

## The 'V' stands for a lot more than victory

The beginning of a new college basketball season is upon us, and once again Texas A&M men's head coach Tony Barone will try to instill a deeper meaning to the 1993-94 season - this time beginning with the letter "V."



**MATTHEW J. RUSH**  
Sportswriter

Last year, Barone and his players came up with the motto "M.T.X.E." which found itself neatly splashed across the back of the players' practice shorts.

"M.T.X.E. (mental toughness, extra effort) was something that characterized last year's team," Barone said.

Barone noted that by putting these letters on their shorts, the message helps the team set the tone for the season. Barone made the point that this so-called "letter practice," helps the team retain focus.

"No matter what the motto, the idea becomes a part of their daily practice routine," Barone said. "It is something that they can build upon."

Barone explained that it is easy for athletes to lose focus during the regular season, especially when these student-athletes have to deal with time conflicts such as road trips, school work, late practices and two-and-a-half-hour games played three times a week.

"Focus is important in rebuilding a basketball team, and focus changes as you develop."

This year's theme, the letter "V," may seem to have less pizzazz or less flair than M.T.X.E., but there is a deeper meaning to the symbolic letter.

The letter, though it may seem singular and meaningless, represents the late Jim Valvano, former head coach at North Carolina State.

Barone and Valvano, during their extensive coaching experience in the NCAA, had developed a friendship over the last five years through a Nike corporate-sponsored event. But earlier this year, Valvano lost a year-long battle with cancer.

To honor the late coach, Barone and the players decided to wear the letter "V" on the backs of the team's shorts.

Barone said that Valvano was not well-understood by most people until his last months, when he served as motivation to millions of people by remaining strong while he battled his disease.

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Mary Macchiusi/THE BATTALION

A&M women's soccer coach **Gerald Guerrieri** instructs his team during the past season. Soccer ended up with a 15-3-1 record.

## Guerrieri kicks back after A&M soccer season ended

By Jose de Jesus Ortiz

THE BATTALION

Entering its inaugural season as an NCAA scholarship team, there were many questions surrounding the Texas A&M Lady Aggie soccer team, and these questions would have to be answered by first-year head coach Gerald Guerrieri.

After the team's 15-3-1 season has come to a close, all the questions have been answered for this year, but Guerrieri said that while facing next year's uncertainties he remains pleased with the support the program has received by A&M's athletic department.

"They went out of their way to get our soccer program going as soon as I got here," Guerrieri said. "At A&M, they are willing to do the little things that help build a champion."

Senior defender Rennie Rebe and junior midfielder Brittan Hlista, who were part of last year's non-scholarship team, said that the extra effort by Texas A&M to build the soccer program was the biggest key for the Lady Aggies finishing the season ranked 10th in the NCAA Southern Region.

"They brought in coaches that we could respect," Hlista said. "And they also started a good conditioning program for us."

Guerrieri came to A&M after being named Coach of the Year by the National Junior College Athletic Association for his job as coach at Richland Junior College. He said he chose A&M because he wanted to work at a program that had a 100 percent commitment toward soccer.

"At other places that I have coached, we were told that we were not going to get the support that the major sports got," Guerrieri said. "But at A&M, I am surrounded by people who are trying to create the best environment for our athletes."

Naming Guerrieri head coach on April 1 was the first step in building the new program, but it was not a smooth transition for Guerrieri, who had to start recruiting three months after the first day to sign athletes had passed.

"We started recruiting players way after everyone," Guerrieri said. "And we had to do some fancy footwork in recruiting."

Within a month after signing freshman forward Yvette Okler, Guerrieri had finished signing his 12 recruits. The team began to take shape soon after, and for coach recruitment he brought on Kathi Conner as an assistant coach.

"She gave us a lot of stability from the coaching side," Guerrieri said. "I knew that I could depend

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## A&M netters stocked with total team talent

By Andrew J. A. Tomczyszyn and William Harrison

THE BATTALION

At Texas A&M's Omar Smith Tennis Center, the men's and women's tennis teams are ready to serve up their seasons with regional and national recognition as goals.

The teams are preparing for this weekend's Westwood tournament in Austin, and while both teams return key personnel this season, the women's squad may have the edge in depth.

Women's head tennis coach Bobby Kleinecke said that he expects his teams to crack the national rankings this year, and said his top five can match up with any team in the region.

"Maybe we aren't a team of great individuals, but we are a solid, good team, and that's important," Kleinecke said. "Our top five have been playing very well; Lonna Logan, Janine Burton-Durham, Nancy Dingwall, Wilson Pate and Christine DiNardo have the potential to be as good as they want to be."

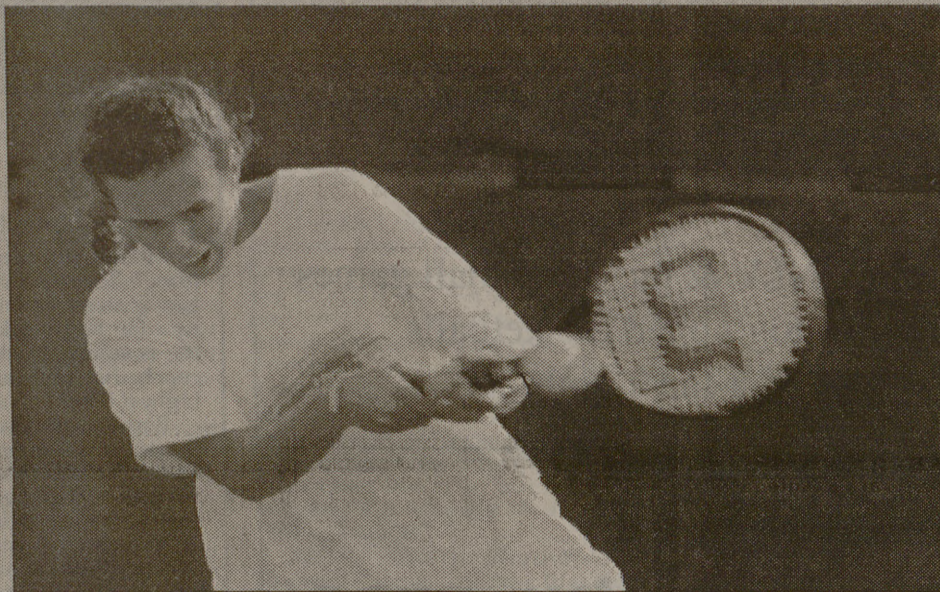
Kleinecke said he expects great things from freshman Nancy Dingwall and sophomore Wilson Pate.

"Pate has the ability, and with a few more breaks, could be one of our best players. Dingwall could be the first All-American at A&M since Lynn Staley," Kleinecke said.

Staley was ranked 18th in the nation in 1991.

Both Pate and Dingwall said they expect the same measure of success their coach anticipates for them.

"The confidence is really high around



Mike Steele/THE BATTALION

Lady Aggie sophomore **Wilson Pate** returns a volley during Wednesday's practice at the Omar Smith tennis center. Both the A&M men and women's tennis squads will play from Friday to Sunday at the Westwood tournament in Austin.

here," said Pate. "We've all had some success this fall, and you can see that we're all looking forward to the upcoming season."

Dingwall had more specific things to say about the upcoming season and the team's goals.

"We're going to be number one in the region, and we're going to beat Texas," Pate said.

And Texas is the defending national

champion.

Kleinecke said that as bold as that may sound, it is all within his team's reach.

"I've told the girls that if we take care of business and play to our potential, it'll be us and Texas at the end of the season, and that match is here," he said.

On the men's side, head coach David Kent said his Aggie netters have the

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## A&M women's volleyball falls to Houston

From Staff and Wire Reports

HOUSTON - The Lady Aggies dropped their second straight Southwest Conference game to the University of Houston, losing in three straight games, 15-11, 15-3, 15-13 in front of a crowd of 746 at the Hofheinz Pavilion.

A&M's record dropped to 25-6 overall and 7-3 in the SWC but had already clinched second place in the conference before the match. Houston improved to 14-14, 6-4.

The Lady Aggies recorded their lowest hitting percentage of the season, hitting .074 to beat the team's previous lows against Texas Tech and the University of Texas.

The team was led by senior outside hitter Sheila Morgan with a match-high 15 kills, and senior middle blockers Kim Mitchell and Amy Kising with six kills each. Kising paced the team with 6 blocks, and Suzy Wente had 34 sets - both match highs.

A&M plays Southwest Texas State on Nov. 16 before taking part in the Southwest Conference Championships on Nov. 19-21 in Lubbock.

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