

SPORTS

Tuesday, April 13, 1993

The Battalion

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Aggies seize top spot in nation

A&M takes first place in all three national polls after weekend sweep

By WILLIAM HARRISON

The Battalion

Three separate college baseball polls ranked Texas A&M number one in the country Monday, ousting their conference rival University of Texas for the top spot.

The Collegiate Baseball, Baseball America and USA Today/Coaches Poll placed the Aggies number one after a three-game sweep over Texas Tech and Baylor's sweep of Texas in a double-header Saturday.

Texas fell to fourth in the USA Today poll, fifth in Baseball America and sixth in Collegiate Baseball.

A&M coach Mark Johnson said he told his team that they were handling the ranking well.

"I haven't seen any sign or signal from our team that we have an overconfidence or cockiness that's not in the right perspective, and I think we'll hold onto that

— there wasn't anybody holding up the number one finger or anything like that," Johnson said.

"The thing we like about the ranking is that it makes us play like a number one team; we've got to try and keep that expectation."

A&M co-captain Billy Harlan said the team needed to keep playing like they have, so if they retain the ranking through the rest of the season, the ranking may yield a home field advantage in the post-season NCAA regional playoffs.

"We're excited; we've worked hard to get there and now we want to prove to everybody that we deserve to be there," Harlan said. "We want to end the season in the conference on the number one spot, and go into the SWC tournament as the number one team."

"Hopefully we'll get a regional here if we're the number one team in the nation."

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McElroy ready to jump into already crowded backfield

A large shadow has been cast over Kyle Field by a talented duo of backs.

Texas A&M running backs Greg Hill and Rodney Thomas have formed a nucleus that rivals any tandem in the nation. Together, both formed the Lion Offense, and in the process, became kings of the Southwestern Conference jungle.

Hill and Thomas occupied a lot of the spotlight last season as the Aggies rolled to 12 consecutive victories. Their shining moments may be dimmed a little this season, though, because of a running back who wants to make three a crowd.

"When I first got here, I didn't know what to expect," redshirt freshman Leeland McElroy said. "I didn't know if I could play with Thomas or Hill but they took me aside and helped me out."

"I knew the best thing for me was to sit out a year, which I did, but I still wanted to play as anybody would want to. I want playing time (this season) but I know I am not going to get as much as I want."

"Greg and Rodney have been here and have had success. I can learn from what they do and hopefully follow in their footsteps. After they are gone, I want to step up and do anything to help this team win."



MICHAEL PLUMER
Assistant Sports Editor

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KEVIN IVY/The Battalion

Texas A&M lefthander Kelly Wunsch has helped pace the Aggies to a number

one ranking in three national baseball polls. Wunsch is currently 5-0 for A&M.

Aggie hurler Kelly Wunsch steps into limelight with latest outing

By Matthew J. Rush

The Battalion

He is a powerful lefthander with a mean breaking ball. He's reached double figures in strikeouts four times this season. He throws his fastball consistently in the high-eighties. No, it's not Jeff Granger it is the arm of the man in his shadow, Kelly Wunsch.

On a pitching staff that is headlined by the dominance of Granger, little is said about the other two starting pitchers or the bullpen, but Kelly Wunsch has

quietly put together a brilliant junior campaign thus far. With a perfect 5-0 record and an ERA of 3.22, Wunsch has all but befuddled hitters at the plate with a nasty arsenal of pitches.

"He is an outstanding pitcher," Coach Mark Johnson said of his 21 year old lefthander. "He is pure ammunition and if he's hooked up, he is tough to beat."

Johnson added that this group could be as good as any he has been associated with. (The pitching staff) has a chance

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