

Tuesday • October 21, 1997

Aggie soccer responds to drop in polls with win over Saint Mary's

Blalack, Peters leading strong offensive attack for A&M



NOTEBOOK



STEPHEN BOUDREAU
staff writer

The talented twosome of senior All-America Bryn Blalack and freshman Alison Peters struck again this weekend as the Texas A&M Soccer Team got back in the win column with a 1-0 shutout over Saint Mary's College in Maraga, California.

In the 16th minute of the first half, Blalack scored the only goal of the game off a pass from Peters. The score marks the 13th goal of the season for Blalack and the 7th assist for Peters. Both lead the team in the respective categories.

The victory moves the Aggies to 13-2-0 and marks the end of a four-week, seven-game road trip. St. Mary's drops to 4-10-0.

"(The win) gets us back on the winning track and now we can focus on being at home again," Head Soccer Coach G. Guerrieri said. "It has been a challenge for our players to be on the road for seven games. We look forward to being back in College Station."

Sophomore goal keeper Melanie Wilson had one save while recording her 7th shutout of the season.

The Aggies outshot St. Mary's 16-3.

Drop in Polls

After last week-end's controversial overtime loss to Baylor, the Aggies fell several places in each of the four soccer polls.

Texas A&M dropped to No. 6 in the NSCAA/Umbro and Soccer News polls, No. 7 in Soccer Buzz and No. 8 in Soccer America.

Previously, the Aggies had held the No. 3 spot in all four, the highest ranking in the history of the program.

A&M is still awaiting a decision by the Big 12 Conference on their appeal of the Baylor decision. There is no timeline on when a decision will be handed down.

Game of the Week

Sunday afternoon the Colorado Buffaloes will rumble into the Aggie Soccer Complex, looking to trample the Aggies' hopes of winning their first Big 12 Championship.

If A&M comes out with a victo-

ry, the championship will be theirs outright. If the Aggies lose, they will tie for the championship with rival Nebraska.

The Aggies defeated Nebraska 1-0 earlier this season in College Station.

The Buffaloes will be led by Donna Holyman, who leads the 5-9 Buffaloes with 5 goals and two assists. Despite a losing record, all five of Colorado's wins have come against Big 12 opponents, including a 3-2 victory over Baylor.

This will be the second encounter between the two teams, the Aggies steamrolling the Buffs last season 3-0 in Boulder.

Other Notes

■ Peters and Blalack have accounted for 20 of the Aggies' 38 goals and 15 of the last 21.

■ This season, the Aggies have outscored opponents 20-6 in the first half and 18-5 in the second half.

■ The Aggies are 12-0 when they score first. The only games when they were not the first to strike were in the matches against Baylor, North Carolina and Texas Tech, losing two of those three.



Stephen Boudreau is a sophomore business major

TROUBLE IN TEXAS

Mackovic defends team's play calling after loss to Missouri

AUSTIN (AP) — Texas coach John Mackovic, tired of being asked why he did not call more plays for Big 12 rushing leader Ricky Williams in the Longhorns' 37-29 loss to Missouri, said Monday his play-calling should not be questioned.

"If you're asking a question about calling plays, just save all of your time," Mackovic told his weekly news conference.

"Don't question the play calling. Play callers call plays. I think Ricky had a generous number of runs based upon the number of plays we had."

Williams ran 23 times for 235 yards against Missouri, an average of 10.2 yards per carry. The Longhorns threw the ball 40 times, completing just 15 passes for 149 yards. Last week, Williams ran 40 times for 223 yards in a 27-24 victory over Oklahoma.

"When we fell behind and had to throw the ball, we threw a lot more passes," Mackovic said. "A lot of those passes were called trying to make something happen at the very end of the game. But I thought Ricky had the ball a good amount of the time."

Six games into the season, the Longhorns say they still have no idea why they've stumbled to a 3-3 start and given one team after another reasons to tear down goalposts.

After the Longhorns' first loss to Missouri in 10 meetings — dating to 1916 — fans in Columbia, Mo., took just a few seconds to rip down their goalposts.

Two weeks earlier, Oklahoma State fans mobbed their goalposts after a 42-16 triumph over Texas.

"We've got to change attitudes, wills and desires," Texas quarterback James Brown, who took blame for the team's recent troubles, said.

"As I go, so goes the team," Brown said. "Completing 15 of 40 passes is just awful."

The Longhorns, 1-2 in the Big 12, face Colorado

(3-3, 1-2) at home Saturday.

Last year, Texas opened 3-3 and then lost to Colorado before winning five straight games and going on to defeat Nebraska for the Big 12 championship.

This year, players say the team's confidence is not the same.

"Last year, we would play a great game and maybe lose by a field goal," tight end Steve Bradley said. "This year, we're not playing well in our losses. There's just not much fire in us. It seems like we're just trying to get through the games."

On Saturday, kicker Phil Dawson, perhaps the team's most dependable player, missed a point after touchdown, had another PAT blocked and failed on field goal attempts of 43 and 48 yards.

Dawson, who has been nagged by hamstring, groin and hip flexor injuries, blamed his misses on a poorly sodded field. Mackovic said Dawson would undergo an evaluation to see if the injuries have worsened.

Players say they have not given up on the season and hope to turn things around.

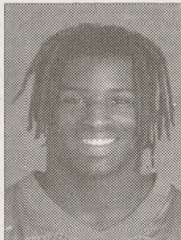
"We could go 8-3 and still end up in San Antonio (for the Big 12 title game)," center Ryan Fiebiger said. "We know some people are unhappy, but we're not giving up."

Before the season, many had projected the Texas-Colorado game to impact the Big 12 title race and possibly the national championship.

"Now it's a battle for improvement and trying to get seasons turned around," Mackovic said.

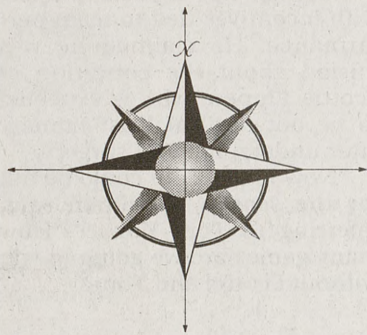
Texas fans have expressed outrage about the Longhorns' season, and many have called for Mackovic's job in letters to the editor and in calls to radio shows. The Colorado game will mark the team's first home appearance since a 66-3 drubbing by UCLA on Sept. 13.

"I hope our fans can respond to the team," Mackovic said. "I know a lot of people are unhappy that we're not undefeated and in the driver's seat, but this team still belongs to the school and to our fans."



Williams

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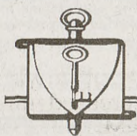
Information Session Tomorrow
Wednesday, October 22, at 5 p.m.
110 Koldies Building

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