

SPORTS

NCAA penalties on A&M players inconsistent, unfair

When Texas A&M and all of its students, faculty, alumni and concerned others learned of the penalties that the NCAA levied on five A&M football players on Friday, a clear message was sent out to the nation.

Beginning in December of 1992, the world learned of what now is referred to as the 'Warren Gilbert Booster Affair.'

We all know the players involved and we all know that head coach R.C. Slocum suspended two of the five players for the Cotton Bowl, the most important game a Texas A&M football player can play in. Not only that, but the Cotton Bowl, at the time, would have had national championship implications.

As it turned out, the game did not have such implications, but months later, the drama of the NCAA investigation has finally come to an abrupt and very shocking end.

Unfortunately, the NCAA, after delaying nearly eight months, finally decided that A&M's penalties were not harsh enough.

Linebacker Jessie Cox will miss the entire season, Greg Hill will miss four games, and the other three players involved - Brian Mitchell, Billy Mitchell and James Brooks - will miss four, three and two games, respectively.

On Tuesday, Slocum expressed anger in the NCAA's ruling. He pointed out that Texas A&M did a thorough and fair investigation and reprimanded its players accordingly.

Slocum then asked rhetorically why all five players, whom he considered equally involved in the pay scheme, received different penalties.

"We thought we had a fair and equitable punishment and every kid was going to have to pay back all the money they were not entitled to," Slocum said. "They were all going to have the same suspension."

"The NCAA gave them two, three, four, five (games). They saw it and acted on it totally different than what we did."

A&M athletic director has said there is "no doubt" that A&M will appeal the NCAA's decision, and interim president E. Dean Gage and Slocum have expressed their displeasure with the results.

But as Coach Slocum pointed out, the appeal will more than likely be a moot point. The NCAA will undoubtedly take its time re-ruling the case and by the time they do decide the fate of the five players, four games could easily have passed

by. In that time, running back Greg Hill, if the appeal is indeed accepted, whether Hill is suspended or not for the four games is meaningless - Hill will have already missed those games.

The NCAA has again tarnished its highly-regarded name (yeah, right) by this ruling. Taking eight months to rule on this case (that was clear cut from the beginning) was both unnecessary to college football and Texas A&M.

The NCAA has also made a fool of itself with its uncanny ability to be inconsistent. Several years back, for example, Southern Methodist's program had similar problems, but with a more serious conviction. Several Mustang players were caught taking school issued credit cards to which friends and girlfriends subsequently used to buy books and supplies for classes. The NCAA gave all players involved a two-game suspension.

Coach Slocum and the players involved were planning to receive a similar penalty; they did not.

Slocum also pointed out that by suspending the players for the most coveted game that a Southwest Conference player can participate in, he did more damage to them than a two-game regular season suspension could ever do.

Regardless, the coach's intention was to give the players a four-game suspension, independent of the NCAA's decision.

Furthermore, ABC commentator Keith Jackson carried on about the unfairness of the dragged-out NCAA investigation of Texas A&M, noting that the investigation did not fit the crime.

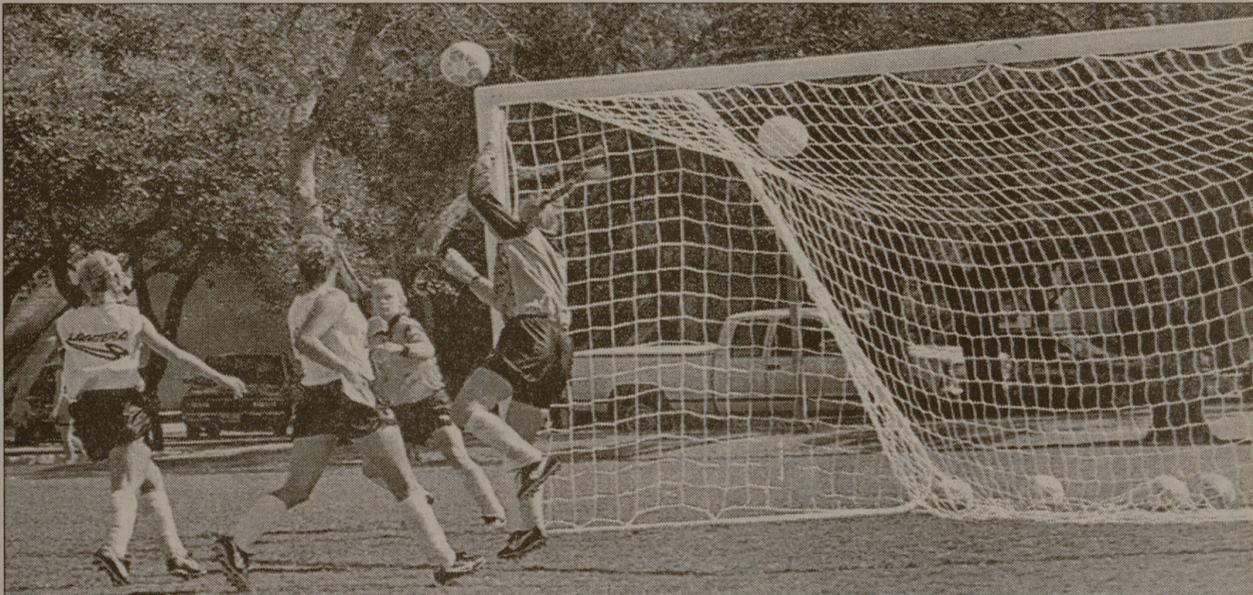
In my mind, the NCAA has disregarded all and any actions taken by Texas A&M University. If they didn't like what the school had as means of punishment, then why didn't they say something six or seven months ago?

The players know they did something wrong. That, coupled with Greg Hill and his teammates missing the opportunity to showcase their talents in the Cotton Bowl is penalty enough for these athletes.

If the NCAA wants the credibility that it needs to have and hopefully wants to have, it should start punishing crimes equally and the appeals process should take into account the investigations that the school had already completed.



Matthew J. Rush
Sportswriter



Mary Macmanus/THE BATTALION

Texas A&M freshman Sunny McConnell, goalie, knocks an attempted shot away during soccer practice on Simpson Drill Field on Wednesday.

A&M soccer team building early confidence

By David Winder

The Battalion

On campus, not many people know the Texas A&M women's soccer team, but outside of College Station the Lady Aggies are making quite a name for themselves.

In last weekend's St. Edwards tournament, A&M captured the title by outscoring their opponents 10-1, while compiling a three-game winning streak. Freshman midfielder Jamie Cizmadia was named the most valuable player after scoring three goals and dishing out two assists.

"Right now, we're actually ahead of schedule," head coach G. Guerrieri said. "Our biggest obstacle is our youth and our lack of time together. The team has really come along way in both those senses."

The Lady Aggies (3-2) would be undefeated if it were not for two narrow losses to ranked teams.

"We lost to Washington St. (2-0), who's eleventh in the nation, in a game that we outplayed them," Guerrieri said. "Then we lost to the University of Arkansas (2-1 OT) who has risen in the rankings to eighth in the region."

"In both games we could have won except for our youth. I would say the team is an impressive group, they have really done well."

The only senior on the team Rennie Rebe has been impressed with the way the underclassmen have played.

"Since our team is pretty young, I thought this was going to be a rebuilding year," Rebe said. "But we're having a successful year and

we've really come together as a team. Our losses I consider wins because we should have won both of those games. The freshmen have adjusted well to college and just jumped in since the first game."

Guerrieri pointed out his team's speed and aggressiveness as its strength.

"It's difficult for other teams to get things built up against us because we're flying all over the field," Guerrieri said. "More or less, maybe our youth could be our strength in that sense because they are very enthusiastic in what they're doing."

Cizmadia, Yvette Okler, Tina Robinson, Anna Whitehead and Allison Buckley could also be counted as strengths for the Lady Aggies.

"Jamie has really stepped up to each challenge that we've given her so far," Guerrieri said. "Yvette had done a good job up front along with Tina and Anna."

"I think that Allison Buckley has also done a great job as another freshman. We've given her several different roles and she's filled them all really well and recently has gotten involved in scoring."

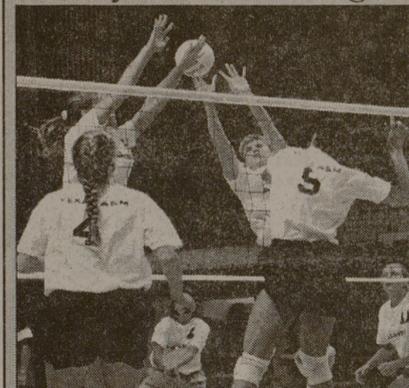
Guerrieri said he has three goals he would like the Lady Aggies to accomplish in this season.

"Our first goal is we want 100 percent intensity 100 percent of the time," Guerrieri said. "The second one is to win all of our home games."

"Then our third goal is to learn from any mistakes that we have. We know we're going to have mistakes, we just don't want to make mistakes."

Volleyball winning streak broken in Austin

From Staff and Wire Reports



Mary Macmanus/THE BATTALION

Karen Richards of the Lady Aggie volleyball team spikes the ball over her defending teammates during practice as Page White waits for the return.

Texas A&M women's volleyball lost their match with fifth-ranked University of Texas in Austin Wednesday night, dropping three straight games - 7-15, 12-15, 5-15.

The Lady Aggies' overall record dropped to 7-2, ending their seven-match winning streak, as the Lady Longhorns improved to 7-1 before a crowd of 1,956 at Texas' Recreational Sports Center.

Texas out-hit A&M in each game, scoring 15, 20, 14 kills, respectively, to A&M's 10, 17 and eight.

The Lady Aggies' hit percentage paled at .092 compared to the Lady Longhorns' .216 winning percentage. A&M hit only .065 in the third game.

Senior outside hitter Sheila Morgan led the Lady Aggies with 11 kills, and sophomore setter Suzy Wentz recorded 31 sets.

A&M's first home game comes this Friday at 7 p.m. in G. Rollie White Coliseum against Florida State, and the Lady Aggies will play again at home Sunday against the University of Florida at 2 p.m.

Granger nominated for '93 Golden Spikes Award

From Staff and Wire Reports

Former A&M baseball pitcher Jeff Granger was named a finalist for the 1993 Golden Spikes Award along with eight other players from around the country.

The award, presented by USA Baseball, is given annually to the country's most outstanding amateur baseball player. Selected from 20 million players, the award is based on athletic ability, sportsmanship, character and overall contribution to the sport.

Granger, who was drafted by the Kansas City Royals this summer, compiled a 14-3 record with a 2.72 ERA and struck out 143 batters last season. On April 2, Granger set a Texas A&M and SWC record against Lubbock Christian with 21 strikeouts.

Granger was also awarded all-Southwest Conference honors and named Most Outstanding Player at the Central I Regional tournament.

Third baseman Phil Nevin from Cal State Fullerton received the award in 1992.

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