

Next stop: Lansing

A&M volleyball drops Trojans in three, move on to second round

By ROSS HECOX
THE BATTALION

Entering the first round in the Big Dance, the 15th-ranked Texas A&M Volleyball Team showed it knows how to cut a rug.

The Lady Aggies quickly dismissed the University of Arkansas at Little Rock 15-3, 15-8, 15-4 last night at G. Rolie White Coliseum.

With the victory, A&M penciled itself into the second round of the NCAA Tournament and will play Michigan State University Saturday at 6 p.m. in East Lansing, Mich.

"I don't think we've ever started that strong in a match in an NCAA Tournament," Corbelli said. "[UALR] had pretty good players, but we took them out of their offense. We were not only effective, we were relaxed and confident."

In the beginning of the first game, the Trojans used good defense to keep the score even at three. But a held ball violation by UALR handed the Lady Aggies the lead. From there the A&M offense rolled out 12 straight points to finish the game. As a team, A&M hit for a .302 percentage in the opening frame.

Sophomore outside hitter

Stacy Sykora, who posted 14 kills and 19 digs total, said throughout the match the team was able to run its style of offense.

"We did a real quick offense like we've been trained to do," Sykora said.

The second game, which saw five lead changes, offered the Trojans their best bid at winning. Numerous hitting errors, service errors and violations by the Lady Aggies kept the game close.

But with the score tied at seven, junior outside hitter Kristie Smedsrud hammered a shot off one of the Trojans, sending the Lady Aggies on an 8-1 run. Sykora made a diving dig at the net, setting up junior outside hitter Jennifer Wells' kill to win game two.

Junior setter Farah Mensik put A&M on the scoreboard first in the final game with her third service ace. The next two A&M points resulted from two Smedsrud service aces. The Lady Aggies dominated the entire game, building a 9-3 lead with a Smedsrud kill and recording their last six points consecutively.

Smedsrud, who hit for a career-high .680 percentage in the match and led the team with 17 kills, said A&M planned to run a tenacious attack.

"We let it all out and played as aggressively as we could," Smedsrud said. "We said we



Ryan Rogers, THE BATTALION

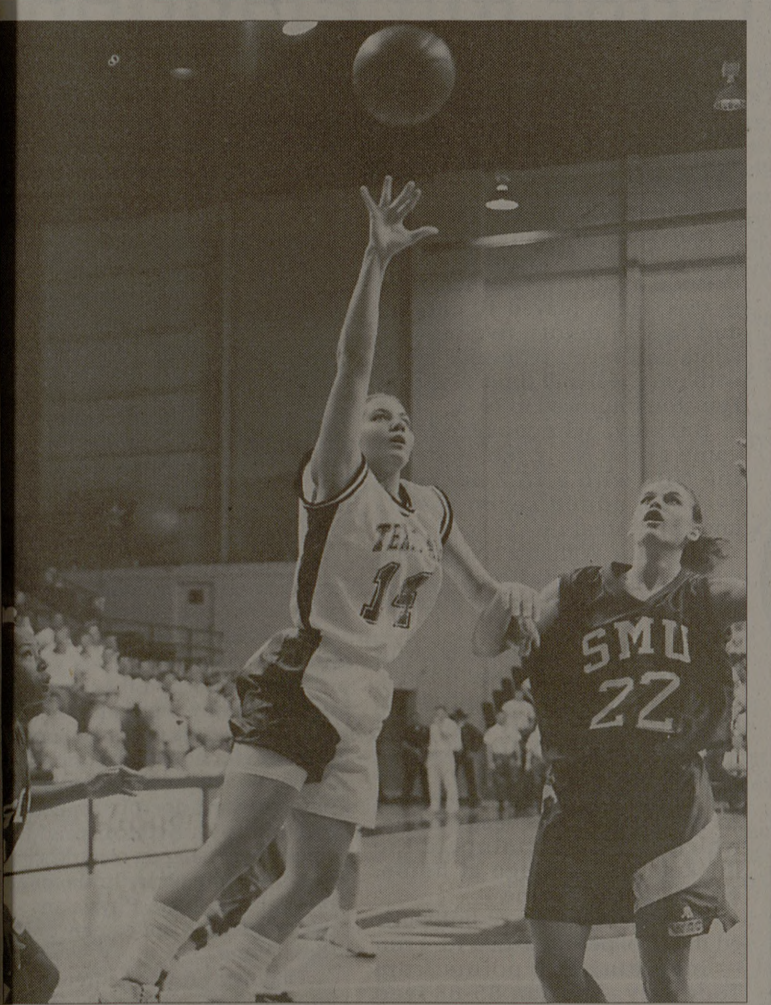
Juniors **Cindy VanderWoude** (#21) and **Kristie Smedsrud** (#13) block an attempted spike by an Arkansas hitter at G. Rolie White.

were going to swing as hard as we could. We were looking for some momentum."

As a team, A&M hit with .293 efficiency and blocked

nine shots, while holding the Trojans to four blocks and a .065 hitting efficiency.

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Stew Milne, THE BATTALION

Close call

A&M freshman **Prissy Sharpe** scores in the first half in the Lady Aggies 74-71 loss to SMU last night.

Versatile Anderson has young Aggies aiming high

By JAMIE BURCH
THE BATTALION

Modest, outspoken, leader and friend. These are a few of the words A&M coaches and players use to describe point guard Tracey Anderson. The 6-foot-2-inch senior on the Men's Basketball Team, subscribing to the Air Force motto of "aim high," has set a few modest goals for himself. The most glaring of his goals is to become "one of the elite guards in the NBA."

Anderson, a second-year transfer from Blinn College, has established himself as the leader of the A&M squad. This season, Anderson is averaging nine points, 2.7 rebounds and four assists per game while helping the Aggies to a 3-0 start.

Anderson said while he is happy with the Aggies' explosive start, he knows that A&M's early-season opponents do not hold a torch to future Big 12 foes.

"I'll take 3-0 any day," Anderson said. "But you can't compare these guards with (Kansas') Jacque Vaughn and (Colorado's) Chauncey Billups.

"Any time you play basketball and

you're defending against Division-I guards it helps. But Chauncey Billups is Chauncey Billups and Jacque Vaughn is Jacque Vaughn. You can't compare the guards we've faced to those guys."

During the offseason, Anderson had to make the transition to point guard following two-sport athlete Kyle Kessel's departure to play for the New York Mets.

Head Coach Tony Barone said Anderson has not missed a beat.

"He is flexible and a great defender," Barone said. "He can guard guys up to 6-foot, 5-inch. It is a focus he has. When we tell him to guard someone, to him, that means he is not going to let them touch the ball."

Sophomore forward Calvin Davis said Anderson is able to effectively run the offense at the point.

"He's adjusted really well," Davis said. "I think he's a bigger factor at the two-guard where he can shoot more. But he can handle the ball and makes good decisions. He runs the offense well."

Last season, Anderson led the team with 13.3 points and two steals per game and was named Southwest Conference Newcomer of the Year. Anderson's 81.4 free throw shooting percentage ranked

second in the SWC and 10th best in A&M history.

Barone said it is Anderson's approach to the sport that makes him so effective.

"He is a leader," Barone said. "He leads from his attitude and work ethic. He plays hard and I think that rubs off on the other players."

"He believes if he works hard he can accomplish anything, and that is contagious."

At Blinn, Anderson averaged 17.9 points, 5.7 assists, 3.7 rebounds and 2.5 steals as a sophomore, earning first-team All-Texas Eastern Conference and first team all-region honors. He made 69 three-pointers, connecting on 39.4 percent, while leading the Buccaneers to a 19-11 record.

As a freshman, Anderson posted 7.7 points per game in limited action.

The senior from Waltrip High School in Houston began playing basketball in the fifth grade. Anderson said he distinctly remembers playing streetball with his cousin.

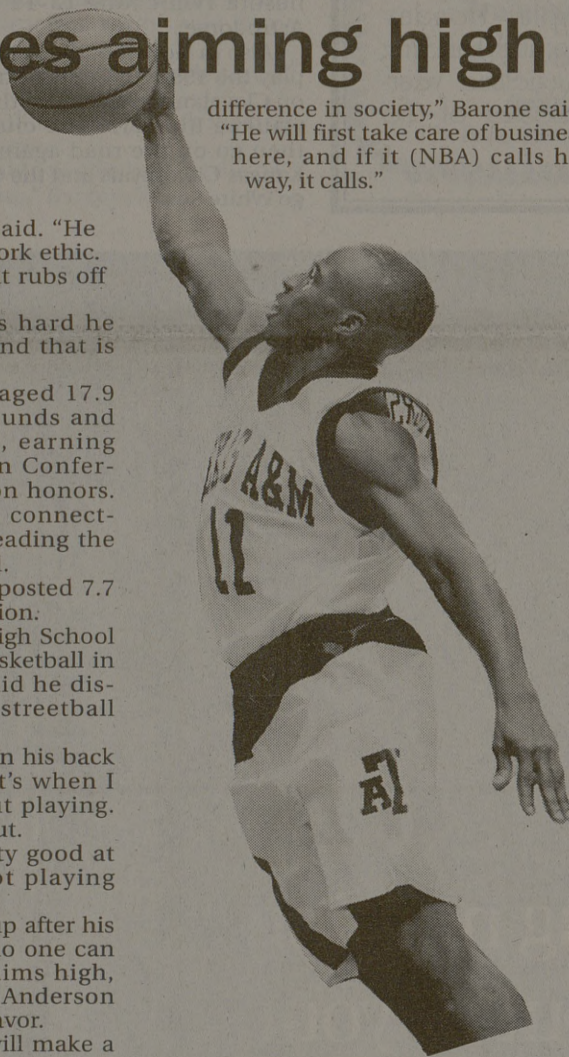
"My cousin put a goal up in his backyard," Anderson said. "That's when I started getting serious about playing. Before then, I was a football nut."

"They told me I was pretty good at it (basketball). So, I've kept playing since then."

Where Anderson will end up after his collegiate days are finished no one can be sure. But as long as he aims high, Barone said he is confident Anderson will be successful in any endeavor.

"When he graduates, he will make a

difference in society," Barone said. "He will first take care of business here, and if it (NBA) calls his way, it calls."



Aggies begin trip with North Texas

By MATT MITCHELL
THE BATTALION

In the midst of a season-opening, seven-game stretch that begins the non-conference schedule, the Texas A&M Men's Basketball Team hopes to continue its winning ways with two games in three days, starting tonight.

The Aggies travel to Denton this evening to take on North Texas (2-3) before returning home for a Saturday night contest against Southeastern Louisiana.

"We're focusing on North Texas right now," A&M Head Coach Tony Barone said. "We know North Texas is a well-coached team. They play good defense and they're aggressive. They're trying to find themselves like most teams are this time of year."

Barone said North Texas' strength is in its inside/outside game, and that the Aggies will need to play the physical, swarming defense that has boosted them to a 3-0 overall record.

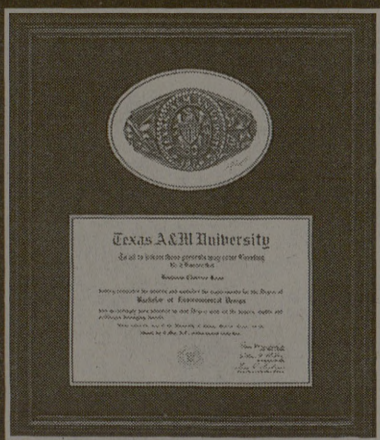
Playing the passing lanes to contain the Eagles and force them into hurried shots is part of the Aggies' game plan.

"They are a good shooting team," Barone said. "Chad Elstun can really shoot it and David Miller is a wonderful inside guy. It's on the road, and you have to focus. When you go on the road, there's an advantage for the home team, and we want to make sure that we're focused in on what we have to do."

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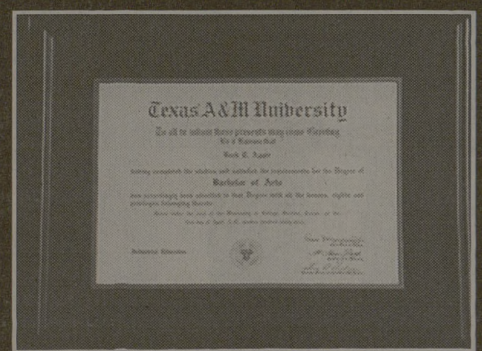


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