

# Conference Tournament stacks up as Big 11 and favorite Kansas

You can smell it in the air. It's that time of year again. March Madness. Unfortunately, the closest Texas A&M Men's Basketball Team to March Madness is the Big 12 Conference tournament, which is not exactly a marquee basketball conference.

The Big 12 should put at three teams, Kansas, Oklahoma State and Oklahoma, in the A Tournament. Nebraska is able to sneak in, but probably not anybody else. In order of tournament seed:



**JEFF SCHMIDT**  
assistant sports editor

**Kansas (31-3, 15-1)**  
The No. 1 seed in the conference tournament and the third-ranked team in America. Not only are the Jayhawks the deepest and talented team in the conference, they do the little things to win.

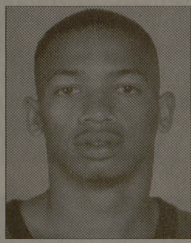
"They play as hard as any team in the conference," A&M Coach Porter Moser said. "You don't see them have any lapses."

Kansas has two All-Americans, Paul Pierce and Raef LaFrentz, and sharpshooting guard Billy Thomas. Another advantage for the Jayhawks is that they will be playing in the home. They are the big favorites to win the conference tournament. First-round bye.

**Oklahoma State (21-5, 11-5)**  
The second-most explosive offense in the conference with three (Adrian Peterson, Brett Robisch and Donald Mason) of the top 13 scorers in the Big 12. Despite being the second seed, the Cowboys are probably the sleeper team in the tournament. First-round bye.

**Oklahoma (20-9, 11-5)**  
This team struggled at the beginning of the season but pulled it together down the stretch. The Sooners are solid defensively and are led on offense by senior guard Corey Brewer, who is averaging 21.2 points per game. First-round bye.

**Nebraska (19-10, 10-6)**  
This team begins and ends with one player — Tyrone Lue. As Lue goes, so go the Cornhuskers. Lue could be the best guard in the conference. He is second in the conference in scoring, and, if he struggles offensively, the Cornhuskers will be hard pressed to find someone else to score. First-round bye.



**Lue**

**Baylor (13-13, 8-8)**  
Thank God the Aggies get to play the Bears in the first round. The lone conference win for the Aggies came against the Bears. Baylor could go as deep as the semifinal round if they can get by the Aggies. Believe it or not, the Aggies could be tougher to beat than Nebraska in the second round.

**Missouri (16-13, 8-8)**  
Being close to home, Missouri might be another sleeper. However, they are not at home, and Missouri never seems to play well on the road. Still, never underestimate a Norm-Stewart-coached team. Plays Iowa State.



**Carr**

**Texas Tech (13-13, 7-9)**  
An outstanding backcourt may lead the Red Raiders to a victory or two. Cory Carr, Stanley Bonewitz and Rayford Young can all stroke the three. Their big guys give them what they need. Plays Texas.

**Kansas State (16-10, 7-9)**  
KSU is pretty mediocre across the board, and they bore me. Plays Colorado for the right to get spanked by Kansas in second round.

**Colorado (13-13, 7-9)**  
See Kansas State. Plays Kansas State for the right to get spanked by Kansas in the second round.

**Texas (12-16, 6-10)**

PLEASE SEE **Big 12** ON PAGE 10.

## A&M recruits blue-chip athletes

Top-25 team highlights future Women's Tennis Team schedule



The Texas A&M Men's Tennis Team is at home this weekend for matches against Pepperdine and Miami. The men's Tennis Team will resume 12 play Friday at Oklahoma and Saturday at Nebraska.

**New Rankings**  
The latest Rolex Collegiate Tennis Rankings for singles and doubles have freshman Rafael de Mesa No. 31 in singles and sophomore Bryan Scott and freshman Evencio Garcia at No. 33 in doubles. The women's team rankings will be out next week; right now the men's team is No. 33, and the women are No. 38.

**No Moral Victories**  
The men's team has traveled this season to No. 6 LSU and No. 7 University of Texas and has lost both matches by the score of 4-3. While many coaches might be satisfied with a good showing against top teams on the road, A&M Coach Porter Moser said there are no moral victories — the Aggies want to win.

**Back On The Recruiting Trail**  
After signing a recruiting class last year called the nation's best by College Tennis Weekly, Cass is at it again. Oklahoma's top high-school player, Jarin Skube, has already signed with the Aggies. Keith From and Andrew Vu, from Florida and Virginia, respectively, have also signed with A&M. Both hold high national rankings in their age groups.

**No Softies Here**  
Unlike other A&M teams, you

won't hear the men's and women's tennis teams being criticized for playing easy non-conference schedules. The men's team has already played LSU (No. 6), and will play Pepperdine (No. 12), Duke (No. 7) and Mississippi State (No. 4). The women's team has played Houston (No. 31), BYU (No. 14) and South Alabama (No. 17) and will host Stanford (No. 5) on March 26.

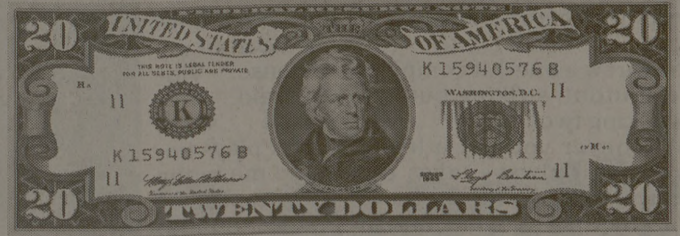
— Al Lazarus is a sophomore journalism major.



RYAN ROGERS/THE BATTALION

Senior **Vanessa Rooks** will lead the Aggies against No. 5 Stanford.

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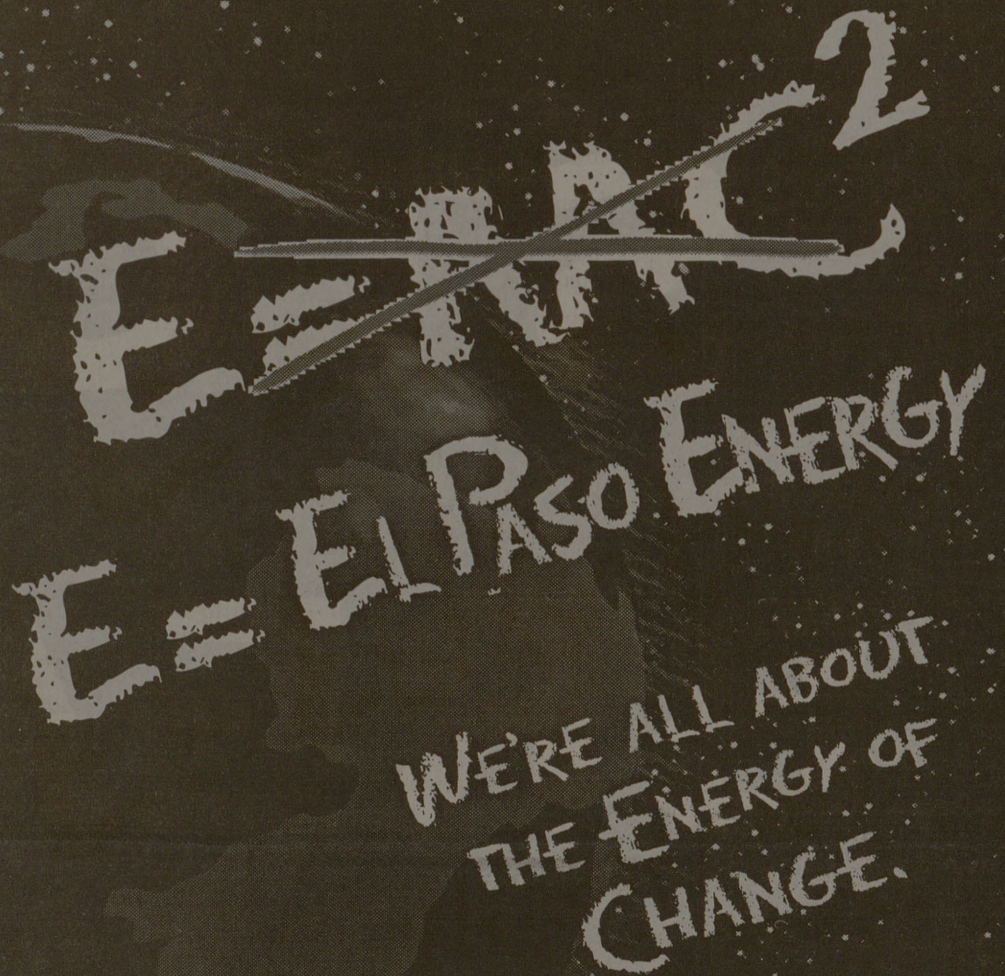
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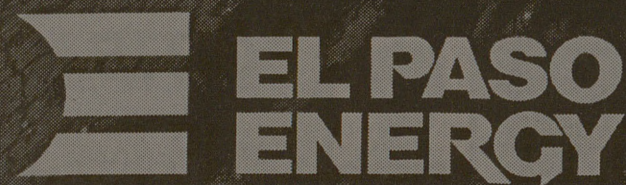
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