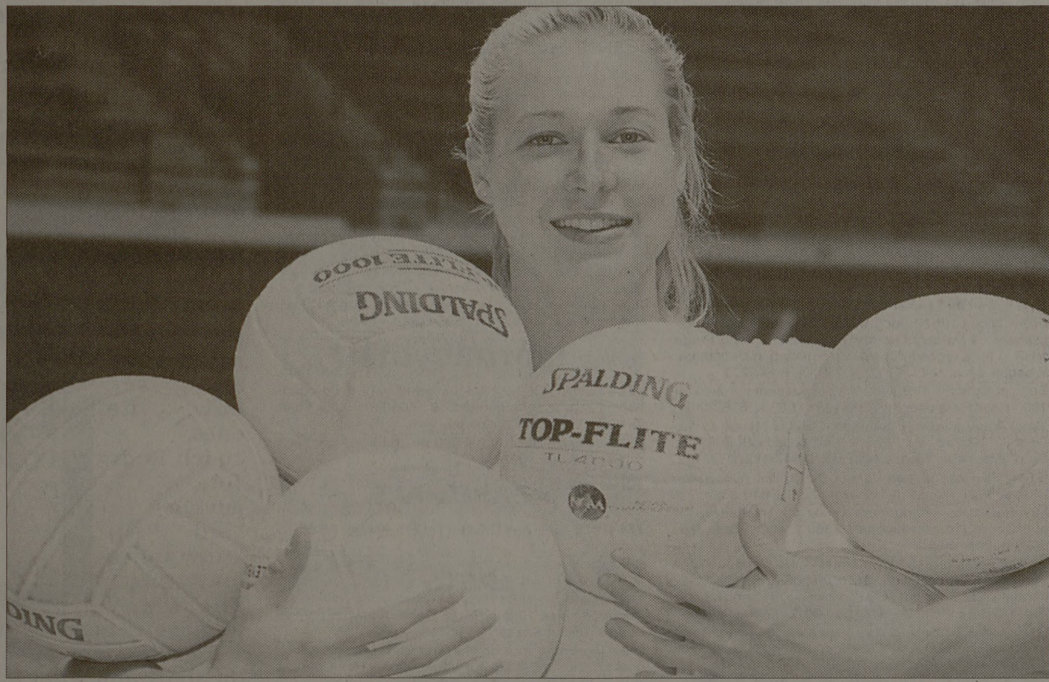


Volleyball roots influence Woolsey

By JAMIE BURCH
THE BATTALION

At 6 feet 3 inches tall, A&M freshman middle blocker Amber Woolsey was born to play basketball. It is no surprise that she was recruited by more schools to play college basketball than volleyball. However, Woolsey said she opted to play volleyball because there was more room for improvement. "Actually, I got burned out on basketball," Woolsey said. "Volleyball was new to me because I didn't start playing until my freshman year in high school." Woolsey said her interest in volleyball stems from her mother, Gayle Trustman, who played at Texas Women's University and North Texas State University. Trustman led the TWU team to a second-place finish in the 1973 AIAW national championship. After transferring to NTSU, she played against A&M Head Coach Laurie Corbelli. "My mom played volleyball against Laurie," Woolsey said. "She also played on the Olympic team. I became interested in the game because of her."



Pat James, THE BATTALION

Freshman Amber Woolsey has seen limited action this year but in 14 games she has posted 19 kills, 17 blocks and her 1.21 blocks per game average is second on the team.

Corbelli said she has been impressed with Woolsey's improvement so far this year. "She came in with a lot of talent and a lot to offer," Corbelli said. "I think her maturity on the court, sharper execution, and movement to the ball for blocking has improved immensely throughout the season."

"We're looking for her to be one of our starting middle blockers next year."

Laurie Corbelli
Volleyball head coach

Senior middle blocker Page White said it is not just improvement that has been the key to her success.

"I don't think it's improvement," White said. "Rather I think she's just begun to feel comfortable and started to play her game."

Woolsey said she has learned from watching White.

"Page has taught me a lot about the game," Woolsey said. "I've learned about playing style by the way she conducts herself on the court. I've seen how hard she pushes herself in practice and that's what I want to do. I really ad-

mire her as a player." Trying to make an impact in her freshman season, Corbelli said Woolsey will be a cornerstone of the team in the future.

"She is someone we will be emphasizing and using tons," Corbelli said. "She and Page remind me a lot of each other. Page's freshman year was a lot of learning, observing and experiencing and getting ready to start her next year. Page has never disappointed us, and I have a feeling that Amber won't either. We're looking for her to be one of our starting middle blockers next year."

Woolsey said while she realizes that her role this season is to come in and play when needed, she is aiming for a starting role next year.

However, more prestigious than a starting position, Woolsey has set her sights on being named an All-American before she graduates.

"I'd like to be an All-American," Woolsey said. "That's a goal I have. I also want to see the team ranked in the top 10 in the next few years. I think with the coaching and the team we have, both are a reality."

Lady Aggs take No. 10 ranking on the road

The 10th-ranked Texas A&M Volleyball Team has now faced every team in the Big 12 Conference and is set for its second conference run with an 18-3 record and a 9-1 conference mark.

When Texas Tech University upset conference-leader University of Nebraska in five games Saturday (A&M defeated the Red Raiders in three games Oct. 6), the Lady Aggies moved into a first-place tie with the seventh-ranked Huskers.

Nebraska handed A&M its sole conference loss, and the two will meet again at G. Rollie White Coliseum on Nov. 30. The Lady Aggies are in a position to win the Big 12 and seem to be on the road to repeating last year's Sweet Sixteen appearance in the NCAA Tournament. They could do more.

Ross Hecox
Volleyball Notebook

Good Golly, G. Rollie... Sure Like it at Home. For the next five matches the Lady Aggies will be on the road and wave goodbye to a dominating home-court advantage. G. Rollie has haunted opposing teams this season, and A&M has shown little hospitality by going undefeated at home with an 11-0 record. In addition, the team has surrendered only one game in those 11 matches and has a 26-game winning streak at home.

Now the team faces seven of its final 10 conference matches on the road. At least Nebraska and Colorado will be dealt with on Aggie turf.

tim to A&M in three games. A&M does not lose matches or games very often. The team has won 58 games and lost only 15.

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Fortifying the Right Side

Ever since freshman outside hitter Summer Strickland sprained her ankle, junior outside hitter Jennifer Wells has been a regular at the right-side position.

And she has emerged as a legitimate force, helping to extinguish the early season weakness of the right side of the Lady Aggie attack.

In last weekend's two matches, Wells recorded nine kills and hit for a .421 percentage. In conference play, she has posted 38 kills and 21 blocks.

Head Coach Laurie Corbelli said she is pleased with Wells' effort.

"Jen has been doing fantastic," Corbelli said. "She has added a lot. She does a great job of ball handling, and she's not afraid to get after it and not be afraid of making mistakes. She has become a part of (the team's) chemistry."

Woolsey, who was recruited by 26 Division I schools for volleyball alone, was recruited by more than 26 colleges to play basketball, including the University of Texas and the University of North Carolina.

Named to the 1993 All-Sun Country team for basketball while at the Valley High School in Overland Park, Kan., Woolsey said she has given a lot of thought to playing both sports in college.

"I looked into playing dual sports," Woolsey said. "But people kept telling me it was too hard to do, playing both volleyball and basketball, so I chose volleyball. Plus, it's better for females because we can do more in volleyball than in college."

As the third-string middle blocker, Woolsey has seen limited action. In 14 games this season, Woolsey has posted 19 kills and 17 blocks. Her 1.21 blocks per game average is second on the team to starting middle blocker Cindy VanderWoude. Woolsey owns the team's season high total blocks with 10 blocks against the University of Colorado.

Underrecognized Thompson latest thorn in Aggies' side

By ROSS HECOX
THE BATTALION

David Thompson. The name does not ring a bell, does it?

Maybe the Oklahoma State running back is being pushed into obscurity by fellow Big 12 Conference backs Byron Hanspard, Troy Davis and Ahman Green, who all attract the national spotlight. Or maybe it has something to do with the sparse coverage of his fledgling football team.

Whatever the reason for the runner's unknown status, the Texas A&M Football Team is well aware that he is capable of accomplishing, as it prepares to battle Thompson and the Cowboys Saturday in Stillwater.

Cowboys Head Coach Bob Simmons said Thompson's anonymity has nothing to do with what he does on a football field every weekend.

"He's in a league that has several good backs," Simmons said. "In my opinion, David Thompson is of the same quality as Hanspard and Davis. I don't think he takes a back seat to any of them."

Thompson's numbers clearly give him front-seat privileges in the Big 12 and in the nation. He ranks third in the conference and fourth in the nation with 138.6 yards per game, racking up a total of 1,109 yards in eight games this season.

His talents run deep enough for his coach to predict an NFL career for Thompson, which would mean following the footsteps of two other

famous Cowboys backs — Thurman Thomas of the Buffalo Bills and Barry Sanders of the Detroit Lions.

His 3,899 career yards put him in the company of Sanders (3,566) and Thomas (4,595), yet he has gained little recognition.

But Thompson shakes it off like a would-be tackler.

"I don't worry about it at all," Thompson said. "I feel [the recognition] is going to come, and if you do well against a team like [A&M] it will. If it does that's fine, and if it doesn't that's fine. My biggest concern is about this team."

Sporting a 1-4 conference record, the OSU football program is still young and developing. Simmons is in his second year as the Cowboys' head coach after mov-

ing from the University of Colorado, where he was assistant head coach under Bill McCartney.

Thompson said the opportunities for improving on last year's 4-8 finish are promising. The Cowboys are currently 4-4 and play their final three games at home.

"Last year we made a statement," Thompson said. "We have a great chance at keeping a strong homestand, and this year we can make another statement. I think we're going to finish up on a good note."

It is difficult for a program to grade its progress when it suddenly has established programs like Texas A&M and the University of Texas thrown on its schedule, along with the rising success of Texas Tech and Baylor.

Simmons said the Big 12 tests the OSU program intensely.

"We're young, and we're really in a building mode," Simmons said. "[The Big 12 schedule] says that we don't have anybody in the season that are slouches. It's a challenge for us. Although we are developing, we better grow up fast."

Thompson, who was finishing his sophomore season when Simmons arrived in December 1994, said Simmons and his Christian values have worked wonders with the program and the individual players in less than two years.

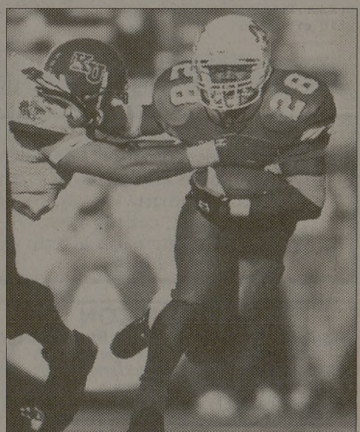
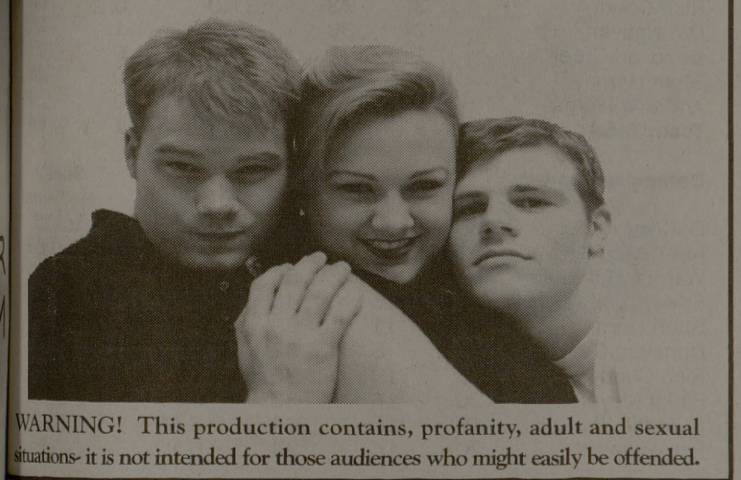


Photo Courtesy of OSU Sports Information
David Thompson averages 138.6 rushing yards per game.

See THOMPSON, Page 8

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