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Aggies, Wildcats ready to rumble in Kansas

By JEFF SCHMIDT
Staff Writer

Bill Snyder can walk on water. Bill Snyder can part the Red Sea. Bill Snyder can change the rotation of the Earth. How do you know Kansas State Head Football Coach Bill Snyder can do all of these things? Anybody who can turn the Kansas State Football Team into a perennial Top 25 team must be a miracle worker.

Snyder is responsible for what may be considered the greatest turnaround in college football history. From doormat to dominant. The numbers are staggering: the Wildcats have been playing football for 102 years but only have five 9+ win seasons. Four of those came under the Snyder administration. In the previous four seasons before Snyder took over the Wildcats were 3-40; after he came, the Wildcats are 59-37-1. He took KSU to their first ever New Year's Day bowl game—the 1997 Cotton Bowl. In 1991 he was named National Coach of the Year by SPN. In 1994 CNN named him their National Coach of the Year. His 59 career wins in nine seasons is more than all of KSU's victories from 1971 to 1988. KSU is just one of 16 schools in the country to win at least nine games each season from 1993-1996.

The Texas A&M Football team has their work cut out for them this weekend as they travel to Manhattan, Kansas to play the 0th ranked Wildcats. Last season, the Wildcats stole a victory at Kyle Field from the Aggies. KSU jumped to a 20-3 halftime lead, but A&M stormed back to within

three points. With less than a minute left in the game the Aggies marched down the field for the go-ahead score but KSU defensive back Chris Canty (now with the New England Patriots) stripped the ball from A&M receiver Albert Connell. The Wildcats recovered the ball. The comeback was over.

The Aggies may face a more difficult time this season. Kansas State has the fifth-winnest home record in college football during the 1990s. Texas A&M Head Football Coach R.C. Slocum, who coached the KSU freshman team in 1970 and 1971, says that this will be the Aggies toughest game yet.

"I don't have any question that they're the best team we'll play," Slocum said. "They're well coached and they play hard."

Running back Dante Hall agrees with Slocum's assessment.

"They might be the best team we'll play. We're looking forward to a challenge," Hall said.

Kansas State's offensive line averages 316 pounds per man. This may pose a problem for the relatively undersized Aggie defensive line. They only average 276 pounds. But don't expect the Aggies to be scared off by numbers. Defensive line coach Bill Johnson expects the Aggies to get after it.

"You could say that we've been mismatched every week. We're going to go out and try to play good technique football, play hard, keep our pads down and execute," Johnson said. "They may be big in size but I guarantee we've got to step on them."

The offensive line will have to protect quarterback Michael Bishop. Bishop, who played at Willis High School and led Blinn College to consecutive national championships, has the strength to run over would-be tacklers and the arm to keep defenses honest.

A&M Defensive Coordinator Mike Hankwitz is concerned by Bishop's mobility. "You've got the threat of him always running the ball. He'll take off at any time if the rush opens up and all of a sudden you have a heck of a runner. We have to know where he is," Hankwitz said.

Kansas State has a stellar linebacking corps lead by two former conference defensive freshman of the year in Travis Ochs and Mark Simoneau. They have helped Kansas State garner the second best defense in the Big 12 (behind Texas A&M).

Despite the impressive accolades that Kansas State has received, quarterback Randy McCown is taking this game in stride.

"We're preparing just like it's any other game," McCown said.

Dante Hall puts the Big 12 race in perspective.

"If we lose, we lose. If we win, we win. We still have five games left to be played. I don't think this game is do or die," Hall said.

Defensive lineman Zerick Rollins is just ready to get it on.

"We're just going to go out and execute and do what we've been doing. All we have to do is swarm around Bishop. If we continue to do that, I don't see us having any problems," Rollins said.



Junior safety Rich Coady and sophomore safety Brandon Jennings close in on an ISU receiver.

Bishop finally getting chance to shine at Kansas St.

By JAMIE BURCH
Staff Writer

Paul Bunyan is known as a fictitious lumberjack who was fabled to cut down trees with a single mighty chop. While dragging his ax in a fit of depression, Bunyan created the Grand Canyon and the Rocky Mountains were formed when he battled his companion Babe the Blue Ox. ... Or is that Kansas State quarterback Michael Bishop?

Against the University of Missouri, Bishop leveled a Tiger linebacker in the open field to gain a few extra yards. Bishop finished the day with two touchdowns and 196 yards on the ground.

K-State coach Bill Snyder would rather downplay the accomplishments of his phenom field general.

"He's an aggressive runner when he runs," Snyder said. "I don't know that he really flattened a linebacker. It's not a Paul Bunyan story. He's another good player in college football who's

trying to improve himself. He doesn't do supernatural things."

Well maybe Bishop is not Paul Bunyan, but supernatural he is.

Bishop spent his first two seasons at Blinn Junior College in Brenham. He led the Bucs to a 24-0 record and two consecutive National Championships. In 1995, he was named the Texas Junior College Football Conference Offensive Player of the Year. Bishop gained over 3,000 yards of total offense in his short JUCO career.

Through five games at the Division I-A level, Bishop is 4-1. His only loss came at the helm of the No. 3 Nebraska Cornhuskers which own the nation's top-ranked offense.

Texas A&M coach R.C. Slocum, who spent two years as a college coach in Lawrence, Kan., said Bishop poses the biggest threat the Aggies will have to face all year.

"He's a big physical running back playing quarterback," Slocum said. "He can break tackles and make you miss him. We will not play against a single player this season, in any one of our games, who will cause us any more concern than Bishop."

Slocum's concern is blindingly evident. Bishop is averaging 130 yards a game in the air and

65 yards via the ground. In addition to his almost 200 yard rushing performance against Missouri, Bishop threw a 44-yard touchdown pass in the 41-11 win. His performance against Mizzou made him only the fifth Wildcat quarterback to rush for more than 100 yards in a game and the first to do so since 1984.

Aggie defensive coordinator Mike Hankwitz said Bishop reminds him of a certain Pittsburgh Steeler quarterback who he coached at the University of Colorado.

"(Against Missouri) he throws the ball 68 yards and he didn't even get his feet set," Hankwitz said. "His speed reminds me of Kordell Stewart, but he's a more aggressive runner than Kordell. He's got a toughness about him."

"He isn't going to shy away from contact. He's gonna make you tackle him. Plus, you've got the threat of him always running the ball."

The elusive Bishop is similar to Stewart in more ways than one. Just like the versatile 'Slash,' Bishop can run, throw and punt. Against Missouri, Bishop pitched in on special teams, booting a punt 37 yards.

None of these supernatural accomplishments seem to make Snyder gawk in amazement.

"When you've been coaching for a long

time," Snyder said, "You don't get surprised by anything."

Snyder may not be amazed, but he is definitely taken aback by all the attention his young quarterback is receiving. Following Kansas State's contest with Missouri, Bishop, the Fox Sports Player of the Game, was stopped by the television crew for an interview. Before Bishop was thrust into the lights of the camera, Snyder grabbed him and denied the interview. Snyder also forbade Bishop from attending the team's post-game press conference, and the KSU coach has gone as far as banning all media from Bishop because he said he feels there are other players, especially four year starters, who deserve the recognition.

But unlike his elder tutor, Bishop is handling his newfound fame like a veteran.

"He handles it well," Snyder said. "He's a very humble young guy. Humility is a virtue for him. He's a team-oriented guy. He's personable, his teammates like him, enjoy being around him, and like his guidance and leadership."

Whether or not he is a fictitious, supernatural lumberjack, one thing is for certain. The 'Wrecking Crew' is in for a long afternoon unless it remembers to bring some Kryptonite along.



Cross Country hosts A&M Invitational

By JEFF WEBB
Staff writer

This Saturday, the Texas A&M Cross Country team will get a little home cooking when they host the Texas A&M Invitational which features numerous teams from the high school and university ranks.

"It's the largest meet of its kind in the Southwest," said cross country Coach Greg Hinze. "I think it's grown every year, but I'm not necessarily of the opinion that bigger is better. As long as we can pull the numbers we have, I think it's a positive thing."

The men's team is looking for positives right now after struggling through a Furman Pre-NCAA Meet that saw them place 21st. The women are coming off a high note after finishing sixth in the unseeded race. The final meetup at home before jumping into the Regional and conference

meets should be helpful.

"There is no question the finish we had last week was not an indication of how good the team is. Sooner or later, we'll have to learn how to beat those teams," said Coach Hinze. "But we have to beat the teams in our region to qualify for regionals."

The Invitational will feature 11 divisions and will begin at 8 a.m. with the university divisions beginning at 9:50 a.m. It will be held at the Texas A&M University Golf Course. Johnny Andrews, head of the golf course, has allowed the golf course to be painted so it will be sufficiently visible. While home field advantage isn't as much of a factor, it can provide minor advantages concerning travel.

"Last week was the biggest meet we've ever been to. This meet has been the biggest one in the past," said senior Kari Wyatt. "I feel more comfortable on this course than any

other. We can tell our friends to come out and support us. I get to sleep in my own bed."

Having high school teams compete in the event also boosts A&M recruiting. Many of the high schools competing this weekend feature athletes that are considering A&M as their school of choice.

"We've gotten a lot of people in the past that have never been to campus before," said Coach Hinze. "They get a chance to see the school. Many will be staying and doing their visits this weekend."

Hopes are high that due to the immense amount of press, the turnout of spectators will be high.

"I keep telling them, you just have to give people a reason and they'll come out. Everybody loves a winner," said Coach Hinze. "With this not being a home football weekend, I am expecting a good turnout."

Volleyball set for big weekend

By TRAVIS V. DABNEY
Staff writer

In what is no doubt the biggest weekend of Big 12 Volleyball play to date, all four of the conferences ranked teams will meet on the court on Friday and Saturday to determine who are the pretenders and who are the contenders.

The 9th ranked Nebraska Cornhuskers will visit the 11th ranked University of Texas on Friday night and then head for G. Rollie White Coliseum to face the 12th ranked Texas A&M Aggies. The Cornhuskers seem to have fallen on some hard times as they have lost two straight matches to Colorado and Oklahoma.

Texas A&M coach Laurie Corbelli doesn't seem ready to throw in the towel for Nebraska just quite yet though.

"Those losses could be very misleading," Corbelli said. "They might be down right now but they are a very mature team and mature teams come back with even more determination after suffering tough losses like Nebraska has."

While the Cornhuskers have struggled over the past two games,

Nebraska coach Terry Pettit seemed confident that his team would regain their old form.

"I think our players are eager to play teams of that level (Texas and Texas A&M) and prove to themselves and to other people that we can still have a great volleyball team."

Colorado on the other hand seems poised to make their own serious run at the Big 12 title. The Buffaloes have won six straight matches including victories over Nebraska and Oklahoma. The Buffs will face the Aggies in College Station on Friday night and then travel to Austin to face Texas on Saturday night.

"Colorado is such a well balanced team," Corbelli said. "Everyone they have seems to do something really well."

Colorado will present a number of problems for the Aggies this weekend according to Corbelli.

"They play great defense and

they dig really well, they will also give you a variety of serves to throw you out of your rhythm, they are just a very good team."

The new Colorado head coach Pi'i Aiu also seems to have injected some spark into the buffaloes game according to Corbelli.

"Last year at times Colorado just did not seem to want to play, but that is definitely not the case this year," Corbelli said. "They are really playing with a lot of enthusiasm and desire this season."

Colorado could come into this weekend's match against the Aggies looking for a bit of revenge from last season. The Aggies swept the Buffs 3-0 in both matches last season.

Coach Corbelli seems to think this is a big weekend for her team.

"This is the biggest weekend of volleyball for us to date and it falls at a great time for us," Corbelli said. "We are at home, and we are playing with a lot of confidence and the experience our team has never hurts."

"I don't make predictions on the outcomes of games but I will predict that the team who plays the most patient and consistent volleyball will win the matches."



Mensik

DRIVING FORCE

Senior Miguel del Angel focuses on final college year

By JASON WHITCOMB
Staff writer

It seems that everyone in the world knows about Earl and Tiger Woods and their combined effort at breeding the most acclaimed golfer in the history of the game. Now, it is time for everyone at Texas A&M to know about senior golfer Miguel del Angel, and the influence he received from his father in McAllen, Texas.

Del Angel did not pick up a golf club until he was 10 years old. His dad would not even let him play on a course until he was able to establish himself at the driving range. Finally, at the age of 12, del Angel got serious about golf and it has paid off.

Last year, del Angel was an honorable mention All-American after tying for first place at the NCAA Central Regional. Prior to the Regional, del Angel ran a string of five straight top 10 finishes in a row. He has also finished several games under 70 shots, a tremendous accomplishment to those of you who do not know much about the game.

"Miguel has turned into an incredible leader," said Assistant Coach John Knauer. "He does all the little things that can impact the whole team. Its not like he gets up in the van and gives an emotional speech, but its how he goes out on the course and takes care of business."

Yet, behind all of his accomplishments, del Angel exhibits a quiet, unassuming personality and chooses to lead with his play, not with his mouth. He is very humble and always looking to give credit to his teammates, who are also his best friends. Despite his extreme success as a collegiate golfer, del Angel claims that his greatest accomplishment in golf is when he beat his father in the summer before his freshman year in high school.

On the course, del Angel does not pay attention to distractions or statistics. He just focuses on the complex game of golf from a shot-by-shot perspective.

"When I am out there, I don't think about the team and I don't

think about myself," said del Angel. "I only think about the shot I am going to hit. I only worry about focusing on that particular shot and then seeing where we stand afterward."

Recently, at the Missouri Bluffs Intercollegiate, del Angel found himself among the leaders, along with teammate, junior Ty Cox. Cox ended up finishing fourth and del Angel tied for sixth, but that was only the statistical result the highly competitive relationship between del Angel and his teammates.

"We love beating each other's brains in," said del Angel. "We are all very close, but are also very competitive. Everyone wants to be the big dog and show everyone else what they can do. I think that the competition is great. That's what it is all about."

His competitiveness, dedication, and ability to focus on the game gives del Angel the unique opportunity to pursue a future in golf. Del Angel sees himself as a professional golfer. He feels like he has the game and experience that is necessary to handle that kind of competition.

"I want to make the pro tour and be successful at it," said del Angel. "I just don't want to go out there and struggle. I want to be one of the top players one day."

As far as Tiger Woods is concerned, del Angel feels that he has had a great impact on the game. Woods has also had a direct impact on del Angel and some of the other Aggie golfers.

"Tiger has especially had a great influence on us because we have with played him and some of us have even beat him at times," said del Angel. "It was really fun playing with him, especially when one of us beat him in a round or played close with him throughout a tournament. It gives us so much confidence in our game to see him do so well. His effect on all the college golfers has been tremendous."

Who knows, maybe one day kids all around the world will be saying "I am Miguel del Angel".

