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2001
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"I think the Big 12 Conference is the reason Texas schools have been so successful at keeping players in state," Slocum said. "In the early '80s, out-of-state schools were given a lot of ammunition. They'd come to Texas in groups and tell the top recruits that in order to get recognition, you have to get out

of this league (SWC) and go somewhere else. I've never had to defend the Big 12 in the last two years."

More important than proximity to family or the high-profile nature of the Big 12, Slocum said the local recruits will appreciate the spirit of the Twelfth Man.

"When it comes time next year for these guys to come out of the tunnel, onto the field, and the band strikes up the Aggie War Hymn, I think it will mean something to these guys," Slocum said.

Texas A&M University
Native American Student Association
5th Annual Native American Week

*Wednesday, February 5
Alabama-Coushatta Dancers
7:30 p.m., MSC Flagroom-TAMU Campus

*Thursday, February 6
Dr. Raymond Pierotti, professor and evolutionary ecologist
University of Kansas
"Ecology, Evolution & Native American Issues"
5:00 p.m., 228/229 MSC-TAMU Campus
Co-Hosted by TAMU American Fisheries Society

*February 7-8, 1997
POW WOW
Friday (7-10:30 p.m.) Saturday (2-11 p.m.)
Louis Pierce Pavillion, College Station, Texas
Gourd Dancing, Intertribal Dancing, and Native American Crafts
Special thanks to the Houston Chronicle
Co-Hosted by: Gulf Coast Tia-Plah Society

For more information, call the Department of Multicultural Services - (409) 862-2000
Call 862-2000 if special accommodations are needed for any events.

Men's Tennis

Ags battle NE La

By DENNIS RAMIREZ
THE BATTALION

The Texas A&M Men's Tennis Team will break the monotony of off-season, intersquad competition with the start of the spring dual match season today at 1:30 p.m. at the Omar Smith Tennis Center, when the Northeast Louisiana State University netters role into town.

"Our last competition was in November, so today will mark the start of our dual match season and we have been practicing hard," A&M Head Coach Tim Cass said. "We are tired of competing with each other and we are certainly excited to get started."

The Aggie netters have two pillars of experience in seniors Robbie Krause who is the team captain, and fellow netter Carlos Tori. Cass said he credits the team with being able to adapt to a new coaching staff and four freshmen.

"Thanks to the leadership of Krause, people are taking responsibility for themselves and everybody is falling into their role," Cass said. "I have seen a great deal of maturity in the freshmen and this dual match will be a good test for us."

As part of the test, Coach Cass will start three freshmen, who have never played a college tennis

match. Krause said he is confident in the freshmen and acknowledges they are ready to go.

"The freshmen have stepped up and are playing," Krause said. "They are competing different players from last season."

"The guys are ready to play, have a new coach, new guys on the team and everybody is excited to get things started. Hopefully, the east Louisiana will be a significant thing to come."

One of the three freshmen netters, Tony Young, said the freshmen are excited.

"I see it as a challenge and an opportunity to improve ourselves and represent the team well," Young said. "We definitely have increased our level of play and we have taken the necessary preparation to win. For now we are focused on the dual match and we are determined to win."

Besides the debut of the Aggies, Cass expects a great performance by both Krause and Tori. "Definitely watch Robbie Krause and Carlos to do well for us, as our top players," Cass said. "Sonny Spivey is a player that the young guys look at and they will set the example only for this weekend, but the rest of the season."

Cass said the Aggies will face Northeast Louisiana when they step out onto the court. "Whatever the outcome is, we are encouraging the guys to play with pride and desire and be willing to win," Cass said. "Those are the fundamentals, but historically we do that consistently and we are successful, so that is what I will look for."

"We have had the best preparation up to this match and I can see we are in competition mode and we are all excited to see what happens."

Golf heads for border

STAFF AND WIRE REPORT

The Texas A&M Men's Tennis Team will have more time than usual to stay away from water this weekend, as they travel to Monterey, Mexico, for the Campestre/Rice Intercollegiate tennis tournament.

The tournament, which will be held at the Campestre Club, will mark the beginning of the team's spring season.

A&M returns three starters from last year's NCAA Central Regional Championship. Senior Jeff Brown, junior Miguel Angel and sophomore Brown and Cox were named honorable mention pre-season All-Americans by Golfweek.

Sophomore transfers Palmer and Matt Welch will lead the squad as the team heads to the border.

The Aggies will be joined by other teams, including Rice University, Stanford University, Young University and the University of Tennessee, the tournament's defending champion. A&M will get its first look at Big 12 foes As described by Missouri, and Texas Tech University.

The Campestre Country course is probably known for its tough finish.

"The front nine are somewhat fiercer than the back nine," Ellis said. "The final holes are very challenging."

A&M's focus for the first part of the season will be improving on disappointing fall. The team placed higher than eighth, which did on two occasions, in any of four tournaments during the season.

However, there were some positives on which they hope to build. "Frankly, this is a good year for us," Richard Neill said. "We are ranked for seventh and Cox tied for the short game, which was among the NCAA's best."

"We did not play to our potential this fall, but our short game was ranked as one of the best in the nation," Ellis said. "During the season, we have worked to maintain strength in our short game and become mentally stronger."

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