

Lady netters take on Horned Frogs

By SARA DUESING
THE BATTALION

With a boost of confidence from two recent wins, the Texas A&M Women's Tennis Team prepares to face Texas Christian University at Omar Smith Tennis Center today at 1:30 p.m.

Weather permitting, the Lady Aggies will continue their six-game homestand as they work towards building skills and confidence.

Although A&M is favored, Head Women's Tennis Coach Bobby Kleinecke said the team has been looking forward to this game and the beginning of regional play since last fall.

"We can finally think about this [game] and not have other stuff get in the way," Kleinecke said. "We gained momentum with the first couple of games and we're ready to go now."

Although the Lady Aggies defeated the Lady Horned Frogs last spring, TCU has some new additions to its team this season who may prove to be substantial threats.

Sophomore Monica San Miguel said the team is focused on the win but also hopes to build strength and stamina for the rest of the season.

"Everyone is focused and ready for the tougher competition," San Miguel said. "I think we've been practicing hard and we've taken care of business in the two easy matches."

After facing TCU, the Lady Aggies will welcome Louisiana State University and Rice University before beginning conference play with the arrival of the University of Nebraska.

Kleinecke said A&M would be disappointed without a win against TCU.

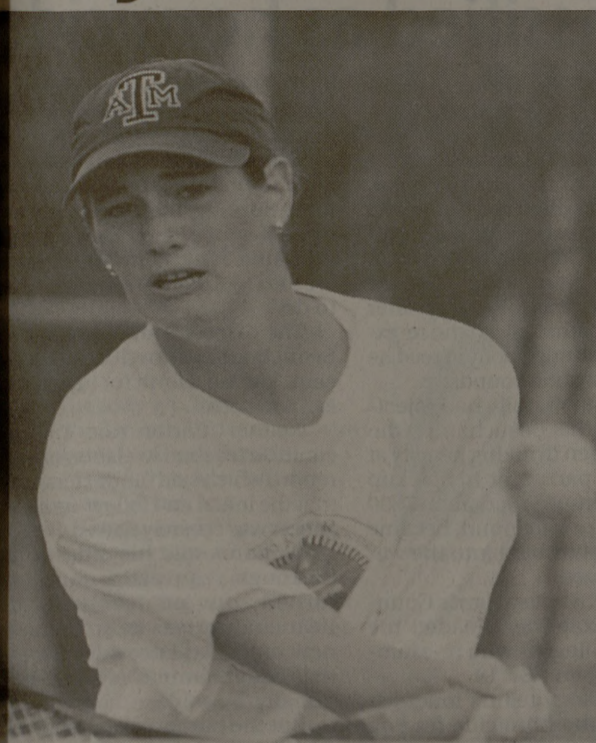
"We just want to compete at every single match," Kleinecke said. "If we're not ready to play, they will jump up and bite us."

San Miguel said the Lady Aggies are working hard to be more consistent and increase aggressiveness on the court.

"From now on," she said, "we are really going to concentrate and stay focused. We all look ready for the tougher competition."



Bobby Kleinecke
A&M head coach



Rony Angkriwan, THE BATTALION

Shaman Kathryn Scott practices at Omar Smith Tennis Center last week.

NUTI

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"Russell wasn't as large as we would have liked, but he had the frame and potential to grow with some weight training," Nelson said.

Assistant Coach Juan De La Garza said Nuti's attitude and work ethic made his introduction to weight training smoother.

"He's really modest and fun to work with," De La Garza said. "Athletes like Russell make coaching easy."

Nuti competed in the discus as a freshman and added the shot put to his event list his sophomore year. He enjoyed some success when he provisionally qualified in the discus at the NCAA Outdoor Championships.

Earning All-American accolades in his junior season Nuti broke into the national scene. After finishing fifth in the discus and 12th in the shot put at the Southwest Conference Outdoor Championship meet, he went on to place 16th in the NCAA Outdoor Championships.

This season Nuti has added the weight throw to his resume.

"He's really modest and fun to work with. Athletes like Russell make coaching easy."

Juan De La Garza
Assistant head coach

"We started throwing the weight this season as a new event in the Big 12," he said. "The SWC didn't have it."

Nuti has steadily improved in the event and expects to compete for the Big 12 title in Nebraska at the Indoor Championships.

Nuti also became the fourth Aggie in history to throw 200 feet in the discus, although he says he is not focusing on a distance.

"If I have one goal, it is just to feel strong and throw consistently," Nuti said. "Everybody wants me to name a distance I want to throw, but I don't have any in particular."

Though Nuti is projected to be one of the top contenders for the Big 12 discus title, De La Garza said he has the potential to achieve even more.

"He is looking consistent in the training and I am sure he will hit 200 [feet]," he said. "Russell, I think will finish in the top five in the nation this season (in the discus)."

Nuti is on his way to leaving his mark in the A&M record books, but even he does not know where the road will lead after school. He is certain, though, he will be back home on the farm when everything is said and done.

"I know I'll end up home on the farm," Nuti said. "That's the reason I'm at A&M."

SCHRADER

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"She has a great work ethic and is a very dedicated athlete, and that is what will allow her to accomplish her goals," De La Garza said. "She is a good team player and she is not selfish, but at the same time she is extremely competitive."

"That, combined with the fact that she is a hard worker and pushes herself on and off the track, is what has allowed her to be successful early in her college career."

Off the track, Schrader is the president of Aggie Athletes Involved and is on the leadership team of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes.

Senior thrower Russell Nuti said he is impressed with Schrader because she remains one of the most focused individuals on the track.

"She is very involved and that takes up a large amount of time, but she is still very focused at what she is doing," Nuti said. "She enjoys to throw and that is what allows her to be so good. Last year she barely missed going to nationals and that was a big accomplishment, but this year we all expect her to be there."

So while it's hard to imagine such an involved and dedicated person clunking around a 20-pound ball of metal or throwing a disc, do not envision the Russian prototype "Drago" from *Rocky VI*.

"The Russian hybrid is a big misconception," Schrader said. "I am not like that and my only goal is to get stronger and better, not bigger and machine-like. Always doing well has always been important and being able to contribute to the team is of utmost importance as well. I would just love to fulfill my ultimate goal of competing in the Olympics."

AGGIES

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Battie said the Raiders were aware of the success the Aggies have had recently on the boards and knew that whichever team held the rebounding advantage stood a good chance of winning the game. Tech edged A&M 41-26 on the boards.

"We came in here knowing that A&M goes to the board extremely hard (with) Calvin Davis and (center) Dario Quesada," Battie said. "They do a great job of getting to the loose balls as they come off the rim, so we kept that in mind, boxed out, and

were able to come up with the ball."

As expected, Tech's tandem of center Tony Battie and forward Cory Carr were the workhorses for the Raiders, making play after play when the Aggies threatened to take over the lead. Carr scored 17 of his 22 points in the second half, and Battie nabbed 17 rebounds to go with 19 points.

"Carr really took over in the second half—I thought that was the difference in the game," Barone said. "I know he had four shots where he just took us. I thought we played pretty good defense on a couple of them, but he just beat us and made the shot."

OUTLAST

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Tech junior Corey Carr, the Big 12's second leading scorer, took advantage of a thin Aggie team to seize control of the game. Carr scored 14 of his 22 points during the final stretch.

Following the game Barone said that Carr was the determining factor.

"Carr really took over in the second half," Barone said. "And I think that was the difference in the game."

In the end, the effort the Aggies had to put into their two runs, caught up with them.

"I guess you can say we just got a little bit tired or just quit executing our plays," Davis said. "They're a good veteran team with really great players."

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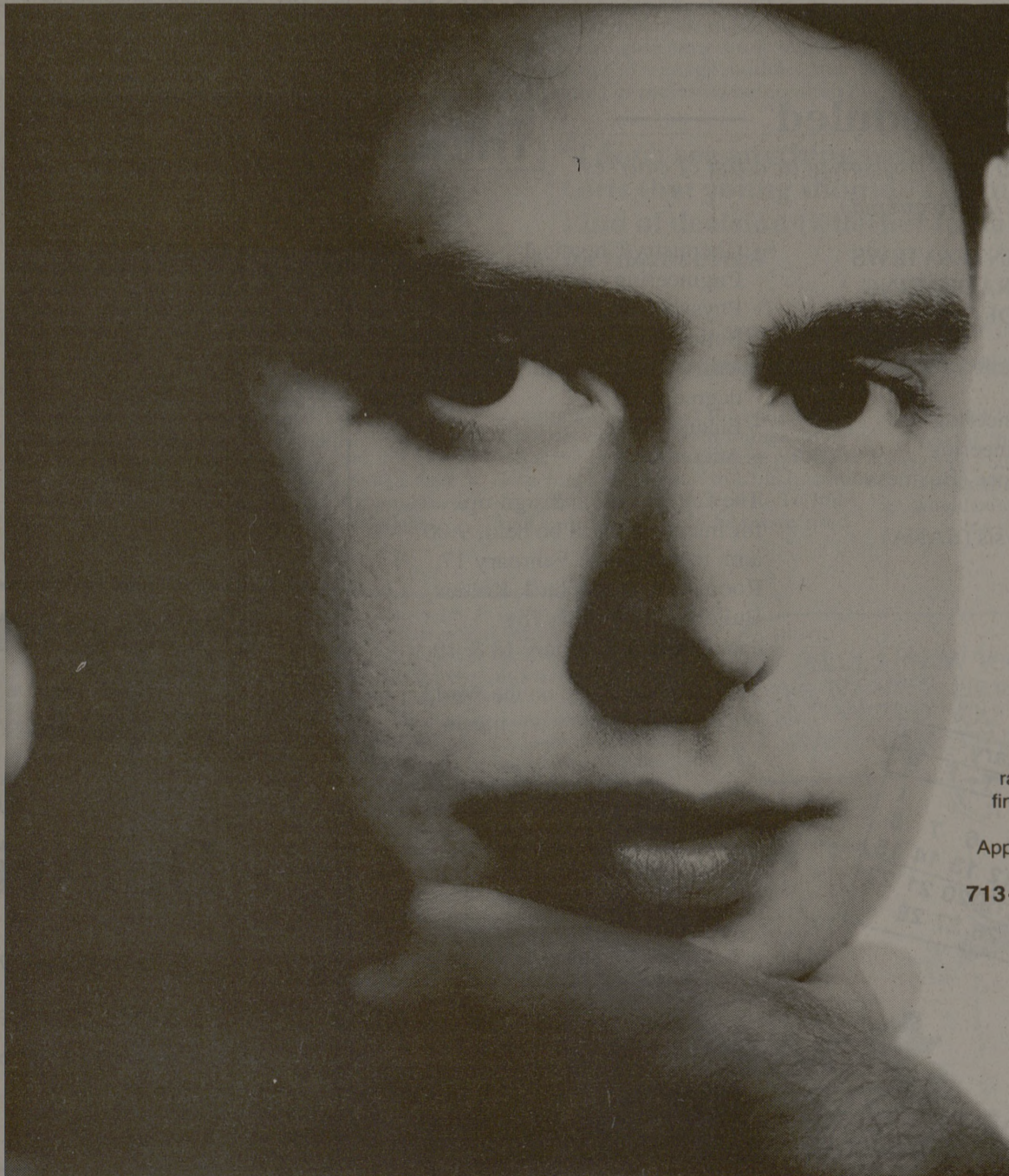
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