

Monday • October 27, 1997

Metcalf belongs in Hall of Fame

Another year has passed and the Texas A&M Lettermen's Association has inducted six new members into its hall of fame, yet for the third consecutive year one inductee name remains absent from that list. A man who served this University for 32 years and won more Southwest Conference Basketball games as the coach here than Guy Lewis at the University of Houston, Eddie Sutton at the University of Arkansas or Abe Lemmons at The University of Texas. Yet his accomplishments for some reason go unrecognized.

It seems puzzling that anyone could justify keeping former Texas A&M basketball coach Shelby Metcalf out of the Texas A&M Sports Hall of Fame but, for some reason that is just what is being done.

For starters, let's look at what Metcalf accomplished while he was the coach here.

Metcalf coached his teams to six Southwest Conference Championships, five NCAA tournaments, four NIT tournaments and two out-of-state Conference tournament championships. Sounds like a good start, right? Well that's not all. He has also been elected to the Texas State University Hall of Fame (his alma mater) as well as the Texas Sports Hall of Fame. Is it just me or does it seem strange that he could be considered one of the best basketball coaches in the history of the state of Texas, yet that is not good enough to get you into the Texas A&M sports hall of fame. Metcalf also took his teams to two Sweet Sixteen's as well as beating the likes of North Carolina and Kentucky in his coaching career.

What could the reason be for this continual snub the hall of fame delivers to the best basketball coach A&M ever had?

Whatever the reason, it seems that not everyone in Aggie sports thinks that he should be excluded. That list includes Athletic Director Wally Groff.

"I certainly think that he (Metcalf) is deserving of being in the Hall of Fame. He had a winning career here at A&M except for the abrupt end, but that would certainly have nothing to do with him not being in the Hall of fame today," Groff said.

That abrupt end that Groff is referring to is when Metcalf was fired in the middle of the 1990 season after coaching at A&M for 26 seasons.

Former A&M basketball player and academic advisor to the basketball team, Al Pulliam also believes that Metcalf deserves consideration.

"He was the dean of Southwest Conference coaches and that should speak for itself," Pulliam said. "He is definitely a credible applicant."

Just like anyone, Metcalf may have some strikes against him. He compiled quite a few losses in his tenure at A&M but as any coach will tell you, you don't coach for 26 years and not rack up a few losses.

It may be time for the Lettermen's Association to review their voting procedures as it is quite obvious that the Hall of Fame is not a basketball friendly place. There are 153 members of the hall of fame of which seven are pure basketball players. Another 14 members have a basketball letter or were coaches but it is quite obvious that most of these members were inducted on their other achievements. A prime example is E. King Gill who was an all conference selection in basketball twice yet was most assuredly elected to the hall due to the fact that he was the original 12th man. Plenty of former A&M basketball players have been two-time all conference yet very few are elected to the hall.

There is likely a whole array of reasons for Metcalf's exclusion but when you get right down to the real question of whether he belongs there or not, there is only logical answer: YES.

Travis V. Dabney is a senior journalism major

Volleyball falls to KSU in three straight sets

The Texas A&M Volleyball Team suffered its worst defeat since 1990 Friday, as they lost to Kansas State in three sets, 15-6, 15-2, 15-2 in Manhattan, Kan.

Kristie Smedsrud and Stacy Sykora, previously ranked 9th and 10th respectively in the Big 12 in kills per game, were limited to a .000, combined attack percentage and had just 12 kills. Setter Farah Mensik, who entered the match ranked 4th in the Big 12 with an average of 13.43 assists per game finished with just 13 assists for the entire match.

The loss is A&M's second in a row to Kansas State, the last coming in 1996 when the 14th-ranked Aggies lost 3-1, and the first time A&M has been swept by an unranked opponent since 3-0 loss to Texas Tech in 1994.

The Aggies fall to 14-5 overall and 6-3 in the Big 12. A&M will continue play against Iowa State this Friday at 7 p.m. in G. Rolie White Coliseum.



Sykora

Aggies clinch Big 12 title

5-0 victory over Colorado gives soccer team league championship

BY STEPHEN BOUDREAU
Staff writer

The Texas A&M Soccer Team (15-2, 9-1) put five goals in the back of the net in the process of stampeding the Colorado Buffaloes (5-11, 5-5) and running away with the Big 12 Championship.

"I think the girls did it today in a really convincing fashion. We still need to fine tune ourselves before post season play, but I thought that our midfield and our defense did a great job today in creating a lot of chances and keeping the pace within our style of play. The girls really won this with style," coach G. Guerrieri said.

The 5-0 victory marked the last conference and home game of the regular season.

Prior to the game, seniors Bryn Blalack, Sonia Ibanez and Diana Rowe were honored for their four years of dedication and outstanding play for the Aggies.

"This is really special for us. This is one of those things we'll really appreciate down the road. It hasn't really sunk in for us yet," Blalack said. "This is so incredible and I personally wouldn't have wanted to do it with anyone else but these guys. Our whole team has been incredible and hopefully we can keep it going."

It only took five minutes for the Aggies to get on the board. Sharon Pickering received a pass in the penalty box from Rowe and easily placed it in the right corner of the net.

A&M dominated in every sense of the word, outshooting Colorado 34-7 and making text book passes to the feet of teammates.

In the 42nd minute, Amber Reynolds blasted one past the Colorado keeper off a Mandy Davidson pass. Reynolds' first goal of the season put the Aggies up 2-0 going into the half.

"We came out well offensively and there were so many opportunities created for the whole team. It's exciting when you can win a game this big and have players step up and play exceptionally well," Blalack said. "Everybody on our team has the ability to carry the weight and it showed today."

With a 20 mph wind at their backs, the Aggies came out firing in the second half.

Gillian Gandy added A&M's third goal on a corner kick.

Becky Peterson scored her second goal of the season 15 minutes later. Sophomore Nicole Shook delivered a pass to Peterson at Midfield. Peterson dribbled through a series of defend-

ers all the way through to the keeper and placed the ball in the corner of the net, sending the crowd of 1,138 into an uproar.

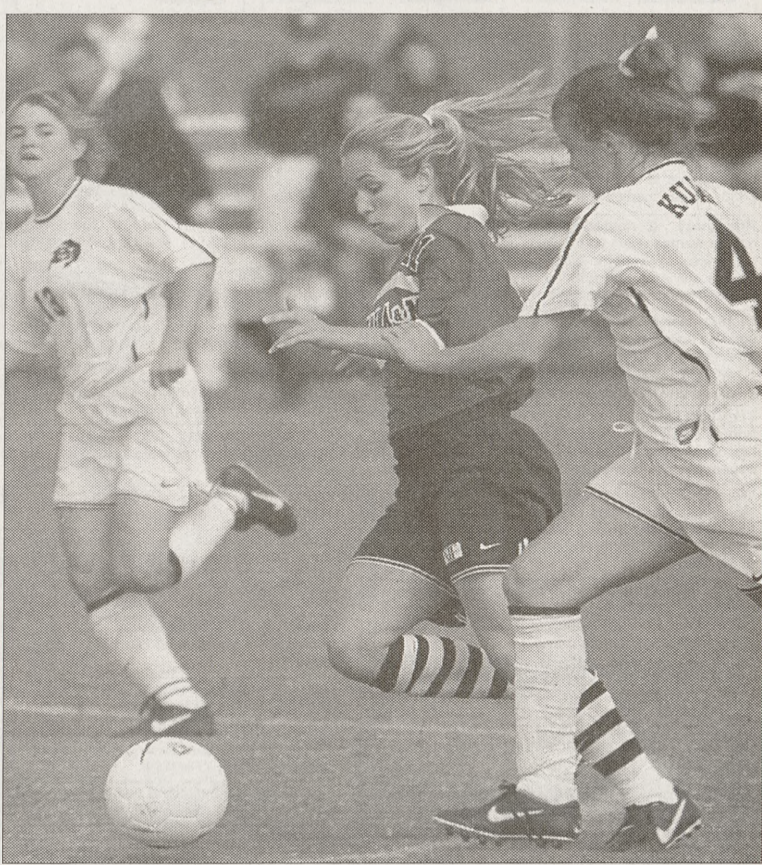
Alison Peters finished off the scoring for the Aggies with her 9th goal of the season in the 88th minute.

"Playing on the road for four weeks was very tiring. Being back home was just awesome," Ibanez said. "This is what we really needed to pick up the intensity for the rest of the season."

With the Big 12 title in their pockets, the Aggies are now looking toward the Big 12 and NCAA tournaments, while setting ultimate goals for the conclusion of the 1997 season.

"(Our goal now is) the national championship. There are no other goals. If you look at the long term, that's always going to be the goal of anyone who truly wants to be the best. I think this team has the talent to do it. But we have to continue to move forward," Guerrieri said. "We're on a pretty good run here. This weekend I thought that the team played as well as we've played in a long time. We want to stay on that roll going into the Big 12 Tournament."

The Aggies conclude the regular season next Friday in Dallas against TCU.



Junior forward Nicole Shook drives up the field in the Aggies' Big 12 clinching victory over Colorado.

Red Raiders hand A&M last-second loss

BY CHRIS FERRELL
Sports editor

LUBBOCK—Somewhere in Lubbock there sits a voodoo doll with a 12th man towel. He uses his powers once a year at a key moment in late October to dramatically alter the outcome of the Texas A&M-Texas Tech football game.

He first struck two years ago when Zack Thomas intercepted a pass and returned it for a touchdown with 39 seconds left to give the Red Raiders a 14-7 victory over A&M.

Then last season his late-quarter magic came in the form of a Zebbie Lethridge to Sammy Morris screen pass which covered 81 yards for the game winning touchdown in the fourth quarter of Tech's 13-10 victory at Kyle Field.

Saturday, the Red Raider voodoo struck again as Texas Tech kicker Tony Roger's 47-yard field goal hit the left upright and bounced in with 19 seconds left to give the Red Raiders a 16-13 victory over the Texas A&M Football Team at Jones Stadium in Lubbock.

"The last two years have been games we've just given to them, thrown away," senior guard Steve McKinney said. "Even this game we had so many chances. We couldn't put them away."

"Last week, we were getting our butts kicked and we knew it. This week, we're kicking their butts and we lose. That's just not right. I don't know how that happens. That's the kind of thing that happened last year. I didn't think that was going to be a problem



Sophomore defensive back Jason Webster blocks Texas Tech kicker Tony Roger's field goal attempt, however Rogers got his revenge with a game winning field goal.

this year and it hadn't been up to this point."

Despite a sluggish first half offensive performance, the Aggies still ended with more total yards, 284 to 215, and a slight edge in time of possession.

Sophomore quarterback Randy McCown made his first career start for A&M, but struggled, completing two of eight passes for seven yards. He also fumbled twice.

Junior quarterback Brannndon Stewart replaced McCown in the second half and turned in one of his top performances of the season. He went 12-for-17 for 126 yards and led the Aggies to their only touchdown, a 24 yard pass to sophomore receiver Leroy Hodge.

Junior running back D'Andre Hardeman picked up the slack for injured run-

ning back Dante Hall, who only returned punts. Hardeman finished the game with 103 yards on 12 carries.

The Wrecking Crew was able to limit Tech's offense for most of the day despite beginning several drives deep in their own territory. Tech senior quarterback Zebbie Lethridge was held in check most of the afternoon.

However Lethridge and the Red Raiders were able to come up big when it counted, driving 51 yards on 15 plays to set up the game-winning score.

"Everything they ran, we knew they were going to run, we practiced it in practice," junior linebacker Dat Nguyen said. "It was execution. They came out ready, they came out and wanted to win more than we did today."

The Aggies will now return home to play Oklahoma State and try to turn around a season which started off so promising.

Stewart said the team is ready to end this road trip which saw them lose to Kansas State last week.

"I heard about three times today, 'I'm sick of hotel beds,'" Stewart said. "We're ready to get home. We're ready to get back to Kyle Field and get a victory."

McKinney said the team is going to have to pull together to get back on the right track.

"I don't want to lose anymore games," he said. "This is the time when this team has just got to pull together and not get into a slump. The real players are going to step forward and show what their true character is."

Sophomore McCown struggles in starting debut

Quarterback change fails to jump-start offense during 16-13 loss to Texas Tech

BY JEFF SCHMIDT
Staff writer



Sophomore quarterback Randy McCown was two-for-eight for seven yards in his first career start against Texas Tech.

LUBBOCK—Statistics can sometimes tell a thousand words. Quarterback Randy McCown, making his first career start, completed only two of eight passes for seven yards and had two fumbles in the 16-13 loss to Texas Tech. Despite McCown's slow start, coach R.C. Slocum elected to leave him in the game for the entire first half.

That move may have been disastrous for the Aggies as the Red Raiders held their lead throughout the first two quarters. However, the Aggies became a different team in the second half under the leadership of erstwhile starter Brannndon Stewart.

Stewart finished the game 12 of 17 with the Ags lone touchdown, a pass to wide receiver Leroy Hodge. This raises two important questions: Why change a two-quarterback system that seemed to be working, and why leave McCown in the game for an entire half, when a change of pace was needed? Despite saying earlier in the week that there would be no change, Coach Slocum apparently felt that McCown had

shown enough moxie to get the start.

"I thought the competition between the two quarterbacks had been very close. Randy McCown had some good practices this week, and we hadn't seen him in a starting role. I thought a different combination to start the game might get us off to a good start," Slocum said. "We started slowly last week and we thought that had a lot to do with the outcome of the game, so we decided to try a different combination."

Entering Saturday's game, McCown had a higher completion percentage and more yardage. Even when McCown was struggling, Slocum had no plans to bench him.

"At some point I decided to just go ahead and let Randy finish the half," Slocum said.

Whether it was first start jitters for McCown or Stewart's return home to West Texas, Stewart was more effective. The offense jelled in the fourth quarter on a nine play, 89 yard drive that Stewart helped spearhead. Ironically, Hodge could have scored earlier in the drive, but he couldn't hold on to a Stewart pass.

Hodge redeemed himself by catching a 24-yard strike that would bring the Ags to an eventual tie with the Raiders. Stewart seemed on the cusp of recapturing the Aggie faithful with his Elway-esque comeback but unfortunately he couldn't help out the defense. Stewart is quick to downplay this

latest quarterback controversy.

"There wasn't much difference as far as our rotation went today. I'm used to coming in and going back and sitting on the bench because that's the way we've done it up to this point," Stewart said. "It's the coaches call. There have been times when I've gone out and struggled and they left me in. I was expecting them to do what they feel is best for the team."

Stewart could easily deflect criticism of the team to others but he acknowledges the problems.

"I thought the different combination to start the game might give us a good start."

R.C. SLOCUM
A&M FOOTBALL COACH

"You put yourself in those situations. You've got to get ahead or get yourself in a better situation to win and we didn't do that today," Stewart said.

It's easy for a player to give up after two straight road losses, but Stewart remains optimistic.

"We can still salvage the season and I feel like we're in pretty good shape," he said. "A lot of teams would be happy to be where we are now."



Stewart

RYAN ROGERS/THE BATTALION