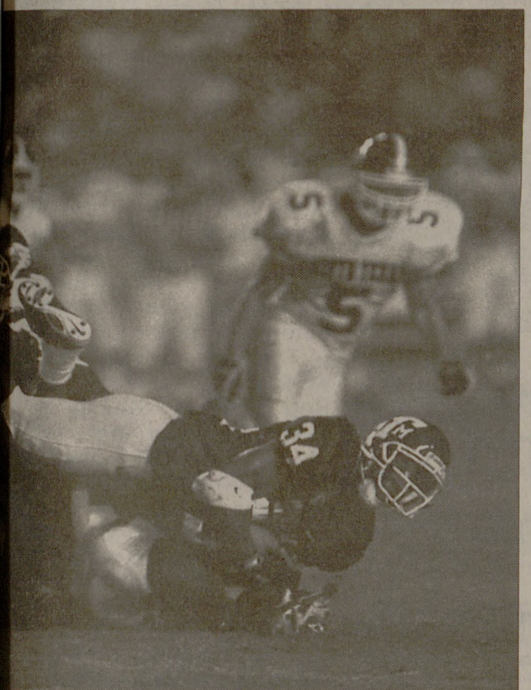


## JUDGMENT DAY

Aggies' host No. 2 Nebraska Cornhuskers, highest ranked opponent since 1983

BY JEFF SCHMIDT  
The Battalion

Like Gen. William T. Sherman through Atlanta, the second-ranked Nebraska Cornhuskers march to Kyle Field with a destructive reputation. After the Cornhuskers have won 19 straight games, 10 straight road games and three out of the last four national championships.



MIKE FUENTES/THE BATTALION

Running back **Dante Hall** runs the ball in A&M's victory over the University of North Texas.

The last time Texas A&M University played the Cornhuskers, in the Big 12 Championship game, the Aggies ran into a juggernaut. Before the Aggies could blink they were down 37-3. The final score: 54-15.

"We caught them last year when they were smelling the national championship," A&M football coach R. C. Slocum said. "They had lost the year before in the conference championship game [against Texas]. Their coach [Tom Osborne] was going to retire. They had everything going their direction, along with being a very talented football team."

"They were a good football team hitting on all cylinders when we played them. We got off to a bad start and really never made a contest out of it."

Call it the Aggies' "Game of the Decade." Or maybe decade and a half.

The Cornhuskers are the highest-ranked opponent to travel to Kyle Field since 1983, when the second-ranked Texas Longhorns throttled A&M 45-13. Senior linebacker Dat Nguyen was eight years old at the time.

Also, the Aggies have not defeated a top-10 team since 1989, Slocum's first year, and are 0-7 against top-five teams.

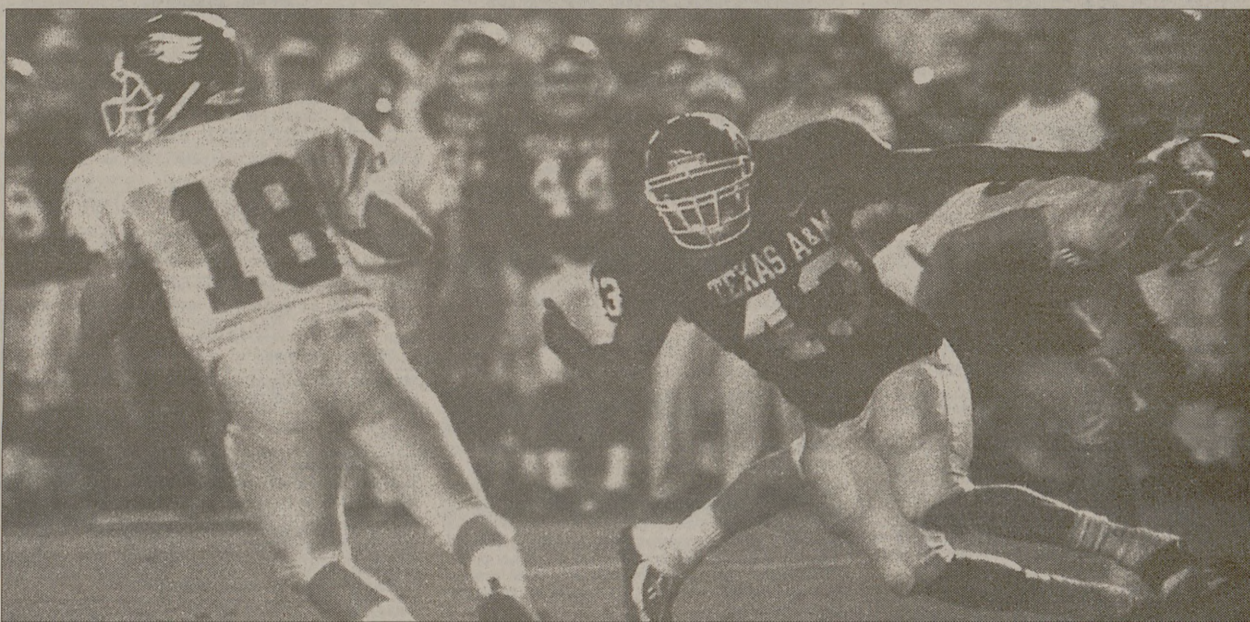
Despite being an overwhelming underdog against Nebraska, junior quarterback Randy McCown said the Aggies are not as intimidated as they were last year.

"[Last year] I don't think we were as relaxed as we usually were," McCown said. "We're not building it up as much as we did last year. By doing that, I think the guys will come in a little more relaxed and play better."

Slocum, who constantly faces charges that he cannot win big games, said he is relaxed and looks forward to coaching against Nebraska.

"I'm looking more forward to this game than if it was just some other team coming in here this week," Slocum said. "Playing this type of game is really what it's all about."

Nebraska has traditionally dominated the series against A&M, holding a 6-1 advantage. A&M's lone win



MIKE FUENTES/THE BATTALION

Senior outside linebacker **Warrick Holdman** pursues University of North Texas quarterback **Jason Attaway** in A&M's 28-9 win. **Holdman** is fourth on the team in tackles, with 32. He leads the team with two sacks.

came in 1955 with coach Paul "Bear" Bryant at the helm.

However, the Cornhuskers are not without flaws. Thanks to a porous secondary, giving up nearly 600 yards passing to Louisiana Tech, the Cornhuskers are 36th nationally in total defense. By contrast, A&M is 14th.

Nebraska also showed chinks in its armor last Saturday against Oklahoma State. It took a punt-return touchdown with less than eight minutes left to give Nebraska a 24-21 victory.

Nebraska faces the possibility of playing the game

with its third-string quarterback, former walk-on Monte Christo. The top two quarterbacks, Bobby Newcombe and Eric Crouch, are hampered with injuries.

If the Aggies are to defeat the Cornhuskers, they should thank home-field advantage. Not the crowd noise, but the grass.

"I think most coaches would feel that option teams aren't normally as good on grass as they are on AstroTurf," Slocum said. "The cuts they make, the changes they make, the footing of AstroTurf is a lot better than it is on grass."

## Tennis opens new facility against Nebraska

BY AL LAZARUS  
The Battalion

The Texas A&M Men's Tennis Team usher in a new era of Aggie tennis tonight at 7 p.m. when it hosts the University of Nebraska Cornhuskers in what is the first match played at the Texas A&M Varsity Tennis Center.

"We're excited to get things going this evening, especially with the new [tennis center]," A&M tennis coach Tim Cass said. "We've had some time to practice at the courts, which is good because you obviously want to feel at home when you're playing at home."

Cass said he is excited to be playing Nebraska the night before the schools' volleyball teams square off at Kyle Field. "We're very enthusiastic to get the chance to play Nebraska at this time," he

said. "I'm sure they'll be pumped up, too. They will probably feed off the fact that their football team is ranked No. 2 in the nation."

Cass said the new tennis center and the expected crowds should help elevate Texas A&M to the premier status enjoyed by the nation's top tennis schools.

"We feel like the crowds here are going to be very beneficial to us," he said. "We want to be able to bring a recruit in for a match, and have him see a full house, like a lot of the top teams in the nation always have."

The Aggies made a big step toward becoming a premier team last season, when they finished No. 13 in the nation. The breakout season included victories over two top-10 schools, Pepperdine University and the University of Texas. The victory against the

Longhorns gave the Aggies the Big 12 Tournament championship.

Sophomore Shuon Madden, who will take over the No. 1 position for the Aggies this year, said the team is looking to build on last season's accomplishments.

"This year, we're looking to take things to a level above last year's," Madden said. "Even though we did pretty well last year, we want to take this program to a new level, and hopefully Nebraska will be a good start to our goals."

Madden said he and his teammates are looking forward to playing their first match at the new tennis center.

"We're all looking forward to it," he said. "Hopefully we'll get a lot of people in. It's a great facility. The school did a great job constructing it."

"Hopefully we'll be able to take advantage of it throughout the season."

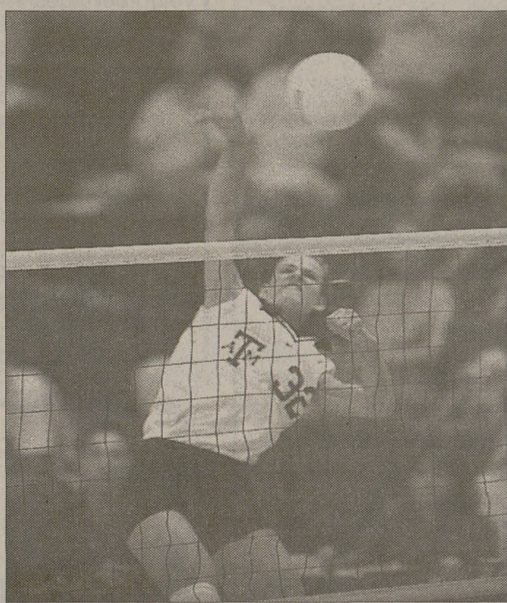
## A&M volleyball team faces much-improved KU squad

BY ABBY LITTLE  
The Battalion

The Texas A&M Volleyball Team plays two underrated teams this weekend: the University of Kansas and University of Oklahoma.

The Kansas Jayhawks have an overall record of 10-5, but are only 1-3 in conference play. They lead the conference in serving effectiveness.

The Jayhawks are better on the road than they are at home, with records of 3-1 and 1-3, respectively. That is a good thing accord-



MIKE FUENTES/THE BATTALION

Senior outside hitter **Stacy Sykora** spikes against Baylor. **Sykora** has 202 kills this year.

ing to freshman setter Jenna Moscovic. "I think it's good for us to have a team that can play on the road because some other teams have come in here intimidated and we don't get to play our game," Moscovic said.

Kansas' new coach, Ray Bechard, holds the highest winning percentage among college coaches at any level.

He established the .923 winning percentage at Barton County Community College in Great Bend, Kan., in 13 seasons.

His expertise helped the Jayhawks play better than they have been in past seasons.

"I think that they are a much-improved team, maybe stronger than we've ever seen them," A&M volleyball coach Laurie Corbelli said. "They aren't the same team as the past. I'm impressed with what I've seen in terms of improvement."

Oklahoma is 6-10 this season, including a five-game losing streak. They lost two of their outside hitters who had been the core of their team for four years. Corbelli said she anticipates a hard-fought match.

"I'm expecting a very, very tough match and a match that we're going to have to be executing as well as we have," Corbelli said. "I still think that they are looking and still working to replace those two studs they had last year on the left. They haven't beaten a lot of teams yet that are highly ranked, so it's hard to see how good they can be. I think they have some really good players, but I don't know that they've put it together yet."

The goal is to become a stronger team, but not to overlook what they perceive to be two easy teams to beat.

SEE VOLLEYBALL ON PAGE 8.

## Former Big 10 official named Big 12 commissioner

DALLAS (AP) — Kevin L. Weiberg, former Kansasian who spent nearly a decade as a senior Big Ten official, announced Thursday as the new commissioner of the Big 12.

University of Kansas Chancellor Robert Hemenway, chairman of the Big 12 Board of Directors, said the board was unanimous in its decision to hire Weiberg, who signed a three-year contract.

During the interview process he expressed innovative ideas," Hemenway said. "And he has a broad range of experience in financial operations, television contracts, the inner workings of conferences, women's athletics, and other equity."

Weiberg said he was "delighted to

have the opportunity."

"I think it's a great and very competitive conference, and I appreciate the confidence shown in me by the presidents and chancellors," he said.

Hemenway said the board interviewed both Weiberg and University of Virginia athletics director Terry Holland on Wednesday.

Weiberg succeeds Steve Hatchell, who resigned May 7 after he reportedly came under internal scrutiny for his treatment of league staffers, allegations he denied.

Oklahoma State associate athletic director Dave Martin had worked as commissioner in the interim.

Weiberg, a 42-year-old native of Anthony, Kan., graduated with a bachelor's degree

in education from Kansas State in 1978. He received a master's in athletics administration from Western Illinois the next year.

His first job out of college was as sports information director at Wayne State College in Nebraska. He then spent 1980-87 as an athletics spokesman, assistant athletic director and associate athletic director at Wichita State.

He was associate AD at the University of Maryland from 1987-89 before moving to the Big Ten as associate commissioner and chief operations officer. In that job, he was responsible for the league's overall financial and office management.

Weiberg was promoted to deputy commissioner, second-in-command to Commissioner James Delany, last August.

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