baseball team will not be one the Redbirds remember with fond memories.

Fifth-ranked A&M used a balanced offensive attack Tuesday night to knock the Redbirds off their perch at Olsen Field by a score of 12-3. Paced by Eric Gonzalez and John Curl, the Aggies unleashed a 16 hit attack, scoring runs in every inning except the third and sixth.

A&M moved its overall record to 18-2 while Illinois State dropped to 0-7.

"I was pleased with our offensive output," A&M head coach Mark Johnson said. "We hit a lot of hard outs. Right now, we need to get the guys who are slumping into a groove and this was a good start."

The fireworks started early for A&M. After Illinois State scored a run in the top of the first inning, A&M answered with two in its half. The Aggies added another run in the second on Eric Gonzalez's second home run of the season.

Gonzalez said he had a feeling it would be one of those nights.

"I had a great pregame batting practice and I just carried that into the game," the junior second baseman said. "Getting three hits is great, especially since the whole team hit well."

Illinois State would not go away until the Aggies dropped the hammer, which ended the Redbirds' chirping.

Clinging to a 5-3 lead in the fifth, A&M put the game away with the one swing of first baseman John Curl's bat. Third baseman Lee Fedora walked to start off the inning and then Curl hit his third home run of the season over the center field fence to give A&M a 7-3 lead and control of the game.

Curl, who had four runs batted in, said the homer might get him straightened out at the plate.

"I haven't found my swing yet like I want but hopefully this will get me out of my slump," Curl said. "Right now, I am swinging bad in batting practice but this game could be the end of it. I hope so."

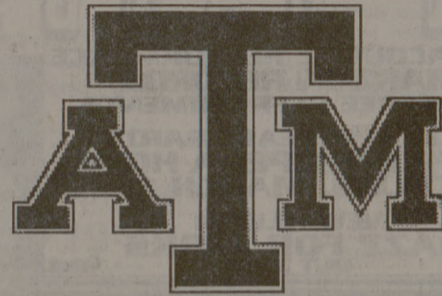
Freshman righthander John Codrington got the win for the Aggies to move his record to 2-0. Johnson said he was pleased with Codrington's effort.


"I thought he pitched well and he established himself," Johnson said. "He got his rhythm and took control of the game. We needed him to come through for us, which he did."

Codrington said he thought the going was tough at times.

"I was satisfied with it even though I kept getting behind batters," Codrington said. "They hit the ball hard, which surprised me, but I had a rhythm going for awhile which made it easy."

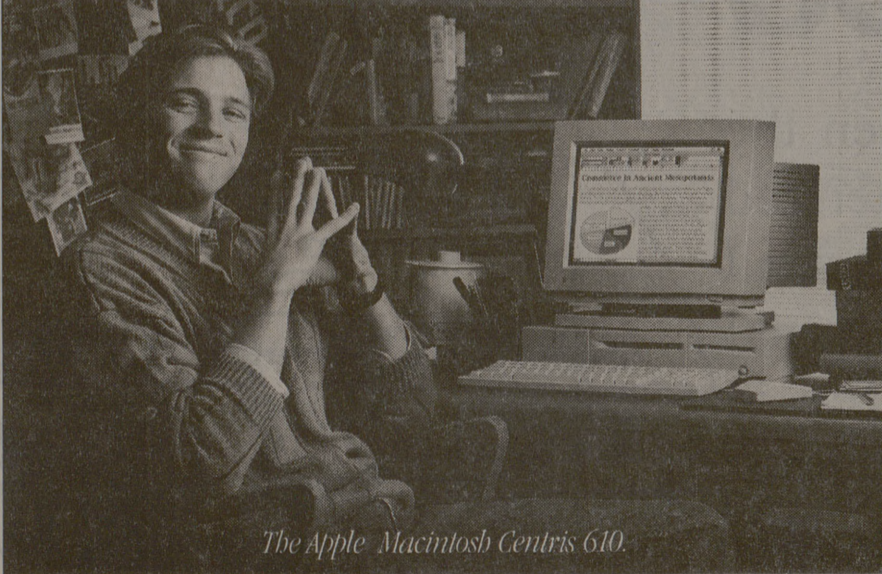
A&M continues its series against Illinois State with a doubleheader that begins today at five in the afternoon. Junior left-hander Jeff Granger is scheduled to start the first game with sophomore righthander Chris Clemons getting the call in the second game.






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