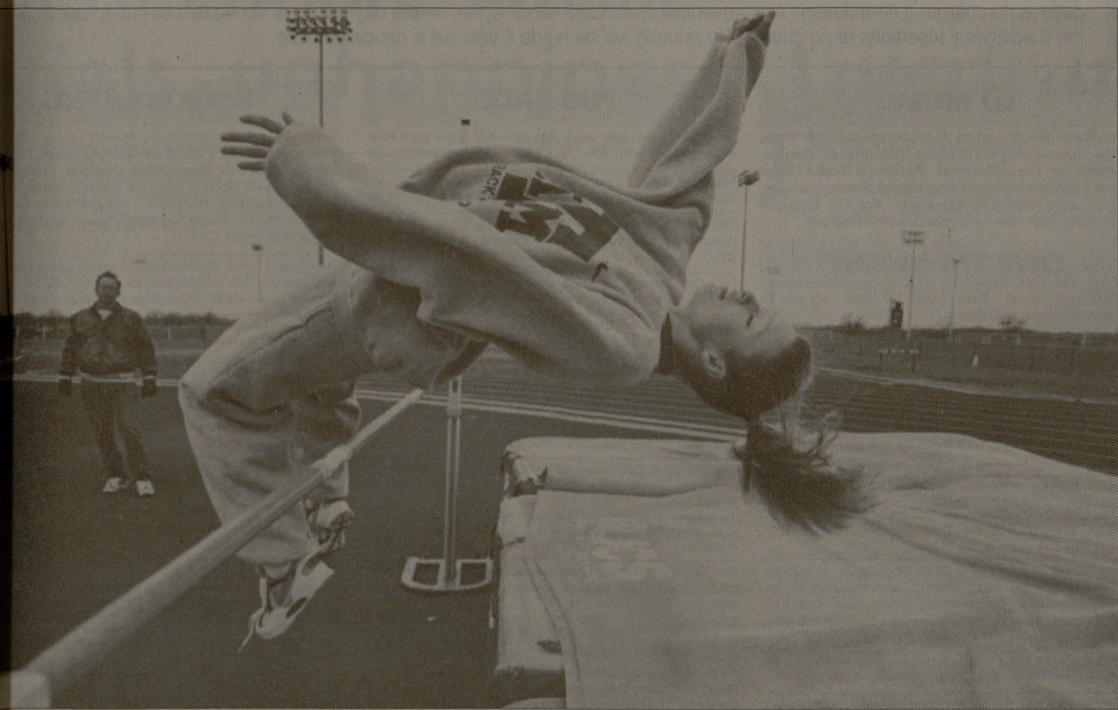


# Aggies prepare for Championship against Sooners

By JEREMY FURTICK  
THE BATTALION



Tim Moog, THE BATTALION

Freshman heptathlete Desi Hudson practices her high jump for the meet in Oklahoma this weekend.

The ping-pong indoor track and field season makes its last bounce this weekend in Oklahoma City as the Texas A&M Men's and Women's Track and Field Teams compete in the Oklahoma City Classic Saturday.

The Aggies will be on familiar ground again as they make their second trip to Sooner Country in three weeks, after just competing in Houston for the second time this season. In the four-meet competition leading to the Big 12 Conference Championships, the Aggies have alternated between meets in Houston and Oklahoma City.

A&M Head Coach Ted Nelson said the indoor season thus far has been a success even with the youthfulness of the two teams and A&M's problems with indoor competition.

"We've educated some of our freshmen," he said. "They've had three indoor meets now and responded well last week. I think they're getting a clue to what college track is all about."

Nelson said the times were good last weekend, but he was more impressed with the intangibles the Aggies showed.

"The times in Houston were better than we've had this year, but I was pleased more with the competitiveness we showed out there," he said.

With this weekend's meet the only remaining competition for A&M until the Big 12 Indoor Conference Championships in Lincoln, Neb., sophomore Scott

Lengefeld said staying focused on Oklahoma has been difficult.

"I don't want to say this meet is practice, but we can't help to look at conference," Lengefeld said. "Every meet is an opportunity to see how you're doing until the championships."

Junior high jumper Teri Fojtik said spending an entire season preparing for the Big 12 meet while trying to stay focused on each individual meet has been a challenge for the teams.

"Every meet is a step toward the conference meet," she said. "It's hard, but you can't let yourself look ahead to it. You have to stay focused on the next meet."

Lengefeld said the teams have spent last two weeks getting themselves physically prepared for the conference meet, not so much for Oklahoma.

"We've been training hard these past two weeks to build ourselves up," he said. "After this weekend we'll taper off and get our fresh legs under us for Nebraska."

Trying not to overlook Saturday's competition, Lengefeld said this weekend's meet will be a good chance for the Aggies to gain some confidence.

"We need to look good this weekend," he said. "A successful meet in Oklahoma will be good for our confidence level."

The teams have shown a steady improvement in their first three meets and Nelson said he believes their success has helped the attitude of the team improve.

"I think we built some confidence in Houston by improving our times," Nelson said. "I feel very good about the attitude of the team right now."

## Boys of summer' host Pan-Am at Olsen

By JEREMY FURTICK  
THE BATTALION

Traditional baseball knowledge says February is no time for the boys of summer to be entering the second week of the season. But the Texas A&M Baseball Team will begin a 13-game homestand today as JT-Pan American comes to College Station for a three-game series.

The Aggies (1-1) are coming off a two-game split with Southwest Texas State University Monday in which A&M scored 20 runs. Pan American (2-1, 0-0), who took two of three games from SWT last weekend, will field a team comparable to that of the Ags' last opponent.

"We are expecting to see a lot of curve balls and off-speed pitches like we did against Southwest," sophomore outfielder Jason Tyner said. "We didn't react well Monday, but we've adjusted this week in practice."

A&M Head Coach Mark Johnson said the team has been concentrating on moving runners around in scoring situations this week in practice. He said the Aggies struggled in the first game against SWT in those situations.

**"We didn't react well Monday but we've adjusted this week in practice."**

Mark Johnson  
A&M Head Coach

"We have to get some runs when we have guys on second and no outs or on third with less than two outs," Johnson said. "We didn't need hits in those situations, just to put the ball in play. We were trying to hit doubles."

Tonight's starting pitcher, junior Ryan Rupe, said Pan American is a good offensive team.

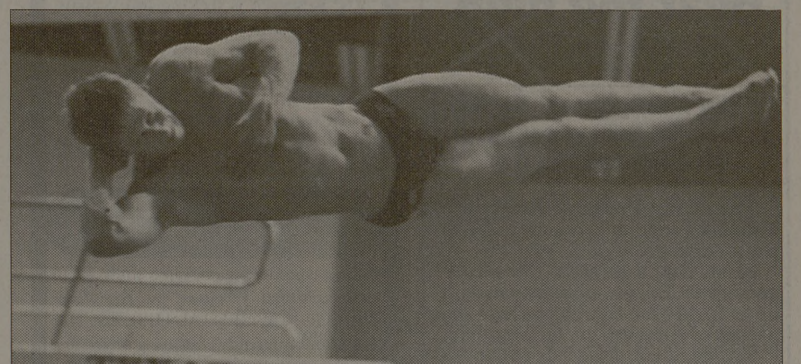
"They are going to put the ball in play," Rupe said. "They scored a lot of runs against Southwest last week." Johnson said he expects the

team to be more relaxed tonight after getting the anxiety of the first series out of the way.

"I want our guys to play well, not just win the game," Johnson said. "We need to elevate our level of play by taking quality strokes at the plate and not just hacking away."

Today's game will begin at 3 p.m. at Olsen Field with gates opening 90 minutes before game time. Tomorrow's doubleheader will start at 1 p.m. with freshman Casey Fossum starting the first game and senior John Codrington throwing the second.

The first 500 fans through the gates on either day will receive magnetic schedules courtesy of the Therapy Center.



Stew Milne, THE BATTALION

Senior Wade Diedrich dives off the 3M board at last weekend's meet.

## Ags travel to Rice

By COURTNEY LYONS  
THE BATTALION

With the season winding down, the Texas A&M Men's and Women's Swimming Teams have one dual meet left before the Big 12 Championships.

Saturday's matchup against Rice University in Houston contains a long order of events (16 total), with short distance relays. There will be no diving events because Rice does not have diving teams.

Although the swimming program at Rice is relatively small, the Owls will be a tough challenge for A&M because many Aggies will be swimming their off events (events they do not normally compete in or are not their specialty event).

"This meet (with Rice) is one last step along the way to conference," Head Women's Coach Don Wagner said. "Everyone will swim in one or two events, to keep rested."

Wagner said the Lady Aggies are ready to take on the challenge.

"This dual meet with Rice will help the guys decide which events will be their second and third events," Assistant Men's Coach Jay Holmes said. "After this meet, we should know what they are capable of in other events."

Holmes said the Aggies should win the meet because the Owls do not have as deep a team as A&M, al-

though they have several individuals who will give the Aggies an opportunity to swim a good, fast race one last time before conference.

### Mastagni retires

Danee Mastagni, a member of the Texas A&M Women's Swimming Team, was forced to end her swimming career because of a medical condition called vasovagal syncope, is commonly referred to as fainting spells.

The 1996 NCAA honorable mention All-American and school record holder in the 200-yard breaststroke, Mastagni qualified for the NCAA Championships in both her freshman and sophomore seasons. Last year, Mastagni collected all-Southwest Conference honors by placing third in the 200-yard breaststroke in an all-time A&M record 2:15.13.

"Danee's leadership and her constant support of her teammates will be missed greatly," A&M Head Women's Swimming Coach Don Wagner said. "To lose arguably the best athlete on the team this late in the season obviously makes this a little more difficult."

"From a personal standpoint, I really hurt for Danee. I hope she knows we care very much about her and love her."

## Tennis team looks to Southwest Louisiana

By DENNIS RAMIREZ  
THE BATTALION

As the Texas A&M Men's Tennis Team opened the spring dual match season, so did the skies open up as the Aggies fell to Northeast Louisiana State University 4-3 yesterday at the Omar Smith Tennis Center.

The Aggies found themselves winning all three of their doubles matches, but dropping four of six singles matches to Northeast Louisiana for the first loss of the season.

Head coach Tim Cass was disappointed with the outcome of the matches, but remains optimistic concerning the overall effect it will have. "I thought we came out here and played hard, but I am not happy that we lost the tennis match or anything for that matter," Coach Cass said. "We have still got a long, hard road ahead of us, but we did an excellent job in dou-

bles and our two veterans won big, but we still have got to get better."

The freshman squad of Tony Young, Gonzalo Anderson, and Juan Aramburo came up short in their doubles matches, and lost the singles matches to the more experienced Northeast Louisiana netters.

Both veterans, senior Robbie Krause and junior Carlos Tori, came up with wins. They teamed up in doubles and put away their opponent 8-3. Tori felt confident on the courts but at the same time credits the freshman shortcomings as a good learning experience.

"I felt really good out there today and every thing that I have worked on in the off season went good," Tori said. "It was the first match for the freshmen, but I thought they played pretty well, especially because they were playing their top guys. They played great matches and being

a freshman did not have anything to do with it. They will certainly be able to grow on this experience though."

The Aggies face the Southwest Louisiana Tennis Team tomorrow and hope to put things together by then. For now, though, Coach Cass wants to take the loss with stride and hopes by the time the Aggies are up for their peak performance they will look back and grow on this.

"Our goal is to be playing our best tennis by late April and during May, and I truly believe that in that time period we will win matches like today's," Coach Cass said. "By then the guys will be a little more seasoned and they needed a situation like today, a freshman finishing it off in cold rainy weather, because really all that is going to come back and help us in the long run. It will be interesting to see if the guys come out here with more maturity against Southwest Louisiana and see how things go."



Stew Milne, THE BATTALION

Senior guard Lana Tucker drives for a layup against the Sooners.

## Bufs roam into G. Rollie to take on Lady Aggies

By JAMIE BURCH  
THE BATTALION

The Texas A&M Women's Basketball Team's style of play this season has mirrored Head Coach Candi Harvey's pregame motto "It's not going to be pretty," but bottom line, a win is a win.

The Lady Ags (8-12 overall, 2-8) will try to emerge with just that — a win — when they battle the University of Colorado (13-6 overall, 7-2) Saturday in G. Rollie White Coliseum at 7 p.m.

Hoping G. Rollie will provide the home crowd advantage, Harvey said the Lady Aggies must concentrate on what they want to accomplish, rather than their specific opponent.

"If you focus on every opponent in this league, you'll just wear yourself out," Harvey said. "They're all good. What we're trying to do is focus on our goals, regardless of who we're playing."

The Lady Buffaloes, who rank second in the Big 12 conference,

pose quite an offensive threat. As a team, Colorado boasts a 41.5 field-goal percentage and is shooting 70 percent from the free-throw line. 6-foot-4 senior forward Reagan Scott's team-leading 8.3 rebounds per game and 45-percent shooting from the field anchors CU's post attack.

The other half of the twin towers, 6-foot-3 senior forward Erin Scholz, leads the team with 14.3 points while swatting down 18 shots in 19 games.

Although Colorado's post players are tall, Harvey said it is the seniors' experience that gives Colorado an advantage.

"Erin Scholz and Reagan Scott have played a lot of basketball for (Head Coach) Ceal Barry," Harvey said. "I think it's not so much their size, but their experience that could be a factor."

To combat Colorado's post-oriented threat, Harvey said the Lady Aggies will have to outlast Colorado.

"If we'll have the ability to hold on just one second longer than our opponent it could put us in the position to win," Harvey said.

**"If you focus on every opponent in this league, you'll just wear yourself out."**

Head Coach  
Candi Harvey

## Aggies head for the Rockies

By MATT MITCHELL  
THE BATTALION

Anytime the Texas A&M University and the University of Colorado get together, it is always a marquee matchup — in football.

The Texas A&M Men's Basketball Team will see firsthand whether or not the Buffaloes are the first of the two football-dominated schools to field a basketball team roughly equal in stature to its football team when they clash Saturday night in Boulder.

Colorado has experienced a basketball resurgence this year behind the play of sophomore point guard Chauncy Billups, a 6-foot-3 dynamo who is scoring nearly 18 points per game. Though coming off a 77-69 loss to Nebraska, the Buffaloes are still 16-5 overall and 7-2 in conference, just a game behind Kansas.

Colorado has notched wins over such teams as Iowa State — who beat the Aggies last Saturday — Texas Tech and Missouri, an upset winner over Kansas Monday night.



Ryan Rogers, THE BATTALION

Freshman guard Brian Barone dribbles past an Iowa State defender.

The Aggies (8-11, 2-7) will be playing the second in a two-game road swing that saw them lose a heartbreaker to Oklahoma Tuesday, 62-59. A win over the title-hungry Buffs would provide some much-needed momentum as A&M enters the home stretch of the season.