

The Battalion

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## Aggies bounce UNT, 5-1

BY DOUG SHILLING  
The Battalion

Coming into the season as defending 12 Conference champions, Texas A&M high expectations. Ranked ninth in the se on, the Aggies wanted to start the sea- off on the right foot. they did not disappoint, posting a 5-1

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victory over North Texas in their season opener.

Nicky Thrasher and Michelle Remington each tallied two goals for the Aggies with Heather Wiebe accounting for the other Aggie goal.

Thrasher opened up the scoring for the Ags in the 13th minute putting in a rebound off a corner. She added her second goal in the 71st minute on a penalty kick.

Wiebe added her goal in the 24th minute sandwiched between Remington's goals in the 21st and 25th minute. After sitting out the whole season last year as a redshirt, Remington said she enjoyed the game.

"It was very exciting," she said. "It was my first real college game after sitting out the whole year last year. It was exciting to get in there and score two goals."

With strong defensive play in the backfield from Claire Elliot and Emily Elias, the Aggies kept North Texas in check most of the night. Christa Davie scored the lone UNT goal in the 61st minute.

With the win, the Aggies moved to 5-1 in season openers under soccer coach G. Guerreri.

"For the first game of the season, especially with as many sophomores and freshman we had in the lineup and the fact that everyone played, it was a great game," Guerreri said. "I think that we are ahead of schedule. I'm very pleased with it."

Next up for the Aggies is a matchup with fourth-ranked Florida on Friday at 7 p.m.



GREG McREYNOLDS/THE BATTALION

sophomore Allison Peters passes to a teammate against North Texas Tuesday.

## Swoopes powers Comets to title

HOUSTON (AP) — Three-time WNBA MVP Cynthia Cooper scored 23 points and Sheryl Swoopes a late second-half surge as the Houston Comets beat the Phoenix Mercury 80-71 Tuesday night to win their second league championship.

beat Phoenix in the best-of-3 series after dropping the opener on the road.

The Mercury led only once in the final game, but they cut Houston's lead to 62-61 with 7:40 to play. Swoopes made two free throws for a 64-61 lead.

Over a 32-second span, Swoopes fed Janeth Arcain for a layup then blocked a shot that led to

her own basket at the other end. The lead 68-61 and the Mercury never got closer than four points the rest of the way.

Tina Thompson had 16 points for Houston and Swoopes scored 11 of her 16 points in the second half.

Michelle Griffiths led the Mercury with 24 points, while Jennifer Gillom had 20.

## The Killer Replacements

A&M Volleyball Team tackles new season, high expectations after losing four starting seniors

BY ROBERT HOLLIER  
The Battalion

With the start of the 1998 season looming on Friday, two words can describe the No. 19 Texas A&M Volleyball Team: youth and inexperience.

After a season that saw A&M finish with a 26-8 record, a fourth-place finish in the Big 12 Conference and a No. 13 ranking, the Aggies will take the court this year with only one senior, All-American Stacy Sykora.

The Aggies lost four starting seniors from 1997 and A&M volleyball coach Laurie Corbelli said she is not sure what kind of team she will have this season.

"When I think of the upcoming season, I basically think about a whole new chemistry and almost all new talent on the court," Corbelli said. "We are kind of an unknown team now after losing four of our well-known starters."

"It was definitely a big loss for us (losing four starters). It means we'll have some inexperience and we'll have a lot of game experience to gain on the court. It makes repetition in practice and in games essential for our younger players."

Sykora said she agreed with her coach that talent and experience are missing from last year's squad.

"Our younger players have a lot of game experience," she said, "just not enough real game court experience."

In addition to Sykora, A&M starting

junior middle blocker Amber Woolsey will return with six other letter winners who helped lead A&M to the NCAA Sweet 16 in 1997.

The Aggies and Corbelli also will welcome a recruiting class that was ranked sixth in the nation by Volleyball Magazine. The recruiting class included three of the top 50 high school prospects freshmen Brandi Mount, Michelle Cole and Jenna Moscovic.

It will be their job to replace four-year senior starters Kristie Smedsrude and Cindy Lothspeich and two-year senior starters Jennifer Wells and Farah Mensik.

"It was obvious that we were going to lose our four starters," Corbelli said. "It's part of the cycle of coaching college ball, and we were prepared for it. Every season we lose people, but we have gotten better every year."

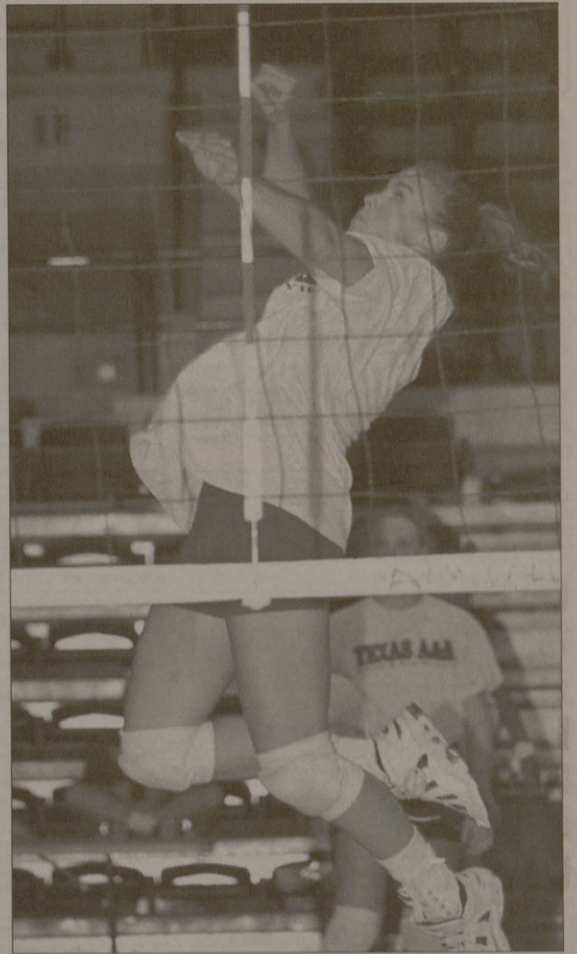
"We didn't play a lot of people last season, and basically just used seven players, so there are a lot of advantages with a new lineup."

When the Aggies open up their 1998 season in the Pacific Tournament in Stockton, Calif., they will enter as the 19th-ranked team nationally, but Corbelli and the team know the rankings have no bearing on how they will perform.

"It's nice to be recognized," Corbelli said, "but that doesn't mean anything now. Our goals are the same whether we are ranked or not."

Sykora said the past dictates current rankings and the team wants to know where they stand this season.

"The rankings are based on what we did last year," she said. "We don't even know where we're at right now or how good we are, so this doesn't mean anything."

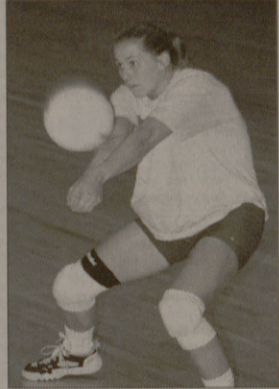


ROBERT MCKAY/THE BATTALION

The Texas A&M Volleyball Team might hold some surprises with four new starters slated for 1998.

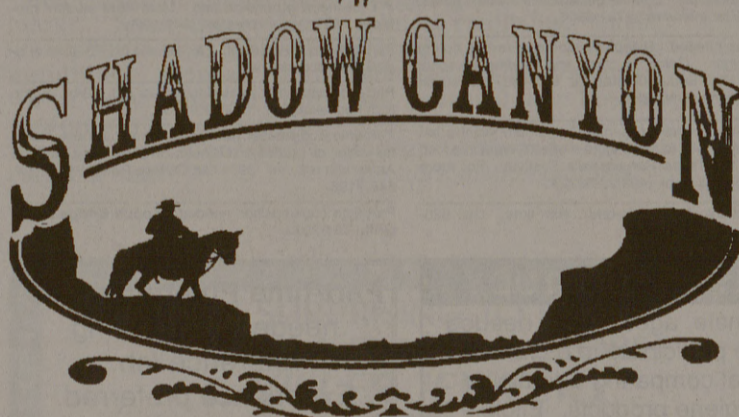
"It's nice to be ranked and we'll take it as a sign of respect, but the first poll does not matter and we don't really worry about it."

The Aggies will get a chance to show they deserved the ranking when they take on No. 11 University of Pacific over the weekend in their first tournament of the young season.



ROBERT MCKAY/THE BATTALION

Three top-50 high school prospects joined A&M.



## EVERY WED. - KARAOKE

### September

3rd - Jason & The Scorchers  
w/Bare Jr.

4th - Breedlove  
w/Reclamation

17th - Roger Creager  
w/Johnny Goudie

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1st - Cowboy Mouth

8th - Haywood  
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