

### Reliving days as young Batt sportswriter

DREW DIENER

Sportswriter



It seems like it was just yesterday when a young and naive Drew Diener reported for his first day of work at The Battalion.

Being a sportswriter for a daily newspaper had always been my dream. On that hot and slimy August day in 1993, the dream became a reality. The sports staff met in the newsroom that morning at 10:30. Nervously, I sat through a briefing on what our editors had cut out for us for the semester, and what we could expect later on that day as the media were to meet at Cain Hall to interview the 1993 Texas A&M football team and staff.

Forced right into action, I soon found myself in the Cain Hall dining room sitting amongst some of the state's most respected sports reporters. After polishing off the first of many complimentary meals to come over the next year and a half, I conducted my first interview...

Lance Teichelman was the starting nose guard for the "Wrecking Crew." A nice guy, Lance bore with me as I nervously asked him a couple of questions about the defense. (It may be important to mention that my assignment was to write a story on the defensive line and linebackers.)

A couple of hours later, after speaking to the likes of Teichelman, Sam Adams, Eric England, the former Antonio Shorter and Steve Solari, I was feeling pretty confident. I was feeling pretty cool.

Writing that first story seemed to take forever. I was really rusty, and I had never really written in appropriate journalistic style before.

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## Lady Aggies pleased with '94 performance

### NCAA tournament high point of season

By Tom Day  
THE BATTALION

After experiencing the thrill and excitement of playing in the NCAA tournament last year, the 1994 Lady Aggie volleyball team planned on making a return trip this season. But with the loss of four starters off of that 27-8 squad, the team realized that the road back might not be as smoothly paved.

Forced to start two freshmen and a sophomore, the young A&M team had a lot of growing up to do. For a while, it looked like the Aggie's plans would have to be put on hold until next season.

At midseason, the Lady Aggies were floating along with a mediocre 7-9 record. Following a heart-breaking loss to Duke University on Oct. 17, the team was feeling the pressure of a three-match losing streak.

"I'm looking for a night when all my hitters are ready to have a stat sheet like all the teams that are beating us," head coach Laurie Corbelli said following the match. "You cannot beat a team at this level with more hitting errors."

Two days later, the Aggies turned it all around in a dominating three game victory over Texas Tech in G. Rollie White Coliseum.

"I don't think we've played better all season long," Corbelli said afterwards. "I think the players learned a lot from the last few games (against ranked Duke and Notre Dame). When you play it enough, you learn it and it becomes you."

The Aggies weren't done yet, as the Tech victory served as a preview of great things to come. The team would win four of its next six matches heading into a Southwest Conference showdown at home against the University of Houston.

The Cougars entered the match ranked No. 17 in the nation, but they were no match for the Aggies on that

night. When the smoke had cleared, A&M had a four game victory and a huge dose in confidence.

"We played spectacular," Corbelli said. "This win is a boost. It is great to play so well against a top team at the end of the year."

On Nov. 18, A&M entered the SWC tournament on a four match winning streak. With wins over Rice and No. 23 ranked Texas, the Aggies made the finals for the first time in the history of the tournament. But, the team surrendered an automatic NCAA tournament berth with a loss to Houston in the final.

A few days later, the Aggies received good news from the national selection committee as they were awarded an at-large berth in the NCAA tournament for their 18-13 record.

A&M did not let the opportunity go to waste, as the team dismantled Michigan St. in a first round home game.

"It was the first time in the first round for a lot of these players and they just did a tremendous job," Corbelli said. "I'm so proud of how we rose to the occasion."

A few days later, the result would be different as A&M would end the season in a three game loss to No. 4 ranked Ohio State on the road. But the loss couldn't dampen the accomplishments of the team and individual players.

In just her third season of leading the Aggie attack, junior setter Suzy Wente broke the school record for assists with 4,035. Senior outside hitter Jennifer Bronner, a reserve player during her first three years, joined the starting lineup this season and led the team in kills.

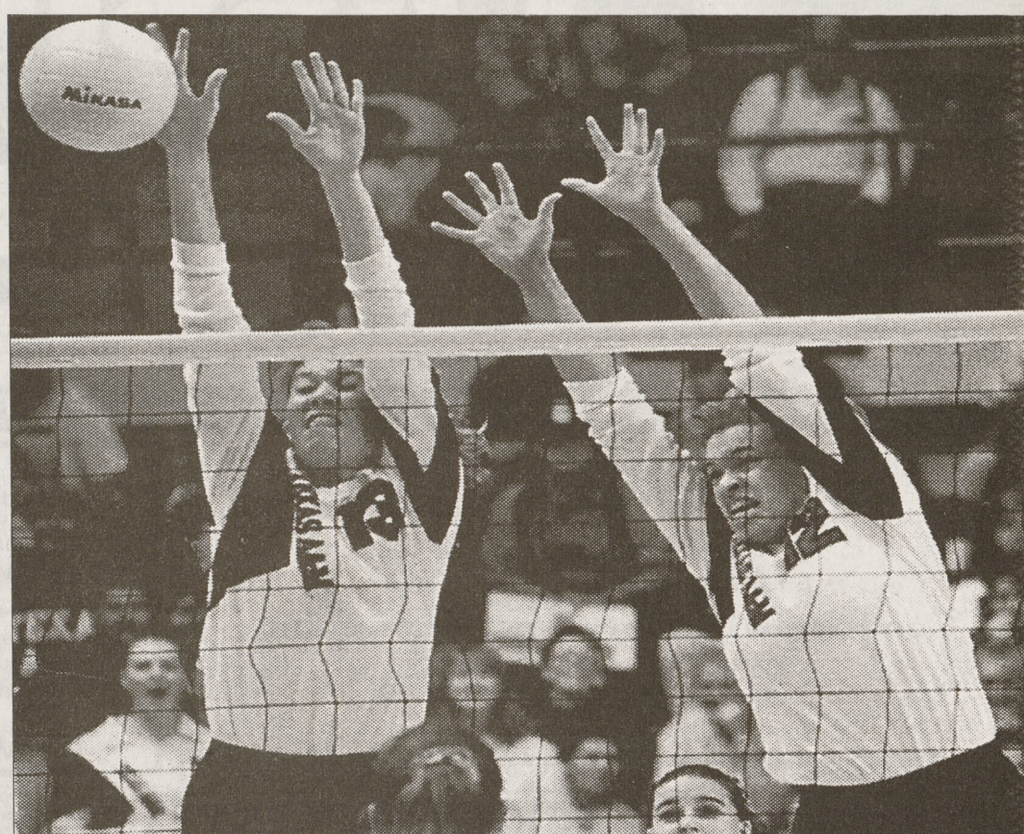
Appropriately, both players were named first team All-SWC for their efforts. Outside hitter Kristie Smedsrud was named All-SWC first team as well as SWC Freshman of the Year and Corbelli was awarded SWC Co-Coach of the Year.

Corbelli said the future of A&M volleyball looks bright.

"I perceive constant climbing in the polls," Corbelli said. "I think I can bring to them the joy of being the best."



Corbelli



Freshman outside hitter Kristie Smedsrud (#13) and junior middle blocker Andrea Williams (#12) block a spike during the game against Michigan State.

## Swimmers make bid for NCAA

Staff and Wire Reports

Eight Lady Aggie swimmers recorded NCAA Consideration times in 10 different events, including three relays, at last weekend's Texas Invitational Dec. 1-3 hosted by the University of Texas.

Senior Susie Geyer qualified in the 100 meter fly, 100 meter breast and 200 meter IM, while fellow seniors Jennifer Saul and Anna Leporis both merited consideration in the 50- and 100-meter events, and as part of the 200 and 400-meter relays.

Freshmen Stacie Karnes and Danee Mastagni also qualified, with Mastagni breaking her own school record in the 200-meter breast. With 14 of 19 competing teams ranked in the CSCAA preseason poll, the Invita-

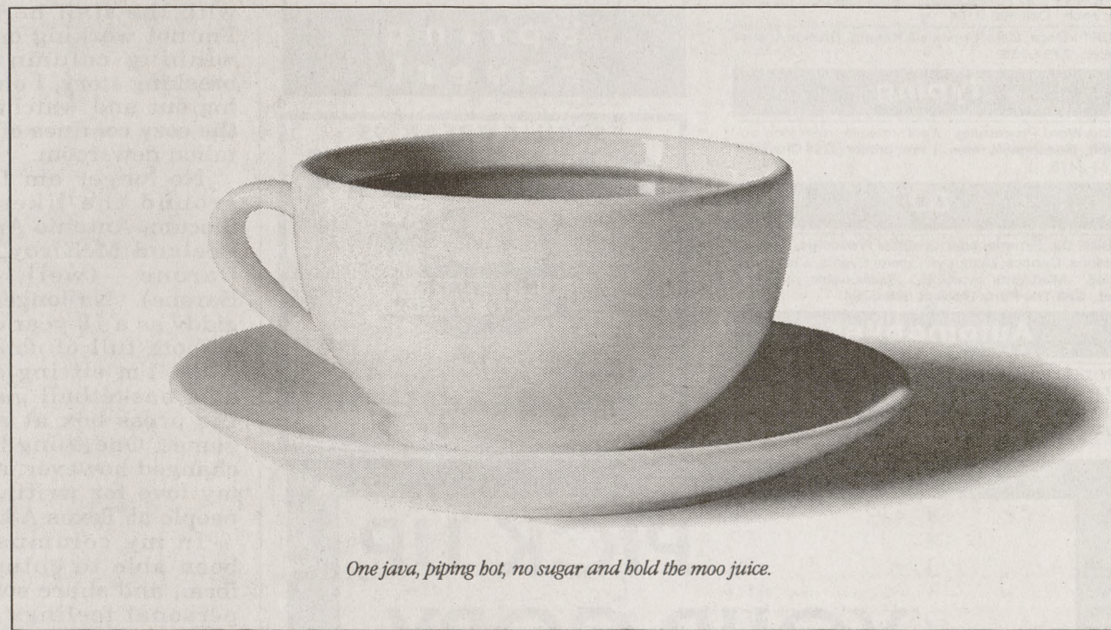
tional was recognized as the fastest collegiate meet on the weekend. Freshman Jodi Janssen earned consideration for the third time this season. She placed ninth in the platform competition with 263.20 points.

The A&M men were led by senior Rich Nolte, Robb Pantano and redshirt freshman Kent Willis who finished eighth in the 100-meter breast, 200-meter back and 1650-meter freestyle.

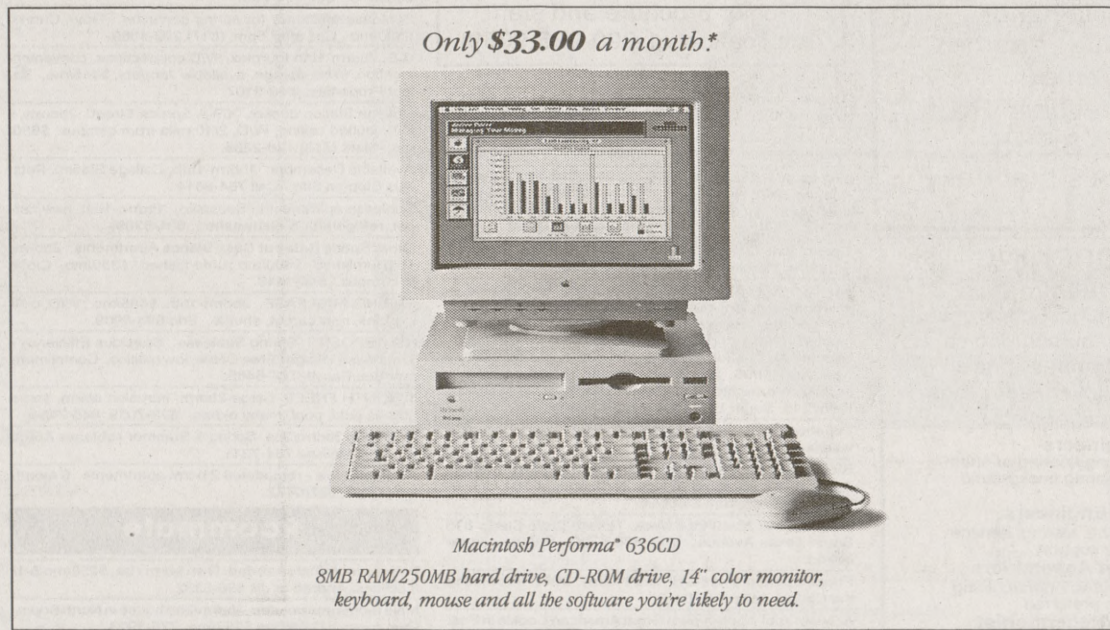
Freshman diver Jarrod Flores also qualified for the NCAA prequalifying meet for the second time by placing second in the one-meter competition with 467.75 points. In addition, he posted sixth-place showings in both the three-meter and platform competitions.

Flores and Janssen will participate in the All-American Diving Invitational hosted by Texas on Jan. 4-8.

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