

## A&M's Palmer just short at Louisiana Invitational

### Men's Golf Team places 10th overall in 15-team field

BY SANTOSH VENKATARAMAN  
The Battalion

The Texas A&M Men's Golf Team slipped to a 10th-place finish Tuesday in the Louisiana Classics Tournament after shooting 301 as a team Monday.

The story for A&M, like last year, was the performance of senior Ryan Palmer, the tournament's defending champ.



PALMER

Palmer, who shot a four-under-par 212 for the two-day event, bettered his Classics-winning performance of 217 from last year.

But Palmer was beaten by Rich Morris of the University of Arkansas and Martin Maritz of the University of Tulsa, who each shot 211 to tie as co-champions.

Palmer finished third despite his attempted rally from five strokes behind going into the last day.

A&M was seventh and led nationally-ranked Arkansas and University of Oklahoma going into Tuesday's action.

Other highlights for A&M were the play of senior Matt Welch and sophomore Casey Cronin. Welch and Cronin both carded final-round scores of 77. Welch finished in a tie with three other golfers for 34th while Cronin tied for 39th with three other golfers. Welch finished one stroke ahead of Cronin as Cronin shot 227 for the tournament and Welch shot 226.

Aggie freshman Sean Gilliland tied Conrad Roberts of the University of Kansas with a 15-over-par 231. Competing as an individual, Aggie freshman Josh McCoy tied for 68th with a 236 while sophomore Ryan Tull shot 250 for sole possession of 81st place.

The tournament, at the par-72, 7,002 yard Oakbourne Country Club in Lafayette, La., was hosted by the University of Southwestern Louisiana, who

finished third. The Classics gave a good indication of how A&M stood in comparison to its Big 12 rivals since seven conference schools competed.

A&M was able to place ahead of conference schools University of Kansas, Baylor University, Kansas State University and the University of Missouri in the 15-team field. The Aggies were three strokes behind ninth-place University of Colorado and finished behind perennial golf powers University of Oklahoma and University of Nebraska.

No. 11 University of Florida won the tournament in dramatic fashion over No. 22 Nebraska on a second-hole play-off. The Gators won for their third tourney of the season.

A&M next travels to the Border Olympics in Laredo, Texas. The Olympics, another two-day event, will be March 19-20 at the Casa Blanca Country Club and the Laredo Country Club. The Olympics are the nation's second oldest college golf tournament.



MIKE FUENTES/THE BATTALION

A&M junior Dell Lindsey (right) attempts the slide against the Iowa State University Cyclones at Olsen Field Saturday night. The Texas A&M Baseball Team defeated the University of Houston Cougars, 8-7, Tuesday night in Houston.

## Ags break even on road with win over Cougars

### A&M Baseball Team moves to 16-3 on season

BY AARON COHAN  
The Battalion

HOUSTON — The road woes were finally defeated Tuesday night as the No. 3 Texas A&M Baseball Team defeated the University of Houston Cougars, 8-7, in front of a UH-record 3,021 fans.

It was a strong showing to start off a five-game road trip for the Aggies, but A&M coach Mark Johnson said the team could not take anything for granted.

"That was one win," Johnson said. "But there are five more."

The Aggies showed up on both sides of the plate Tuesday, with both the offense and defense coming down the stretch. After giving up two homers to the Cougars in the bottom of the fourth inning, junior pitcher Chris Scarcella was re-

lieved by senior Shane King, who was able to retire the next two Houston batters to keep UH's lead at one.

In the top of the fifth, A&M junior center fielder Steven Truitt launched a fastball over the left-field wall for his eighth homerun this season, tying the game.

King got into trouble in the bottom of the fifth, loading the bases. Johnson brought in freshman hurler Khalid Balloui, who managed to get A&M out of the inning by forcing Cougar catcher Jarrod Bitter to ground out to A&M shortstop Steve Scarborough.

Johnson said he was impressed with the freshman's performance.

"K.B. (Balloui) came in and did a good job," Johnson said. "For a freshman to step into an arena with a packed house, I was really

### A&M Baseball vs. Houston

A&M, 8-7  
W-Balloui (2-0)  
L-Moore (3-2)

pleased with him."

A&M began to pull away from the Cougars in the sixth inning, as junior catcher Joe O'Jibway hit a two-RBI double that scored three runs. A&M never looked back, tacking on one more run to end their scoring as Balloui pitched his way to his second win of the year.

The Aggies, who have now won 13 of their last 14 contests, will return home March 19 to host the Aggie Classic at Olsen Field.

## Eligibility decision draws fire

### NCAA decides to fight judge's ruling on Prop 16

(AP) — The NCAA will fight a ruling that struck down test-score requirements for freshmen athletes as unfair to blacks, saying the judge's decision could create chaos at its member colleges.

The governing body of college sports Wednesday will ask the judge to stay the ruling and also will appeal, Elsa Cole, NCAA general counsel, said Tuesday. She expects a response from the judge within a day or two.

U.S. District Judge Ronald Buckwalter in Philadelphia ruled Monday the NCAA may not use a minimum test score to eliminate freshmen student-athletes from eligibility. He cited the NCAA's own research showing the practice harmed black students' chances of being declared academically eligible.

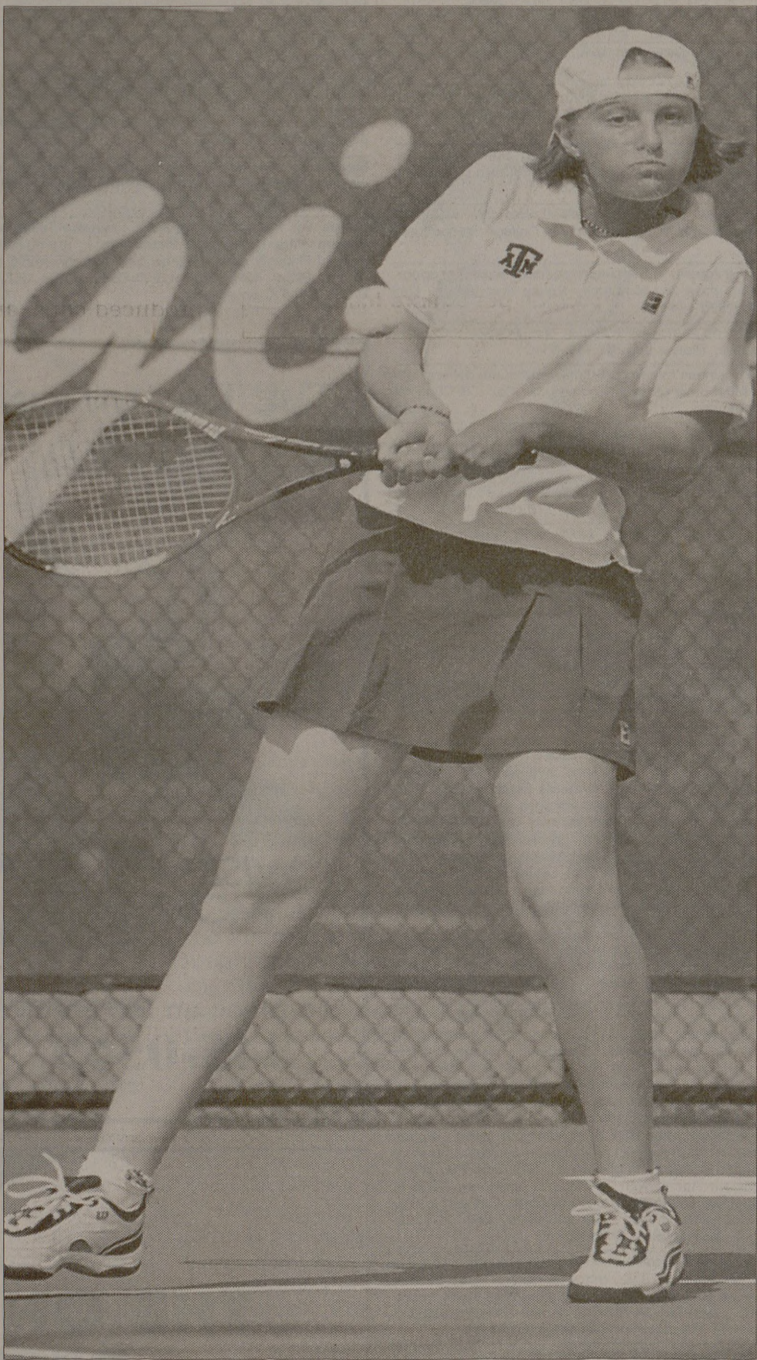
The policy, known as Proposition 16, required the athletes to have a minimum score of 820 on the Scholastic Assessment Test regardless of their high school grades. The ruling did not rule out some use of the tests, which many educators have long said are racial- and culturally discriminatory.

"We are encouraged by the court's acknowledgment that the initial eligibility standards ... serve a legitimate educational goal," Charles Wethington, president at Kentucky and head of the NCAA's executive committee, said.

"In addition, the judge has not precluded use of the SAT or ACT as a part of an initial eligibility rule. The challenge for the NCAA remains as it has always been: to develop standards to meet that goal."

Also Tuesday, the NCAA announced a settlement on another divisive issue. It agreed to pay \$54.5 million to about 2,000 Division I coaches who had sued over the so-called restricted-earnings rule, which had capped their salaries at \$12,000 for an academic year.

## Nedorostova breaks top 100



SALLIE TURNER/THE BATTALION

A&M freshman Martina Nedorostova takes a swing during the Texas A&M Women's Tennis Team's match against Oklahoma State University Feb. 27. Nedorostova, from Bratislava, Slovakia, broke into the Intercollegiate Tennis Association's national ranking this week at No. 98 with a 12-6 overall record. The women as a team are ranked 31st, three spots above their final fall position. The men dropped to 19th nationally after a No. 14 final fall ranking.

## NCAA reaches salary-cap deal

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP) — Underpaid college coaches who successfully sued the NCAA are finally getting a big bonus: \$54.5 million.

The governing body of college sports agreed Tuesday to pay the amount to about 2,000 Division I assistant coaches whose salary was capped at \$12,000 for an academic year.

The so-called restricted-earnings rule lasted three years (1992-95) before a judge struck it down. The coaches and the NCAA had been fighting over a settlement ever since.

"This association-wide nightmare is over," Charles Wethington, NCAA executive committee chair, said in announcing an end to years of expensive litigation.

The settlement comes a day after another NCAA setback. A federal judge in Philadelphia threw out the organization's minimum test-score requirement for freshmen student-athletes, saying it was unfair to blacks. The NCAA is fighting the ruling.

In the settlement, the NCAA must still decide how much each of the 302 Division I schools will pay. Officials of many schools have criticized the organization for not settling the case sooner.

The schools' financial pain could be cushioned by about \$22

million the NCAA will make over the next three years through cost-cutting measures, executive director Cedric Dempsey said. But the schools would still be responsible for the balance of the settlement.

Dempsey would not speculate on a school-by-school allocation of the damages. He said a subcommittee that is already studying the question has heard two "extremes" — one to

**"We won our major point, which was that the rule was unlawful and was repealed."**

—Dennis Cross  
NCAA coaches' lawyer

divide the total equally among all Division I schools, the other tied to distribution of revenue based on school size.

"It is not likely the subcommittee's allocation plan will embrace either of these solutions," said Dempsey, adding that the NCAA wants to decide before the organization's next fiscal year begins in September.

The settlement now awaits a

judge's approval, which will clear the way for the coaches to submit claims.

They will not split the money evenly, however. Instead, the amount they receive will be based on what they made under the cap and what their schools would otherwise have paid them, said Dennis Cross, a Kansas City-based lawyer for the coaches.

It will probably be months before checks are sent out to the coaches, many of whom are no longer in college sports, he said.

"We won our major point, which was that the rule was unlawful and was repealed. And those who were damaged by it will be recompensed," Cross said.

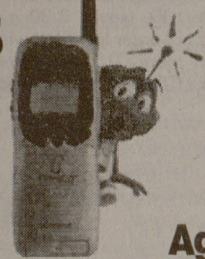
The restricted-earnings rule was adopted as a cost-cutting move by near-unanimous vote of Division I schools in 1991 and took effect in August 1992. The rule capped salaries for entry-level assistants in various sports, excluding football, at \$12,000 for the academic year and \$4,000 for the summer. Coaches filed three lawsuits that were later consolidated into one, and the NCAA lifted the rule in 1995 after a federal judge in Kansas City, Kan., ruled that the organization violated antitrust laws. An appellate court upheld that ruling, and the U.S. Supreme Court refused to hear the case.

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