

Sixth-ranked Aggies stay unbeaten

By Nicki Smith
THE BATTALION



Stew Milne, THE BATTALION

A&M senior forward **Kristen Koop** drives past Florida goalkeeper **Michelle Harris** to attempt a shot on goal during the second half of A&M's 2-1 victory over Florida.

It is like General Patton said, "Give me a handful of Aggies and I will win a war." This statement was proven true this week-end at the Aggie Soccer Complex as the Texas A&M Soccer team defeated the University of Florida Gators, 2-1, in an all-out war between two of the nation's top ten soccer teams.

Going into Sunday's game, the Aggies were ranked sixth nationally with an overall record of 7-0, while the Lady Gators were right behind with a 5-0 record and a No. 8 ranking.

A&M Head Coach G. Guerrieri said the Lady Gators were the Aggies' toughest match-up of the season.

"They are an extremely athletic team that is deserving of a top ranking," Guerrieri said. "They do a good job of double-teaming all over the field. They are also a much taller and physically stronger team than we are."

Physical or not, the Aggies led their four-game, two-week home stand with an impressive win in front of 1,035 fans, the largest crowd the Aggies have seen all season.

Senior forward Yvette Okler said the crowd was the motivating factor throughout the entire game.

"All of the people just got us going," Okler said. "We all just started playing with our heart knowing that we had to win."

With the crowd in mind and a perfect opportunity to score less than five minutes into the game, senior forward Kristen Koop put the Aggies ahead.

The shot came after Koop beat charging Lady Gator goalkeeper Ann Pattishall to the ball and got the shot past Pattishall.

The goal put the Aggies up 1-0, and would be the only goal either team would score for the next 20 minutes.

Okler said the scoring drought was attributed to a good Florida defense.

"They had to start hitting and pushing us to get us going," Okler said. "They are very tall and kept the ball in the air a lot. We had to work on keeping the ball on the ground and keeping our intensity up."

With 25 minutes left in the first half, the score was tied at one

apiece as Florida scored off a corner kick that got past freshman goaltender Melanie Wilson.

For the rest of the half, it was all defense for both teams as each tried to break loose to get the ball to its respective offensive players.

The Aggies were successful at getting three open-netted shots, two from senior forward Bryn Blalack and one from Koop. All three came up empty by either going wide or over the goal.

Okler was able to shift the momentum as she scored the winning goal with 1:48 left to play off

a pass from Koop. It was Okler's first goal since the game against Vanderbilt University Sept. 6.

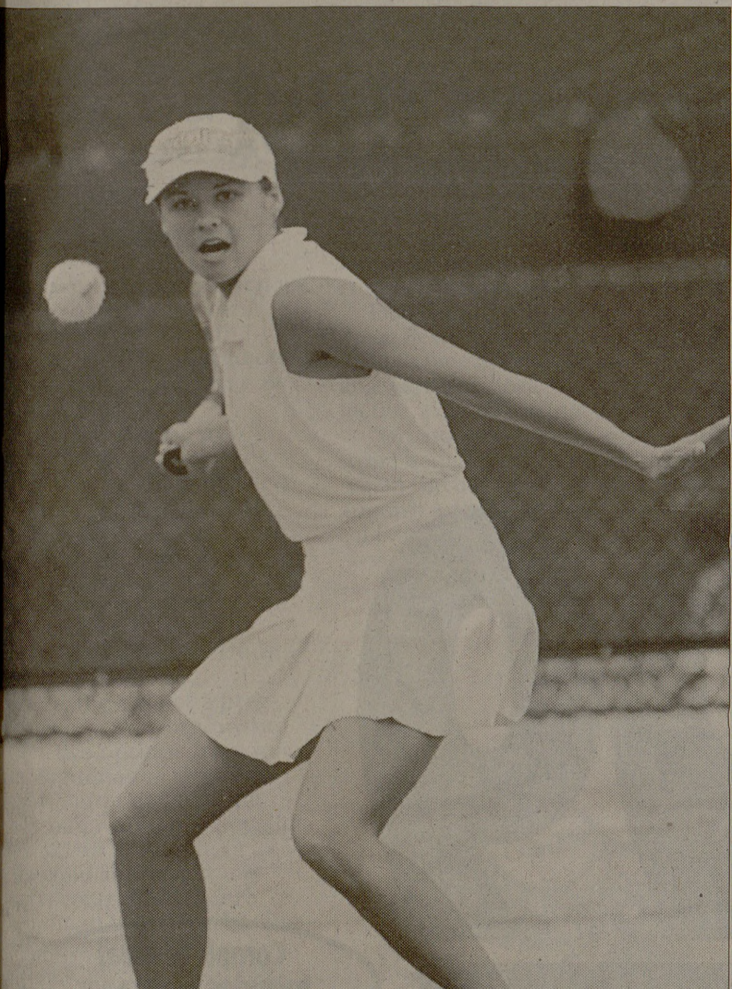
Guerrieri said the home-field advantage is what gave the Aggies their winning goal.

"We are now 28-1 at home, 4-0 at home this season," Guerrieri said. "Our crowds are getting bigger, and for us the crowd is good for one goal with us."

The Aggies will embark on a five-game road trip this week, facing Big 12 foes Iowa State on Friday, and 12th-ranked University of Nebraska on Sunday.

Lady Ag tennis impressive at A&M Five-Way

By Sara Duesing
THE BATTALION



Rony Angkriwan, THE BATTALION

Lady Aggie team captain **Nancy Dingwall** takes a swing at the A&M Five-Way tournament at Pebble Creek Country Club on Saturday.

The Texas A&M Women's Tennis Team breathed a huge sigh of relief after completing its first competition of the fall season.

The Lady Aggies, young and inexperienced with three new freshmen, faced Rice University, the University of North Texas, the University of Southwestern Louisiana and Texas Christian at Pebble Creek Country Club as they hosted the A&M Five-Way tournament this weekend.

A&M Head Women's Tennis Coach Bobby Kleinecke said he was pleased with his team's performance, especially in the singles competition.

"Both [junior] Monica Rebolledo and [sophomore] Monica San Miguel competed really well," Kleinecke said. "They gave it their all and performed as if this were the spring season."

Kleinecke also said he and his team were going to use this first tournament as an opportunity to learn about themselves and to get all the nerves out of the way.

"I was really pleased with the chemistry between the girls," Kleinecke said. "This was all about getting used to competing again."

Rice proved dominant and captured first place. The Owls captured the No. 1 and No. 2 positions in the singles "A" competition. But senior team captain Nancy Dingwall finished third after Julia Mertins of USL with-

drew due to injury. Two other Lady Aggies finished in the top 10 including Rebolledo, who finished sixth after falling to Rice's Jennifer Velasco 7-6, 6-1. A&M freshman Lisa Dingwall took ninth after beating USL's Katia Antropova 3-6, 6-3, 6-1.

"We worked really hard and no one gave up," Rebolledo said. "We have a few things to work on, though."

Kleinecke said he is certain his team will progressively improve and stressed the importance of feeling dominant on the court.

"We're going to practice on being more aggressive," Kleinecke said. "In doubles, the girls have to get used to their partner and we also need to start cutting off the returns. We got what we expected (this weekend) and I'm extremely pleased with the effort and the attitudes that these girls showed."

In the B singles competition, the Lady Aggies finished strong as San Miguel finished second after losing to Rice's Jessica Gagnon, 7-5, 3-6, 6-3 in the finals. Freshman Kathryn Scott finished third after defeating Rice's Vessie Ivanova, 6-4, 6-4.

"We had a lot of close matches," Rebolledo said. "We didn't do bad, but we plan to really do better next time."

Next time for the Lady Aggies is Sept. 28 at the ITA Invitational.

"We will continue to work hard," Kleinecke said. "We're just young and it takes time."



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