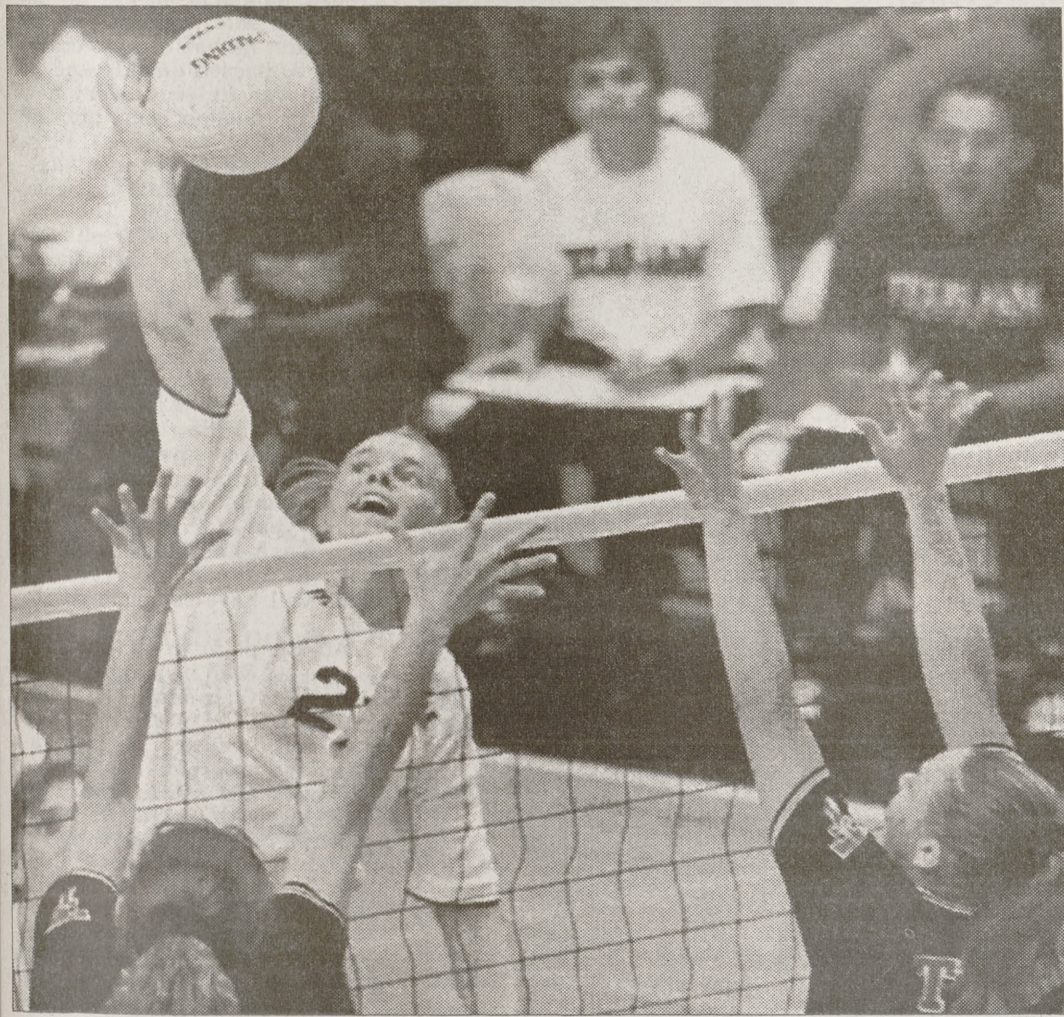


Conference lead on line tonight for A&M, UT



Stew Milne THE BATTALION

Sophomore middle blocker **Cindy VanderWoude** spikes the ball against the Texas Tech Lady Red Raiders during Saturday night's win at G. Rollie White Coliseum.

□ The Lady Aggies will be attempting to keep their unbeaten home and conference records intact.

By Lisa Nance
THE BATTALION

The University of Texas has already called to ask if our fans will be hostile.

"We're not going to be mean," A&M Head Volleyball Coach Laurie Corbelli said. "But, we're going to be loud."

Tonight the Lady Aggies and the Lady Longhorns will face off in a match that will decide who will be the front runner in the conference. Both teams are 4-0 going into tonight's game.

Corbelli said tonight's match will be against one of the biggest blocking teams the Lady Aggies have played against all season.

"They're going to be the second-biggest block we've seen all year (Stanford being the first)," Corbelli said. "They have two outside hitters who are very successful and powerful, so we'll really have to contend with those two."

If anyone should know about how A&M and Texas match up, it is Stanford. Last year's national champion, the Cardinal's only two losses this season are to the Lady Aggies and the Lady Longhorns.

The Lady Aggies are 12-1 for the season, the best start in school history. The 4-0 conference start is the best start since 1986. They are ranked 19th in the nation, while the Lady Longhorns settle in at No. 11.

"I think my team is aware of how capable they are," Corbelli said. "I think they see the weaknesses in Texas that we must take advantage of in order to beat them. I think they're ready to get out there and play them instead of thinking about playing them and waiting to play them."

This matchup marks the third time the two teams have met at G. Rollie White Coliseum in Corbelli's tenure. Corbelli said she is amazed at how the big the Aggie crowds have always been for the matches with Texas.

"I don't think there is anywhere in the country where there is a match like this," Corbelli said. "I was amazed the first year and had goosebumps the entire evening. Last year, it was the same thing, a little more because I expected it, so it was more fun for me."

Thus far in 1995, the Lady Aggies have been very successful at home, compiling a perfect 6-0 record. They will try to build upon that mark tonight while making a run at the 1982 team which won 16 straight matches at home to begin its season.

Although winning the game is foremost in the players' minds, plenty of eyes will be on senior setter Suzy Wentz as she continues her assault on the Southwest Conference record books.

Wentz now has 4,642 career assists, 205 short of the SWC career record of 4,846.

Last season, Wentz broke the A&M career record held by Yvonne Van Brandt.

Texas comes into the match with a six-match winning streak, including a four-game win over then-No. 7 Notre Dame.

The Lady Longhorns are led by freshman outside hitter Demetria Sance, who leads the team with 4.3 kills and 3.66 digs per game.

In their most recent outing, Texas defeated SWC rival Baylor 15-2, 15-7, 15-12. The loss dropped the Bears to 0-4 in SWC play.

A&M is coming off a three-game sweep of Texas Tech Saturday night at G. Rollie White Coliseum. Outside hitter Kristie Smetsrud led the Lady Aggies with 17 kills, and senior outside hitter Andrea Williams contributed 15 kills and a match-high .591 hitting percentage.

The Lady Aggies and the Lady Longhorns will face off at 7 p.m.

"We're not going to be mean, but we're going to be loud."

—Laurie Corbelli
A&M Volleyball Coach



Re-signing Biggio a must for a bright Astro future

Houston Astros owner Drayton McLane, Jr. has a little problem. It seems his high-priced, underachieving baseball team isn't quite turning a major league profit. In fact, the Astros have been losing millions since McLane purchased the team over three years ago, including \$22 million in 1995.

Now, after another disappointing season, McLane and the Astros have another problem to deal with. The contract of team leader and fan favorite Craig Biggio has expired, and the second baseman is due to become a free agent following the World Series at the end of this month.

Adding fuel to the fire, Biggio was nothing short of amazing this season. The team's most consistent and versatile player hit .302 with 22 home runs and 77 RBIs. He stole 30 bases, and his 123 runs scored led the league and set a team record.

Biggio's last contract paid him an average of \$3.5 million a year from 1993-1995. However, his estimated worth for next season is around \$5 million, and McLane may not have enough spare change hidden beneath his couch cushions to foot the bill.

The man upstairs is handcuffed financially, and the Astros' bloated payroll has a lot to do with the problem. McLane already has \$16 million invested in 1994 National League MVP Jeff Bagwell and the

TOM DAY
SPORTSWRITER



kings of underachievement — pitchers Doug Drabek and Greg Swindell.

Also, in wake of last season's labor strike that canceled the postseason, gate receipts in Major League baseball parks were down, and the story was no different at the Astrodome. This lack of income may spell doom for Biggio and his future with the Astros.

But if McLane knows what's good for his team and the well-being of the franchise, he'll do whatever it takes to re-sign Biggio. Last season, the Astros were just a half game behind the Cincinnati Reds when the strike interrupted the season. Then, management gutted the team, trading Steve Finley, Ken Caminiti and Andujar Cedeno to the Padres for Derek Bell and a couple other players.

The new-look Astros couldn't get the job done this season, and to lose their best player in 1995 would be devastating. Bagwell has already voiced his discontent over losing Biggio and said he would request a trade if the three-time All-Star leaves. That wouldn't do much for team unity.

More importantly though, team ownership and management can expect waves of fan backlash if Biggio bolts. He's the last player connected to the good old days when players like Nolan Ryan and Billy Doran graced the Houston baseball diamond. Like Doran before him, Biggio is a sentimental

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A&M soccer team ready to extend SWC win streak

□ The team travels to Austin this afternoon for a matchup against the 4-9 Lady Longhorns.

By Philip Leone
THE BATTALION

With an overall record of 9-3, the 13th-ranked Texas A&M Soccer Team will travel to Austin this afternoon to test their spotless 2-0 conference mark in a 4 p.m. showdown with the University of Texas Lady Longhorns.

The Lady Aggies jumped up two spots in the national polls after last weekend's pounding of Texas Tech University and the University of New Mexico at the Aggie Soccer Complex. Head Coach G. Guerrieri believes his squad is headed to Austin playing at the top of their game.

"We're riding a nice winning streak where our defense has really come together," said Guerrieri. "So we're confident now that we can play anybody and attack at will and stop any counter attacks thrown at us."

The Lady Longhorns come into today's action sporting a black-and-blue 4-9 overall season record; however, eight of those losses were to teams ranked in the nation's top twenty. Texas stands at 1-1 in Southwest Conference play, de-



Stew Milne, THE BATTALION

Texas A&M's **Bryn Blalack** gets physical during the Aggies' win over Texas Tech Sunday.

feating Texas Christian University and losing to the Central regions' No. 1 team, Southern Methodist University.

Even though Texas' record is less than impressive, Guerrieri is still concerned with the unique

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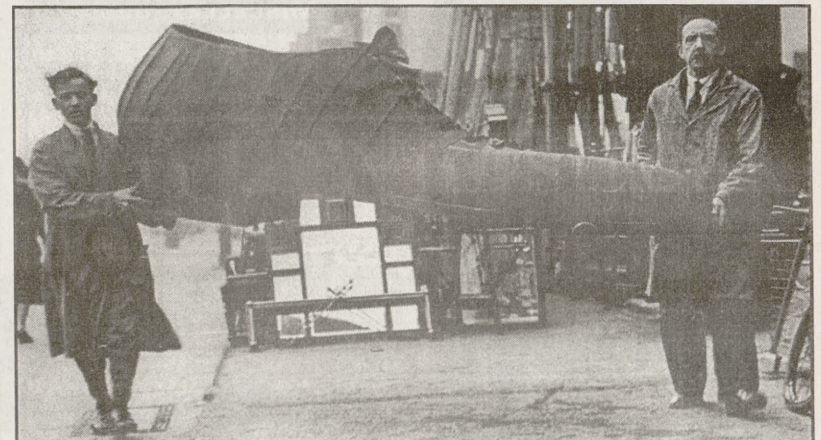
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