

## Cole makes impact on volleyball team

BY GRANT HAWKINS  
The Battalion

In the fall of 1994, Michelle Cole entered her freshman year at Temecula High School in Temecula, Calif.

The wide-eyed freshman spent her mid-high school days acting on stage, and was ready to take her career in drama to the high school level.

Her high school career would be on stage, but that stage was a volleyball court. Things did not work out like she originally planned.

"I came to high school fully and intended to go out for the drama team, but I never figured out when the tryouts were," Cole said. "I needed something to do, so I thought I'd try volleyball. I showed up in jeans and regular shoes, not tennis shoes. It was the first time I ever played."

Four years later, the decision to try volleyball landed her in College Station and a starting spot on the 16th-ranked Texas A&M Volleyball Team. As a true freshman, Cole has been in the starting lineup since the Georgia Tech game earlier this season. Cole did not expect to see playing time so early in her college career.

"The first time I was in the starting line-up was during the game against Georgia Tech," Cole said. "I was still on the bench and someone on the starting squad was saying, 'Michelle get out here.'"

Cole, a 6-foot outside hitter, is averaging

3.38 kills per match, ranking her third on the team, and second to only senior outside hitter Stacy Sykora in digs with 3.14 per contest. Cole made the adjustment to the college game smoothly, something she said is much different than high-school ball.

"Everything is so much quicker in the college game than in high school," Cole said.

*"Everyday in practice, she is ready to go with an incredibly enthusiastic attitude."*

— LAURIE CORBELLI  
A&M VOLLEYBALL COACH



Cole made recruiting visits to A&M, Georgia Tech and Long Beach State after being named to the Fab 50, Volleyball Magazine's annual list of the top high-school seniors in the country. She said her decision to attend A&M was influenced mainly by coach Laurie Corbelli.

"Laurie and John [Corbelli] are totally awesome," Cole said. "Everywhere I went, people told me the Corbellis were awesome. They are 10 times better than I thought they would be."

As a true freshman, Cole is learning on the run. The Aggies are currently 10-2 on the season and 3-1 in the Big 12 Conference after making it to the NCAA Sweet 16 a year ago.

With the help of seasoned veterans Sykora and junior middle blocker Amber Woolsey, Cole has gained first hand knowledge of what it takes to succeed in Division IA volleyball.

"I've learned that you keep going," Cole said. "Even if you just got blocked, you keep swinging, and your teammates are behind you to cover you."

Cole said her teammates have been the most enjoyable part in her inaugural season at A&M.

"This team is so energetic," Cole said. "We are always cracking jokes about something."

"If she [Michelle] wasn't as great a player as she is," junior outside hitter Celia Howes said. "I don't know if I would have made the improvements I have."

The season started with questions about the players' lack of experience, but those questions have quickly withered away because of Cole, Corbelli said.

"She brings us a truck-load of self confidence," Corbelli said. "Everyday in practice she is ready to go with an incredibly enthusiastic attitude."

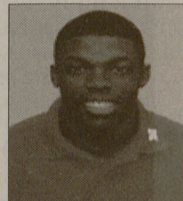
"I had so many people tell me, 'You've got a great kid,'" Corbelli said. "I hear that all the time, but Michelle is special. She's got something about her that I think partly God gave to her and partly she worked towards herself."



MIKE FUENTES/THE BATTALION  
Freshman Michelle Cole ranks third on the volleyball team in kills with 3.4 a match.

## Solich lists QB as questionable for A&M game

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — Nebraska starting quarterback Bobby Newcombe is "a little questionable" for Saturday's game at Texas A&M and will see limited action in practice this week, Huskers coach Frank Solich said.



NEWCOMBE

"He made excellent progress for a period of time and we thought he was over the hump," Solich said Monday. "Now his progress has slowed down dramatically and is really at a stop."

Solich said Newcombe was not at 100 percent in last Saturday's 24-17 squeaker over Oklahoma State.

Newcombe had some difficulty executing the option last Saturday, rushing for 22 yards on 13 carries, Solich said. He did pass for 112 yards, completing 9 of 15 throws.

"Bobby wasn't in as good of shape as he was the week before against Washington," Solich said during the Big 12 Conference coaches telephone news conference. "We had thought he was about 90 to 95 percent."

Newcombe did not practice Monday and the Huskers planned to limit the number of repetitions he takes during workouts this week, Solich said.

No. 2 quarterback Eric Crouch, who had been bothered by a pulled hamstring, suffered a bruised hip against Oklahoma State and also would be limited somewhat in practice, Solich said.

No. 3 quarterback Monte Christy is set to take most of the snaps with the first-string offense throughout the week, Solich said.

## Back injury ends career of Texas A&M senior

FROM STAFF AND WIRE REPORTS

A nagging back injury ended the career of Texas A&M senior center Mario Quesada, according to men's basketball coach Melvin Watkins.

Quesada suffered from a bulging disk in his back in September 1997, which forced him to miss last season. "Dario just couldn't overcome the injury," Watkins said in a news release. "It's unfortunate for him to end his college career this way."

## NBA cancels exhibition games, faces possibility of no season

NEW YORK (AP) — After canceling the rest of its exhibition schedule Monday, the NBA's perfect record of never missing a regular season game because of a labor dispute is in serious jeopardy.

The league, which had earlier called off the first 24 exhibition games, canceled the final 90 Monday because of stalled labor negotiations with the players.

"At this point, our teams cannot possibly be ready to play any games before November," deputy commissioner Russ Granik said. "It's sad that we have been unable to have any meaningful negotiations."

The next collective bargaining session is set

for Thursday. The league said decisions concerning possible cancellation of regular season games would be made next week. The season is scheduled to begin Nov. 3.

When the two sides finally meet again, they will have only a few days to strike a deal that would preserve an 82-game schedule.

Once a new agreement is reached, it will take at least three weeks to sign players, make trades and hold abbreviated training camps. So unless a deal can be completed a few days after the sides reconvene, there appears to be no way the season can start on its scheduled date.

The owners made their latest proposal 10 days ago, still calling for a system with an ab-

solute ceiling on salaries — or a "hard" salary cap. The union said the owners included 16 pages of new demands that had not been discussed in any previous meetings.

"Our proposals would result in an average player salary of more than \$3.1 million and a minimum salary for 10-year veterans of \$750,000," Granik said Monday. "Unfortunately, the union leadership has been unwilling to give any serious consideration to what we have offered."

Both sides await a ruling from arbitrator John Feerick on the union's grievance over whether players with guaranteed contracts should be paid during the lockout.

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