

### Aggies should fly by night

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Guest Columnist



I went to Louisiana last weekend, to watch the Aggies play the LSU Tigers in Baton Rouge. The game was a smashing success. The excitement in Tiger Stadium lasted all four quarters, the band was great and best of all ... it wasn't hot.

It wasn't hot because it was a night game. It was at 7 pm, the ideal time. It also was one of only two night games on our football schedule this season. (And Death Valley at night is no place for an Aggie.)

The other night match-up is against University of Houston in the Astrodome. And last time I checked it doesn't matter what time of day you are playing in a dome; the temperature, humidity and atmosphere are totally controlled for you. It could be 40 below outside and you wouldn't know it inside a dome.

It also seems ridiculous that during the one season when we aren't bound by TV scheduling we still are playing afternoon games. We are wasting our only opportunity to be free of television's bossy, capitalistic limitations. Our only opportunity unless Warren Gilbert's charges end up being true, that is.

My first Division I football game was here at A&M, two years ago. I was having a great time, until my friend passed out from the heat. This was a little scary and I had a few questions. Why on earth did we have so many afternoon games?

"For TV," someone said. "Uh, something about television," said another. "The television contracts specify the exact time of kickoff and since we are being paid by them we are bound to play by their rules," said my sports knowledgeable friend Jason.

Everyone blamed it on the omnipotent force of television. Those television dollars seemed to speak louder than anything else and consequently, we the students suffered through many agonizingly hot hours.

It isn't easy to stand for three and a half hours in the blazing sun as I discovered at last year's game against LSU. By the second quarter I was sunburned; it got so bad that my friends and I gave up our 50 yard line, second deck tickets to go sit in the horseshoe. During time outs we ran into the tunnel for shade.

I definitely missed the Friday night football games of high school. Despite that we Minnesotans had to

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# Sooners not scared by Kyle Field showdown

## OU coach expecting war in trenches

By Nick Georgandis THE BATTALION

When the Texas A&M football team was pulling out a come-from-behind victory last Saturday night, their counterparts at Oklahoma University were showing their resilience, running out to a 24-0 lead against Syracuse, then having to come back and pull out a 30-29 victory.

Oklahoma sophomore tailback James Allen said the game against the Orangemen has given the Sooners a confidence boost as they continue to play on the road to open the season.

"I think (that game) showed we can come back no matter what," Allen said. "It helped us practice this week real well."

It was, of course, Oklahoma that handed the Aggies their only regular-season loss last season, a 44-14 shellacking at Norman.

Oklahoma head coach Gary Gibbs however, does not feel revenge will be a determining factor in the outcome of the game.

"Last year's game was very physical and competitive," Gibbs said.

"I don't expect anything different this time around, the key factor will be who can go out and execute the best."

Oklahoma is in a similar situation to A&M, having lost several top performers including quarterback Cale Gundy, linebacker Aubrey Beavers and flanker Corey Warren.

Despite the losses, the Sooners are still ex-

pected to be a force in the Big 8, a conference that includes #1 Nebraska and nationally-ranked Colorado. Gibbs said if his team is going to be successful Saturday and for the rest of the season, it will be because of the make-up of the team.

"We have a lot of confidence in ourselves, and we've worked extremely hard," Gibbs said. "Everyone on this team believed in themselves before (the Syracuse game), and now they believe even more."

One aspect of the game that both sides are looking forward to is the running backs that will be showcased Saturday afternoon.

The Texas A&M tandem of sophomore Leland McElroy and Rodney Thomas will be matched against Oklahoma's threesome of Allen, sophomore fullback Jerald Moore and sophomore tailback Jeff Frazier, who Gibbs calls "our home run hitter."

Allen said he is looking forward to the game from an individual standpoint, to see how well he and teammate Moore match up against some of the best runners in the country.

"Thomas and McElroy are very exciting to watch," Allen said. "This is a chance for Jerald and I to get shown as well."

Gibbs goes a step further than his starting tailback, paying high compliments to the Aggie backs while claiming that fans attending Saturday's contest will see something truly special.

"(McElroy) is truly capable of scoring every time he touches the ball, and Thomas is one of the most physical, punishing rushers I have ever seen," Gibbs said.

"There will not be another game played this season featuring so many superbly talented (running) backs."



Nick Rodnicki/The Battalion

## Pushin' on through

Noseguard Eddie Jasper, left, practices his moves against Marcus Heard in preparation for the University of Oklahoma game.

# Collins tows the line after off-season position change

By Drew Diener THE BATTALION



Nick Rodnicki/The Battalion

After earning All-Southwest honors at guard last season, Calvin Collins was moved to center by the Texas A&M coaching staff. The move, which was made during spring practice, suits the sophomore from Beaumont West Brook just fine.

"I played there (center) for two years in high school," Collins said. "I'm finally getting back in the swing of things where I can do things naturally. They made a good decision by moving me."

As a red-shirt freshman last season, Collins gained valuable experience playing on a senior-dominated line that helped lead the way for an Aggie offense that racked up 36.7 points and an average of over 400 yards per game.

Collins said that he feels more comfortable this season with a year of playing in the trenches under his belt.

"My knowledge of the game has grown a lot," Collins said. "I know the plays and it makes me feel better when I'm out there."

In the weight room, Collins' power clean of 341 pounds will top on the team, while his bench press of 410 pounds tied him for third.

Offensive line coach Joe D'Alessandris said he is pleased with the progress Collins has made since the spring, and hopes that he will continue to make strides in the right direction. "We need good performances out of him in order to be successful," D'Alessandris said. "He did a good job during pre-season practice and against LSU."

Collins said he is looking forward to the challenge that this weekend's game against Oklahoma presents. Like his teammates, Collins is anxious to gain revenge against the Sooners after Oklahoma handed the Aggies a 44-14 defeat last season.

"They'll (the Oklahoma defensive line) be the best front we'll play against this year," Collins said. "Playing Oklahoma is such a big thing, that alone gets you hyped up enough to play the game."

As Collins has become more comfortable at center, he has become more comfortable as a leader. "Since I'm the center, you've got to look to me for guidance anyway," Collins said. "Most of the guys motivate themselves and sometimes it's (leading) not necessary."

D'Alessandris said that Collins work ethic alone sets a good example for his teammates.

"Each person leads in his own particular way," D'Alessandris said. "He's not a 'rah-rah' guy who is always yelling and holler-ing. He leads by example."

At 6 feet, 3 inches and 299 pounds, Collins possesses an enormous physical stature that is made more formidable by his speed and quickness. With such natural gifts, D'Alessandris considers Collins to be a bonafide National Football League prospect should he continue to evolve at center.

"I think he has some great qualities," D'Alessandris said. "He has a lot of god given ability and if he continues to work at it, he has the ability to go to the next level."

# Volleyball home opener tonight against Arkansas-Little Rock

By Jason Holstead THE BATTALION

After winning first place at the Virginia Tech All Sport Volleyfest last weekend and losing to Sam Houston State University Wednesday night, the Texas A&M University Lady Aggie volleyball team opens its home schedule tonight against the University of Arkansas-Little Rock.

Laurie Corbelli, second-year head coach of the Lady Aggies, said she was pleased with the team's overall performance during the tourna-

ment, but feels there are several areas that still need to be improved.

"We saw some highlights from our younger players, while Suzy Wente and Jennifer Bronner had great performances," she said. "But we are still a young team that tends to have defensive lapses during games."

The Lady Aggies are coming off one of the most successful seasons in school history, reaching the second-round of the NCAA tournament. The team finished with a 27-8 record and a second-

place showing in the South-west Conference.

The 1994 Lady Aggies have several holes to fill after losing four full-time starters and one key reserve to graduation, but Corbelli says the talents of the incoming freshman coupled with the strong play of Bronner and Wente will help the team have a successful season.

"The new kids are definitely very experienced and have made an impact on our team, with several having played in Junior Olympic games and major club events around the

country," Corbelli said. "While Bronner and Wente have shown they are the leaders of this team through their solid play on the court."

Wente feels the overall play of the team during the past week was good, considering it was the first four games of the season.

"The strengths of this team are the blocking and hitting, they can put it (the ball) anywhere and go through the blocks really good," she said. "The weaknesses are our serving, we really need to be more aggressive in that area."

Wente says a "large and rowdy" crowd at G. Rollie White Coliseum can help this year's Lady Aggies, who is long on talent but short on experience.

"A crowd is incredible, it really makes your adrenaline pump," she said. "It makes you jump higher, hit harder and can be the difference in a close game."

The Lady Aggies hope to end an up-and-down week with a win against Arkansas Little-Rock Friday at 7:00 p.m. at G. Rollie White Coliseum.

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