

Aggies face KSU on road Baseball team aims for .500 record in away games

BY AARON COHAN
The Battalion

The harsh road again awaits the Texas A&M Baseball Team.

The sixth-ranked Aggies have been brilliant at home, winning 20 of 21 games, but the road has taken its toll as A&M has a record of 6-7 away from Olsen Field.

The good news for the Aggies is that the team will face conference rival Kansas State University. The Aggies have been successful lately against Big 12 opponents, taking two games from the University of Missouri and sweeping a hot University of Nebraska club last weekend.

A&M coach Mark Johnson said his club will need to perform well against KSU if it wants to stay in the hunt for the Big 12 title.



JOHNSON

"We have to play our game this weekend if we're going to be successful," he said. "I know our guys will be ready — it's just a matter of getting over the hump."

The Wildcats lost their last three games and are now eighth in the conference standings with a 5-10 record. The Wildcats are 1-14 on the road this season but hold an impressive 12-4 record at their so-called "home," as they have been playing home games at neutral sites while their new stadium is being built.

A&M will be led again by the All-American pitching staff of Casey Fossum and Chance Caple. Fossum, the probable starter for Friday, has a 6-3 record, including 83 strike outs in 63 innings. His performance so far has placed him second in the Big 12 conference in whiffed batters.

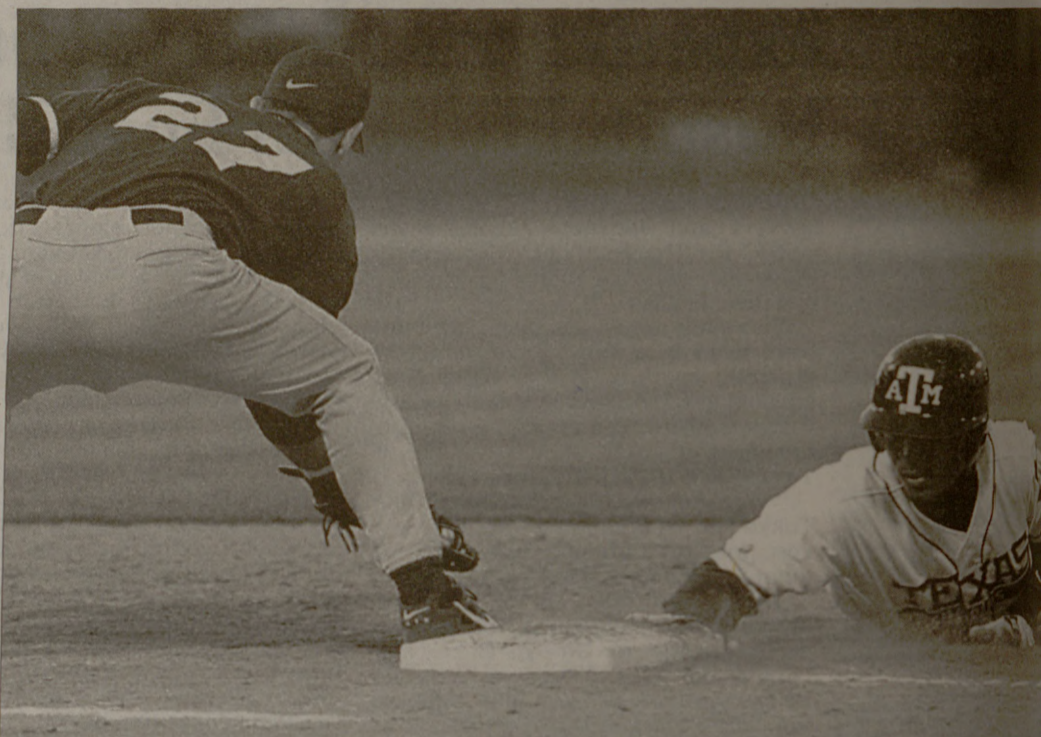
The junior will be followed by another All-American in Caple. The big hurler is holding opponents to a .231 batting average while amass-

ing a 5-3 record and 67 K's, second to Fossum for the Aggies.

The third-game starter spot is still up for grabs but might be taken by Chris Russ. The sophomore has been one of the most effective pitchers on the Aggie staff this year, leading the staff in wins (8) and in ERA (0.79). Russ' ERA leads the nation with four earned runs in 45-plus innings.

"If we don't have to use Chris Friday or Saturday, we will more than likely start him on Sunday," Johnson said. "He has become so versatile, it's hard to keep him off the field."

The Aggie offense, which is averaging almost 13 hits per game in Big 12 play, will be supplied by some of the most potent lumber in the conference, as senior Shawn Schumacher and junior Dell Lindsey are each hitting over .400 in conference, while juniors Daylon Holt and Steven Truitt and senior John Scheschuk have totaled 14 long balls between them.



A&M junior third baseman Dell Lindsey dives for the base during the Aggies' game against the University of Michigan Wolverines March 20 at Olsen Field. The No. 6 Texas A&M Baseball Team will go on the road Friday to take on the Kansas State University Wildcats in Manhattan, Kan., in a three-game, weekend conference series.

Women netters host Vanderbilt

BY SANTOSH VENKATARAMAN
The Battalion

After a 10-day layoff, the Texas A&M Women's Tennis Team returns to the Varsity Tennis Center Saturday for an afternoon non-conference match against Vanderbilt University.

The No. 34 Aggies, at 12-4 overall and 6-1 in the Big 12, currently are one game behind the University of Texas in the race for the conference crown. The No. 12 Lady Commodores (14-6 overall, 5-5 Southeastern Conference) are coming off a 5-1 home loss to the University of Georgia April 3 and have lost three of their past four matches.

The Aggies last played March 31, when they came away with a thrilling 5-4 victory over Harvard University. Freshman Martina Nedorostova continued her strong play with a straight-set victory at No. 1 singles. Also notching singles victories for A&M were Leah Killen and sophomore Eva Marcial at No. 3 and No. 6, respectively. With the score tied at 4-4, Nedorostova and Lisa Dingwall prevailed in a tie-



KLEINECKE

breaker, 9-8 (7-4), to win the deciding doubles point.

The break in action comes at a good time for the Aggies as they prepare for their stretch drive, A&M coach Bobby Kleinecke said.

"We took a little time off for Easter break," he said. "Then we came back and worked on our net game and our volleys."

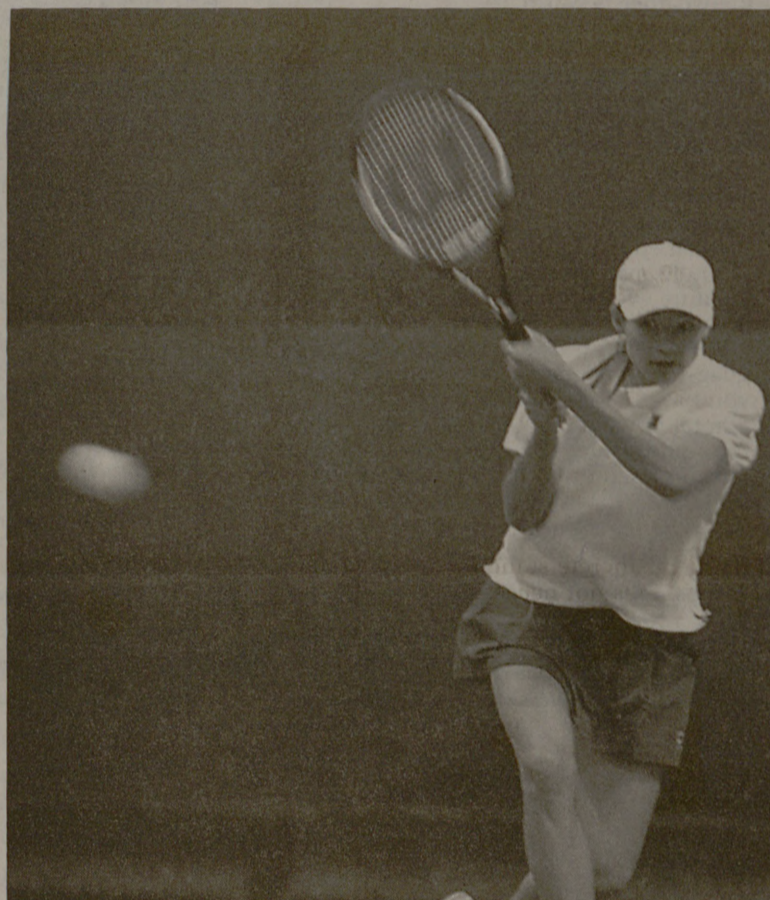
The Vanderbilt match will be highlighted by the No. 1 singles match between Nedorostova and the Commodores' Julie Ditty. Ditty, the National Player of the Month, currently is ranked 12th in the country. Ditty had a perfect 10-0 record in March and is 14-5 overall in dual matches this season. Her ranking of No. 7 earlier this year was the highest ever for a Vanderbilt player.

"That will be an interesting match," Kleinecke said. "It's a good opportunity for Martina."

Kleinecke said his team needs to play a complete match to upset the Commodores.

"We have to play well at every position," he said. "We can't give them any easy matches, and we need to put them behind at the start and get them in a hole on the road."

Vanderbilt, which will be playing the first match of a three-



MIKE FUENTES/THE BATTALION

A&M junior Lisa Dingwall returns a volley during singles play against Texas Tech University March 29 at the Varsity Tennis Center. The Texas A&M Women's Tennis Team will host Vanderbilt University Saturday.

match, three-day trip to Texas, defeated the Aggies last season in Nashville by winning five of six singles matches. A&M's next match is April 17 at home against Rice University.

Men's Golf Team heads for Carolina

BY TRAVIS HARSCH
The Battalion

There is a pretty big golf tournament in a southern state this weekend.

Oh, and the Masters is also being played.

The Texas A&M Men's Golf Team will take on seven Top 25 teams in the BellSouth Yellow Pages Intercollegiate Tournament Saturday and Sunday at MacGregor Downs Country Club in Cary, N.C. The field for the tournament includes No. 2 Clemson and No. 3 UNLV.

The tournament will be the last for A&M before the Big 12 Championships, April 25 to 27 in Hutchinson, Kan.

A&M coach Bob Ellis said the strength of the field will play a big part in his team's preparation for the conference tournament.

"I've always felt that the best way to prepare for a big tournament is to play in a big tournament," Ellis said. "The tourna-

ment has a lot of great teams, and it is on a great course. It should help prepare for the Big 12 Championships."

The Aggies will play 36 holes a day and 18 Saturday, with opening at 7 a.m. CST each day. A&M is coming off a ninth-place finish in the Cleveland Golf/Men's Williams National Tournament Palmer, whose 73.46 average has posted a 73.46 average in eight tournaments this season.

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A&M Men's Golf Coach

der-par 214 for the tournament. The second-place finish in the third consecutive time he has finished in a tournament, and was his second top finish after placing third in Louisiana Classics March 9.

Palmer, whose 73.46 average leads the team, will be joined in the tournament by sophomores Clark and Casey Cronin, junior Reed and senior Matt Welch. Clark has posted a 73.46 average in eight tournaments this season.

Texas squads gather for A&M Invitational

Outdoor season continues for track teams

BY TOM KENNEDY
The Battalion

The Texas A&M Men's and Women's Track Teams will host the Texas A&M Invitational Saturday at the Anderson Track and Field Complex. The meet, which will not feature team scoring, will be attended by eight teams, including Texas Christian University, the University of Houston and Rice University.

The A&M women will attempt to continue their recent success on the outdoor track after finishing ninth at the Big 12 Indoor Meet. The Aggies have moved up consistently in the polls and currently are ranked 14th in the nation by Trackweek Online.

The men are beginning to near preseason expectations as the 400- and 1,600-meter relay units appear to be more comfortable running together.

A&M Track and Field coach Ted Nelson said he expects his squads to be competitive.

"I look for us to compete well," Nelson said. "We had a really good meet last weekend,

so I'm hoping some of that will carry over to this meet."

Both squads turned in their share of provisional qualifiers for the NCAA Championships last weekend. Senior Detrich Clariett had one of the strongest outings of the day, breaking her school record in the triple jump with a wind-aided leap of 43 feet, 8 1/2 inches.

Sophomore Esther Eisenlauer and freshman Katy Doyle continued A&M's one-two punch in the javelin throw by both tossing provisional qualifying marks to place second and fourth, respectively.

Nelson said more impressive performances could be witnessed by those on hand Saturday.

"This will be a quality meet with some quality teams," he said. "If the weather cooperates, we could see some more people qualifying for nationals."

The meet will begin with the field events at 1 p.m. The running events will begin with the women's 3,000-meter run at 5 p.m. and conclude with the 1,600-meter relay competition at 8:15 p.m.

Ags looking for revenge in Austin

BY BEN WESTBROOK
The Battalion

When the No. 19 Texas A&M Softball Team travels to Red and Charlin McCombs Field in Austin Saturday, it will have one major thought on its mind — hit the ball.

The Aggies faced the University of Texas and All-American pitcher Christa Williams last Friday at the Aggie Softball Complex and were held without a hit for the entire contest, Williams' fifth career no-hitter.

A&M is coming off a two-game sweep of non-conference foe Stephen F. Austin State University Wednesday, bringing its season record to 33-9 and getting the pop back in its bats along the way.

Freshman standout, who leads the Aggies in several offensive categories, Lisa Klam came back with vengeance Wednesday, slapping two home runs while going 4-for-6 against the embattled Lumberjack pitching staff.

Klam was joined in the Aggie offensive by shortstop Jamie Smith, who went 3-for-5 on the night, and drove in two RBI's.

A&M coach Jo Evans said the duo's performance was a key to the Aggie victories.

"I am happy that we won," Evans said. "Offensively, I thought we could have hit the ball harder and pushed their defense more, but Lisa and Jamie really stepped up and came through in the clutch."

Despite the pair's strong performance,

the Aggies were still out hit 17-13 in the two games. The team also committed an uncharacteristic three errors Wednesday.

"I didn't feel we played our best," Evans said. "We made some errors on defense that we haven't been making lately, but we kept it together."

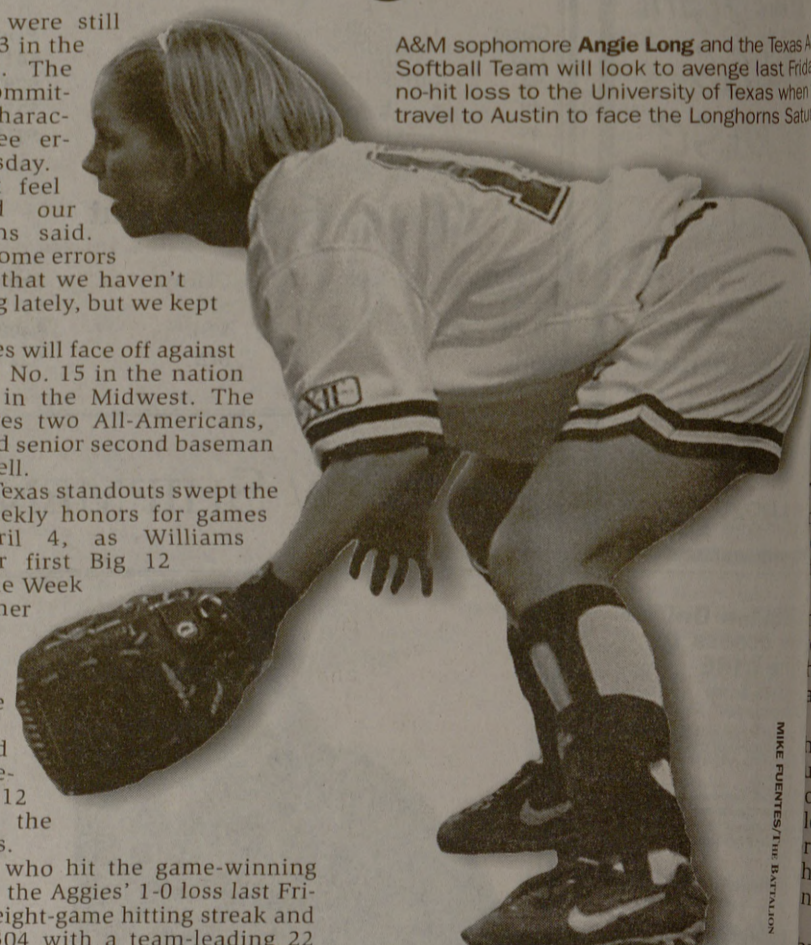
The Aggies will face off against Texas, rated No. 15 in the nation and No. 1 in the Midwest. The team features two All-Americans, Williams and senior second baseman Nikki Cockrell.

The two Texas standouts swept the Big 12's weekly honors for games ending April 4, as Williams claimed her first Big 12 Pitcher of the Week award for her no-hit, eleven-strikeout performance against A&M, and Cockrell received Big 12 Player of the Week honors.

Cockrell, who hit the game-winning home run in the Aggies' 1-0 loss last Friday, has an eight-game hitting streak and is batting .304 with a team-leading 22 runs scored for the season.



SMITH



A&M sophomore Angie Long and the Texas Softball Team will look to avenge last Friday's no-hit loss to the University of Texas when they travel to Austin to face the Longhorns Saturday.

MIKE FUENTES/THE BATTALION