

Aggie tennis teams prepare for ACC foes

Texas A&M men set to take on North Carolina Tarheels

BY AL LAZARUS
The Battalion

The No. 19 Texas A&M Men's Tennis Team will try to maintain its perfect record tonight when the Aggies host the No. 58 University of North Carolina Tarheels at 6 p.m. at the Varsity Tennis Center.

The Aggies (6-0, 3-0) defeated the Tarheels, 4-3, last year in Chapel Hill, N.C.

"UNC played us very, very tough last year," A&M coach Tim Cass said. "They are outside the top 25 right now, but we'll treat them like a top-25 team."

Despite their perfect record, the Aggies fell five spots from their final fall ranking of No. 14 in the Rolex Collegiate Rankings.

Cass said the rankings drop is due to a lack of highly ranked opponents on the Aggies schedule so far, which will change with the arrival of 4th-ranked Duke University next Tuesday.

"Our goal is to try to play 10 of the top 25 teams year in and year out," Cass said.

Two days after their match against Duke, the Aggies will get a chance to play several more highly-ranked teams when they travel to Montgomery, Ala. for the National Blue/Grey Team Tournament.

In early April, A&M will travel to California to take on No. 12 Pepperdine University and the nation's No. 1 team, the University of California at Los Angeles.

The Aggies also have home matches in April against the nation's No. 7 and No. 8 teams, Baylor University and the University of Texas, respectively.

Junior Juan Aramburo said the Aggies hope to take advantage of their tough schedule.

"I think it's going to help us a lot," he said. "If we take advantage of it and play well, we'll end up with a high ranking."

Aramburo said playing well in tonight's match is key for the Aggies as they prepare to enter the tough portion of their schedule.

"A win will help us build up our confidence for the next part of the season," he said. "We want to get into a good rhythm with Duke coming in next week."



MIKE FUENTES/THE BATTALION

Junior **Gonzalo Anderson** stretches for a shot in a match earlier this season. The 19th-ranked Aggies play host to the No. 58 North Carolina Tarheels today at 6 p.m. at the Varsity Tennis Center.

A&M women get ready for the 16th-ranked Demon Deacons

BY TRAVIS HARSCH
The Battalion

The Texas A&M Women's Tennis Team will look to continue its winning ways against the Demon Deacons of Wake Forest today at 6 p.m. at the Varsity Tennis Center. A&M has posted victories over Texas Christian and Oklahoma State in its last two outings following a loss to Houston, the Aggies' sole defeat on the year.

Coach Bobby Kleinecke said the Deacons would provide the Aggies with a challenge.

"They're pretty hard-hitting," Kleinecke said. "They're a typical Wake Forest team with a lot of talent."

Much of that talent consists of underclassmen, which has led to some difficulties early in the year for Wake Forest.

"They're a pretty young team," Kleinecke said. They had a great win over Ole Miss and then lost to South Carolina, but that's what you get sometimes with a young team."

Mariel Verban, ranked as the sixth-best singles player in the nation, leads Wake Forest. The Deacons are listed as 16th in the latest ITA poll, with the Aggies at 31st.

Kleinecke said Wake Forest's status as a favorite

could actually help his team.

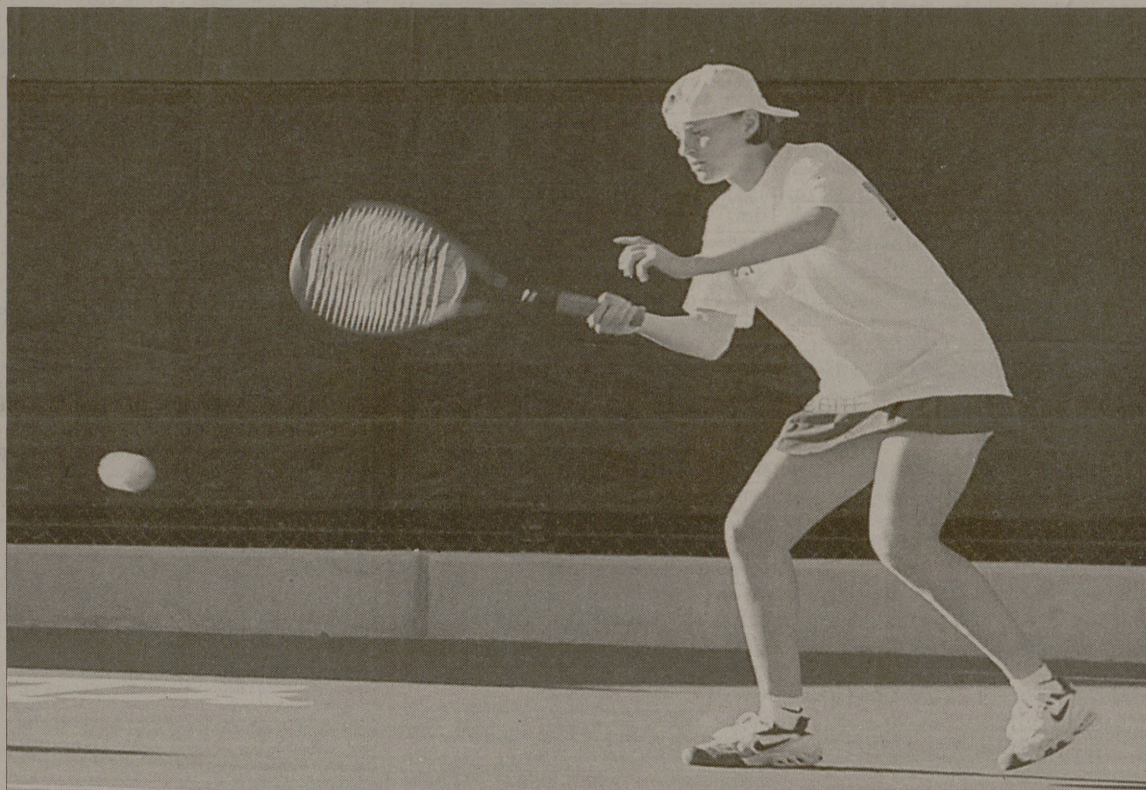
"This is our first opportunity to come out as the underdogs," he said. "They started the season ranked ninth; they're now 16th. We're going to get some opportunities, and it helps being at home. Really, the pressure is on them. We can come out and let our hair down and play hard and see what we've got."

Kleinecke said the Aggies would like to get the victory over the Deacons to make up for that earlier loss to the Cougars. He also said A&M will have additional opportunities to beat other ranked squads and conference opponents as the team plays its next four matches on the road.

"It's important to win because of the loss to U of H," he said. "We need to make up a win over a ranked team somewhere, and if we don't get it here, we'll need to get it down the road, so that part of it's important."

"But we've got two conference matchups on the road, against Iowa State and Missouri, who have been at the bottom of the standings but are really playing better, and we still have that swing against North Carolina and North Carolina State, but we really play them just one match at a time."

The Aggies are coming off a 6-3 win over Big 12 foe Oklahoma State before a crowd that included former President George Bush.



TERRY ROBERSON/THE BATTALION

Freshman **Martina Nedorostova** prepares for a volley against the Nebraska Cornhuskers. The No. 31 Aggies will face the No. 16 Wake Forest Demon Deacons today at 6 p.m. at the Varsity Tennis Center.

Newly ranked Aggie softball team travels to face the Roadrunners

BY BEN WESTBROOK
The Battalion

The Texas A&M Softball Team jumped into the national top 25 for the first time this season when they debuted at No. 24 this week and had two players receive Big 12 honors after finishing 5-1 at the A&M Invitational II this weekend.

Lisa Klam and Amy Vining captured Big 12 honors for the week of March 10 with Klam nabbing player of the week and Vining taking home the pitcher of the week title for the second time in a row.

The women will be taking a 20-6 record on the road to play the Texas-San Antonio Roadrunners Thursday with action kicking off at 1:00 p.m.

Vining's one-hit performance last weekend against No. 18 University of Minnesota helped the women pull away with a 2-0 win. Klam led all Aggie hitters with a 1.000 slugging percentage for

the tournament and drove in the game-winning RBI in four out of five wins.

The Roadrunners have a 11-8 record and a five game winning streak under first year head coach Corrie Hill.

UTSA will be looking to junior infielder Amanda Michalsky to lead the way against the Aggies as she has hit .517 with nine home runs and a 1.133 slugging percentage for the year. As a team, the Roadrunners are hitting .285 while holding opponents to .265.

One of the goals for the Aggies will be trying to move closer to breaking the school stolen base record of 82. The women have already stolen 72 for the year and need just 11 more to surpass the old record.

Lisa Klam leads all Aggies with 15 thefts while Tiffany Esters, Rachel Lewis and Hollee Hayden are tied at 10 a piece. Hayden has 10 despite missing the last 12 games with a broken arm.



MIKE FUENTES/THE BATTALION

Sophomore **Rachel Lewis** attempts a slide into second base against Butler University at the Aggie Invitational II. The 24th-ranked Aggies head to San Antonio to take on the University of Texas-San Antonio Roadrunners.

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