



Mary Macmanus/THE BATTALION

Texas A&M junior center **Debbie Biermann** (41) follows through on a shot amongst three Cincinnati Bearkat defenders Sunday during the Aggies 74-48 victory.

A&M scratches Cincinnati, 74-48, to win tournament

By Nick Georgandis

THE BATTALION

Just call them Houston Rockets North. Using a stifling defense and a multitude of players on offense, the Texas A&M women's basketball team coasted to a 74-48 victory over the University of Cincinnati Sunday to win the Domino's/Holiday Inn Lady Aggie Invitational.

With the win, A&M improved its season record to 4-0.

The Lady Aggies were led by sophomore center Martha McClelland who scored 11 points and collected a career-high 13 rebounds. McClelland, one of five A&M players to score in double figures, was named the tournament's Most Valuable Player. McClelland said she thought the team's season opener set the tone for the rough play she experienced in the tournament.

"Our first game against (Arizona State) was a very tough game," McClelland said.

"I'm glad it was our first game because it really prepared us for this weekend."

Also honored for her weekend performance was sophomore guard Lisa Branch, who joined McClelland on the all-tournament team. Against Cincinnati, Branch contributed a game-high 12 points, including being two of three on three-point shots.

Branch said she believed that after a slow start, the team played hard.

"Coach Hickey was on us early for not communicating or being intense which were our two goals," Branch said.

The Lady Aggies made it to the final after knocking off the University of Portland on Saturday night, 88-70. In that contest, McClelland scored a career-high 22 points and Branch threw in another 20 points plus eight assists.

Notre Dame makes return trip to Dallas

By Michael Plumer

THE BATTALION

What had been rumored for a week came to fruition Sunday morning as Notre Dame was invited to the 1994 Cotton Bowl to play Southwest Conference champion Texas A&M on New Year's Day.

Third-ranked West Virginia (11-0) bypassed the Cotton Bowl for a higher payout from the Sugar Bowl and will face Southeastern Conference champion and ninth-ranked Florida (10-2). The Mountaineers were hoping to get a shot at the national title but the Coalition Poll released Sunday had Florida State ahead of West Virginia.

The national championship should be decided in the Orange Bowl as number one Nebraska (11-0) faces second-ranked Florida State (10-1).

The Notre Dame-A&M contest is a rematch from the 1993 Cotton Bowl, a 28-3 Irish victory. Last year, Cotton Bowl officials drew criticism from around the country because they refused a return engagement by the Seminoles, who played in the 1992 game.

Cotton Bowl general manager Rick

Baker said the situation warranted a repeat of the 1993 contest.

"We prefer not to have rematches," Baker said via a teleconference call. "But we thought we were in a no-lose situation. When West Virginia passed, we were left without much of a choice."

"We are very pleased with a Notre Dame-A&M game. I think it will be one of the best matchups on New Year's Day."

The fourth-ranked Irish (10-1) will make their seventh appearance in the game since 1970 while the seventh-ranked Aggies (10-1) make their third consecutive trip to Dallas.

Texas A&M head coach R.C. Slocum said the return by Notre Dame gives A&M a chance to harness some of that elusive national respect.

"In all honesty, either team would be hard to beat," Slocum said. "But if you beat Notre Dame, you get more credit. West Virginia does not carry the weight Notre Dame does. 'That is just a reality.'"

Slocum added that he is excited to play the Irish again.

"First of all, I am delighted about being in the Cotton Bowl," he said. "Notre Dame is as talented as any team in

America. This game offers a great matchup."

"I do not know of any finer coach in America than Lou Holtz, and that is what makes it fun."

Holtz, Notre Dame's head man, said despite all the hyperbole about who should play where, he does not want his team to forget about the task at hand.

"I am not real happy to play A&M," Holtz said. "We have not fared well in rematches. I point to the 1990 Orange Bowl when we got beat by Colorado after beating them in the 1989 Orange Bowl."

"There isn't anybody in America who wants to play A&M in Dallas because it is like a home game for them."

"Right now, we have more than we can say grace over worrying about A&M."

Last New Year's Day, Slocum said the Fighting Irish dominated the Aggies along the line of scrimmage and as a result, ended up winning by 25 points. He said A&M needs to reverse that trend.

"We have to play at a higher level," Slocum said. "Notre Dame controlled both sides of the ball, and we have got to improve across the board if we are going to be competitive."

Texas ends A&M spikers' season

From Staff and Wire Reports

AUSTIN - The Texas A&M Lady Aggie volleyball team fell to the University of Texas 15-10, 15-3 and 15-8 at the Recreational Sports Center Saturday night in Austin.

The Longhorns, ranked number one in the nation, moved their record 30-2 overall. The Aggies, seeded eighth in the region, finished 27-8 overall. Texas won all three matches between the teams this season.

Senior outside hitter Sheila Morgan led the Aggies with 11 kills while sophomore outside hitter Dana Santleben had seven. Sophomore setter Suzy Wente had 28 assists.

A&M head coach Laurie Corbelli said she was pleased with the Aggies' start but she wished they could have continued it.

"We started off like I was hoping we'd play the whole time," Corbelli said. "We had a mid-match lull, and you can't play up and down with a team like this."

A&M basketball plays Montana State tonight

From Staff and Wire Reports

Texas A&M begins a four game home-stand tonight against Montana State at 7 in G. Rolie White Coliseum.

The Aggies (1-1) will attempt to rebound from their first loss of the season against Kansas State last Wednesday, 64-53. Junior forward Joe Wilbert led A&M with 12 points with junior forward Damon Johnson adding 10 points.

The Bobcats enter the game undefeated at 3-0. The game marks the first meeting between the two schools.

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