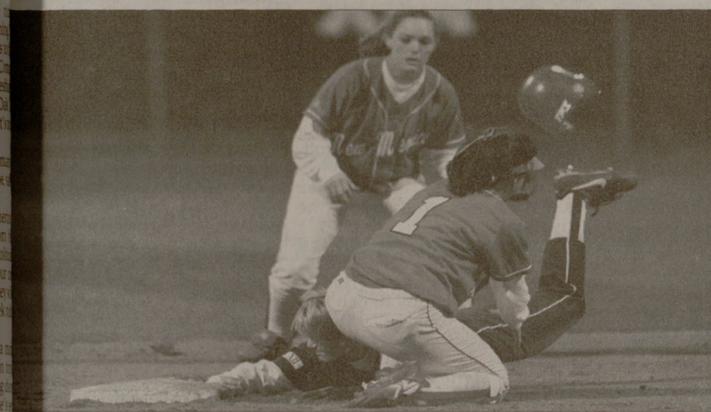


The Battalion

Softball finishes third in home tournament



A&M's **Hollie Hayden** slides safely into second against the University of New Mexico Friday at the Aggie Softball Complex. A&M lost, 6-1, on the way to 2-3 tournament record.

New Mexico takes Aggie Invitational title

BY BEN WESTBROOK
The Battalion

The Texas A&M Softball team finished third this weekend in the Aggie Invitational while dropping three games and falling 10-4 on the season. The University of New Mexico went home with first place, finishing the tournament 5-0.

The women began tournament play Friday with Auburn University, beating them 10-0. In the second game of the evening, New Mexico handed the Aggies their second loss with a 6-1 drumming.

The women dropped another one Saturday, losing to Penn State 7-6. Their second scheduled game against New Mexico was cancelled due to bad weather.

The Aggies had a chance to nab second place Sunday but could not get it done, losing to Auburn, 4-0. Amy Vining was the starting pitcher for the Aggies, giving up 10 hits in seven innings of work.

The loss was made worse as Hollie Hayden, the Aggies' center fielder and leading base stealer, came up with a broken arm after sliding into second base.

"That is a huge loss for us," softball coach Jo Evans said. "Hollie has been an impact player for us. She earned the starting spot after the first game of the season and has been out there ever since. She is a threat on the bases, and she is a true lead-off batter, which is something we haven't had. She will be tough to replace."

The women rebounded from the Auburn game with a 4-1 win over Penn State.

Aggie Invitational Feb. 19-21

Game 1 (Friday):
A&M 3, Auburn 0

Game 2 (Friday):
New Mexico 6, A&M 1

Game 1 (Saturday):
Penn State 7, A&M 6

Game 1 (Sunday):
Auburn 4, A&M 0

Game 2 (Sunday):
A&M 4, Penn State 1

The Aggie bats came alive by hammering nine hits against the Nittany Lions. Rachel Lewis led the way with a 3-3 performance and Vining shook off the loss to Auburn while picking up the win for the Aggies, improving her record to 6-2.

The women will be traveling to California this upcoming weekend to compete in the UC Santa Barbara/Easton Invitational.

Home runs, fists fly at Olsen

Baseball Team goes to 8-2 with victories over UT-Arlington

BY AARON COHAN
The Battalion

The 13th-ranked Texas A&M Baseball Team swept a three-game series this weekend against the University of Texas at Arlington.

The Aggies put it to the Mavericks with strong pitching and effective hitting.

"We had solid pitching and hitting all weekend long," sophomore rightfielder Daylon Holt said. "It was good to get some momentum going with both things working for us."

The first game of the doubleheader was more physical than the average ballgame. The highlight of the game for many was a scuffle between senior co-captain Steve Leonard and four members of the Mavericks' squad.

Although details were sketchy on why the fight broke out, Leonard's teammate Kenny Sundstrom said he thought Leonard was fine.

"It was hard to stay back in the dugout," Sundstrom said, "but Steve had things under control."

Casey Fossum hurled another strong performance in the baseball portion of the contest. The junior pitched a complete-game, four-hit shutout while striking out six.

Helping out Fossum was junior center fielder Stephen Truitt, who smacked two home runs to help guide the Aggies to an 8-0 win.

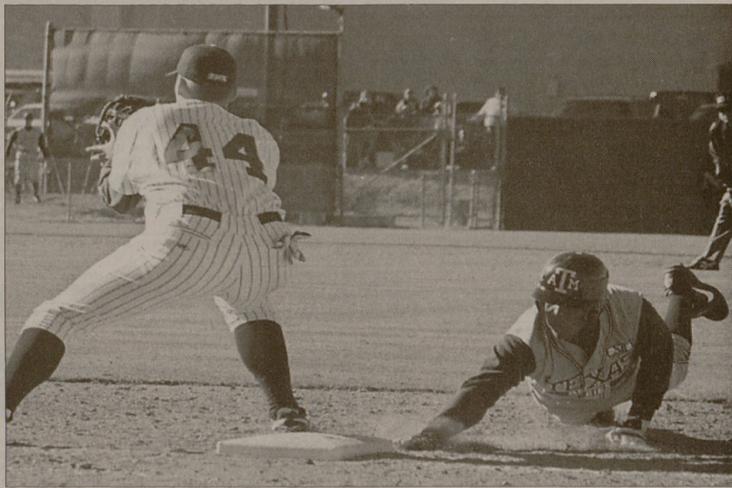
"I am feeling real relaxed right now," Truitt said. "There isn't any pressure on me to hit, so it's becoming real easy to get on base."

The second game was capped off by the pitching performance by Chance Caple. The junior righthander whiffed eleven batters while not giving up any runs in seven innings of work in the Aggies' 12-0 win.

Led by juniors Daylon Holt and Steve Scarborough, the Aggie bats went to work again, banging out 16 hits. The two combined for a perfect day with three hits and two RBI's a piece.

The finale game Sunday afternoon was an all-around effort by the Aggies. The A&M team overcame two early errors to get the job done.

The 7-1 win helped coaches and fans alike to see the ability of possible third starter Chris Russ. The sophomore righthander pitched seven strong innings, even without his top pitch.



CARINO CASAS/THE BATTALION

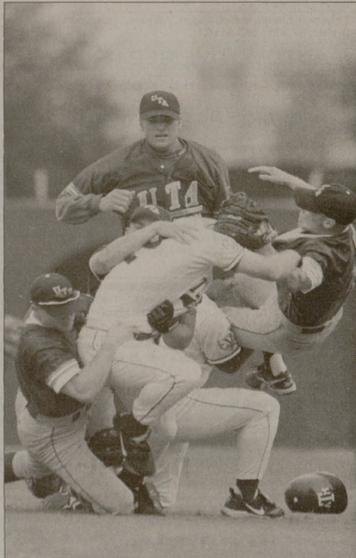
The Texas A&M Baseball Team moved to 8-2 on the season with a three-game sweep of the University of Texas-Arlington Mavericks over the weekend at Olsen Field. The Aggies won the Saturday doubleheader, 8-0, 12-0, and the Sunday game, 8-1.

A&M Baseball vs. UT-Arlington Feb. 20-21

Game 1 (Saturday):
8-0 — A&M
W Fossum (2-1)
L Ashlock (0-2)

Game 2 (Saturday):
12-0 — A&M
W Caple (2-1)
L Sanchez (0-3)

Game 1 (Saturday):
7-1 — A&M



ERIC NEWMAN/THE BATTALION

Leading the Aggies again was Holt, who crushed his seventh home run of the season.

The sweep brings the Aggie's record to 8-2 overall. The next game is Tuesday afternoon at Olsen Field when the Aggies host Ole Miss.

A&M senior co-captain **Steve Leonard** scuffles with several members of the University-Arlington baseball team during the first game of Saturday's doubleheader.

Defense not enough versus UT

BY SANTOSH VENKATARAMAN
The Battalion

It was another frustrating afternoon Saturday for the Texas A&M Men's Basketball Team as they fell, 54-51, to the University of Texas.

The Big 12-leading Longhorns defeated the Aggies for the eleventh straight time, spoiling a record A&M basketball crowd of 9,424 fans. With the win, Texas (17-10, 2-2 Big 12) clinched a tie for the regular season conference championship while A&M (11-13, 4-10) slipped to eleventh place.

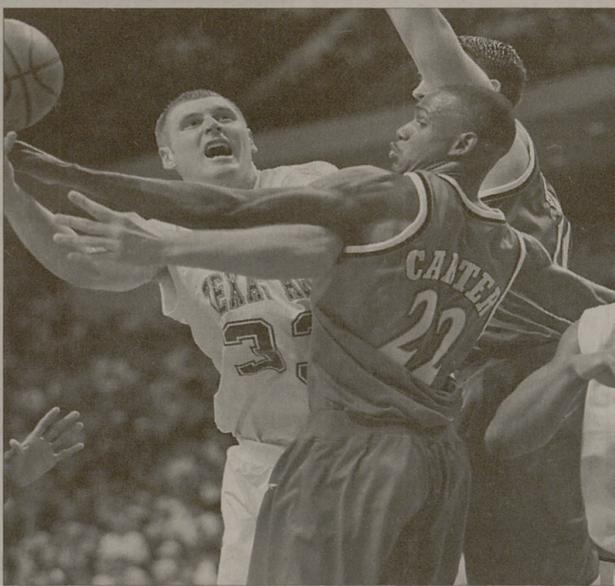
Coach Melvin Watkins and UT coach Rick Barnes talked about a new beginning in the rivalry between the 'Horns and the Ags.

"It was a great atmosphere," Watkins said. "We need to have this every night, not just because Texas is here. I told Rick that this rivalry is going to really be special."

"This was a great college basketball game," Barnes said. "Both teams were at each other defensively. This rivalry is going to be on over the years."

The game was certainly more physical for Barnes than for Watkins this time around. The first half was a poor shooting affair in which both teams managed only eight field goals apiece and ended in a 24-24 tie. Junior guard Clifton Cook had eight first-half points while senior forward Shanne Jones added seven points.

The second half remained close as Texas sprinted out to a 29-24 lead on a Gabe Muoneke lay-up with three minutes gone by. The Aggie lead was still five with 13 minutes remaining when A&M received help from an unlikely source. Freshman guard Andy Atherman, who logged only nine minutes for the contest, drained a three-pointer to trigger a 9-1 run to give A&M a 38-35 lead.



MIKE FUENTES/THE BATTALION

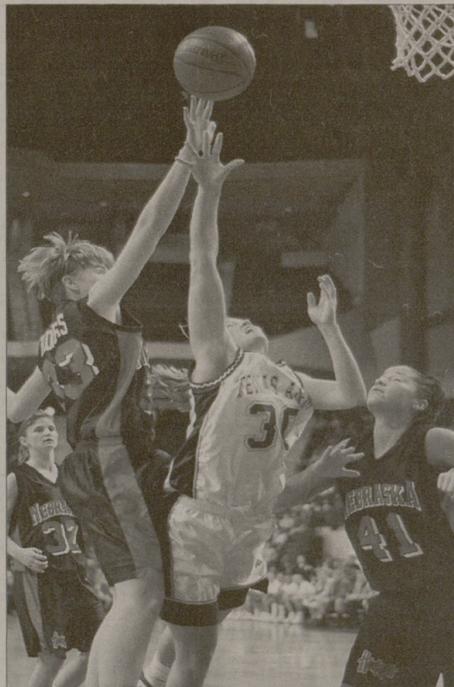
Freshman center **Joe White** goes up for the contested shot against the University of Texas in Reed Arena Saturday.

The game ended with 10:28 to play. Leatherman scored all seven of his points in the three-minute stretch.

The A&M lead was 40-37 when Texas flexed its championship muscle with a decisive run. Guard Kris Clack nailed a three-pointer from the corner in front of the Texas bench to trigger 13 straight Longhorn points. Shooting guard William Clay, a Bryan native, then hit a three-pointer to give UT the lead for good and Clack made another three to give UT a 46-40 advantage.

"Kris and Will's threes; I think that was the dagger." UT center

SEE HOOPS ON PAGE 10.



ERIC NEWMAN/THE BATTALION

Junior forward **Kera Alexander** battles the University of Nebraska in the paint.

Comeback falls short for women against 'Horns

STAFF AND WIRE REPORT

The Texas A&M Women's Basketball Team won the battle against Texas on Saturday, but the Longhorns won the war, defeating the Aggies, 65-56, in front of 8,848 at the Frank Erwin Center.

After struggling with turnover problems the past few games, the Aggies gave the ball up only 14 times, compared with 19 for Texas. But the key statistic in this game was rebounds, as Texas pulled down 36 boards, 15 on the offensive end, to 26 for the Aggies.

The Longhorns (15-9, 9-5) used a 19-6 run to turn a 15-15 tie at the 10:41 mark of the first half into a 34-21 halftime lead.

Texas played solid defensively in the first half, pulling down 28 rebounds to A&M's 12 and blocking six Aggie shots. Texas also shot better than A&M in the first half, 41 percent to 28 percent, scoring 12 second-chance points and 20 in the paint, taking advantage of their size.

The Aggies (7-17, 2-12) made a run in the second half, trimming the Texas lead to 58-51 with 4:01 remaining in the contest. With a basket from Prissy Sharpe and a blocked shot and subsequent layup from freshman Celeria Washington, who was making her first start of the year, the lead was cut to three, and a Kim Tarkington free throw sliced the lead to two at the 2:12 mark.

But Edwina Brown, who led Texas with 15 points, showed why she is considered one of the best players in the conference by scoring the next five points to seal the victory for Texas.

The Longhorns also received help from Tracy Cook, who recorded a double-double with 14 points and 13 rebounds and from Asha Hill, who cleaned the glass 12 times and contributed nine points.

The Aggies improved greatly in their shooting performance in the second half, shooting 16 of 32 from the field, for a 40.4 percentage clip for the contest.

Kim Tarkington led A&M in the assist column with six in 39 minutes.

Kera Alexander had 14 points to lead the Aggie effort, and Prissy Sharpe added nine points.

Aggie freshmen played a big role, as Washington had nine points and six rebounds in her first start of the season, while LaToya Rose had seven points in 15 minutes.

A&M will travel to Norman, Okla., Wednesday to take on the University of Oklahoma Sooners at 7 p.m.

A&M Men's Game Leaders

Points leader:
Clifton Cook (19)

Rebound leader:
Clifton Cook (9)

Assists leader:
Michael Schmidt (4)

A&M Women's Game Leaders

Points leader:
Kera Alexander (14)

Rebound leader:
Celeria Washington (6)

Assists leader:
Kim Tarkington (6)