

## 7th-ranked soccer team hits the road to take on Baylor, Texas Tech

BY REECE FLOOD  
The Battalion



JP BEATO/THE BATTALION

Senior midfielder **Mandy Davidson** (middle) challenges for a ball against the Ohio State University Buckeyes last month.

The Texas A&M Soccer Team will continue to take part in Big 12 action this weekend when they play road games against Baylor University today and Texas Tech University Sunday.

The Aggies (10-2) will travel to Waco tonight for a 7 p.m. game against the defending Big 12 champion Baylor Bears (8-4).

The Bears have a tendency to play the Aggies tough, and due to some past experiences this game may prove to be quite a show.

Two years ago Baylor won the game against the Aggies in Waco on a controversial call. A Baylor player shot the ball at the Aggie goal, but missed it wide and the ball hit the side of the net.

The referee mistakenly thought the ball went inside the net and counted the shot as a goal. A&M eventually lost the game by one goal.

Sophomore midfielder **Michelle Royal**

was not at the game two years ago, but she said the team has not forgotten what happened and the controversy is still remembered by some.

"With the players that were there, it's (controversy) still [on their mind]," Royal said.

The controversial call sparked an incident that carried over to last year's game.

"Kind of a fight type thing broke out after the game and it was pretty intense," Royal said. "Last year they [Baylor] came here, it was an intense game, a real physical type game."

Last year Baylor won 2-0 in College Station which tied the series record at 2-2.

The Aggies are hoping to go into Waco and end Baylor's series winning streak at two, but they know it will be no easy task.

"I look at them as an attacking team," Royal said.

Leading the way for Baylor with eight goals on the season is Courtney Saunders. Also this season Baylor, has accumulated 122 shots on goal while limiting opponents to only 88 shots on goal as a team.

The Aggies will return home Friday night, but leave on Saturday for Lubbock and spend the night there before playing Texas Tech at 1 p.m. on Sunday.

A&M's offense will try to maintain their aggressive level of attacking in order to take advantage of a Tech defense that has allowed 20 goals in 12 games this season.

The Aggies will have to overcome a few injuries on defense in order to be successful this weekend.

Senior defender **Ashley Fendley** and freshman defender **Martha Moore** are both doubtful to see any playing time this weekend.

The Aggies are hitting the road ranked seventh in the latest NSCAA and Soccer Buzz polls and are ranked 12th in Soccer America.

A&M is also ranked seventh in scoring offense with a 3.25 goals-per-game average. The defense is ranked 11th at a 0.58 goals-per-game average while senior goal keeper **Melanie Wilson** is 11th in the nation with a 0.52 goals against average.

## Aggies try to regroup against Bears

BY BETH MILLER  
The Battalion

The 1999 football season was supposed to showcase the Texas A&M Football Team's balanced offense, ranked No. 1 in the nation after the team's first two games. But the spotlight has not been kind to the Aggies, as they scored no offensive touchdowns in their third and fourth games.

Senior running back **Dante Hall** attributes the Aggies' performance to lack of enthusiasm and heart.

"I think if we play with more heart, more power, more emotion, then the running game will get more push or we will concentrate on who we have on passing or on assignments," Hall said. "So I think it's just about going out and playing with a whole lot more fire, instead of going out there with this cool attitude like 'we're Texas A&M.'"

"Each week teams are going to give us their best, and we have to give them our best back, and we didn't give it our best this past weekend."

Last weekend the Aggies lost to Texas Tech University, 21-19, in Lubbock. The Aggies compiled 273 yards passing but only 52 yards rushing. They achieved 17 first downs and completed 20 of 38 passes.

Junior placekicker **Terence Kitchens** hit the majority of A&M's points on the board with four field goals, and sophomore cornerback **Jay Brooks** scored the Aggies' only touchdown on a blocked punt.

The Aggies will take on Baylor University Saturday at 1 p.m. at Kyle Field. This weekend's meeting will be the 16th between A&M and Baylor since 1899, with the Aggies leading the series 17-29-9.

The Bears (1-4, 0-2 in Big 12) broke their 10-game losing streak and gave coach **Kevin Steele** his first win at Baylor when they beat the University of North

Texas, 23-10, last Saturday in Waco.

Hall said the Aggies' problems against Texas Tech were offensive inability in the red zone, lack of focus and the fact Tech's defensive strategy entailed stacking the line with eight or nine men at a time.

"Watching the film, we still, even in the red zone, had missed assignments, and it's not what someone's doing — it's what we're doing," he said. "We're not executing when we get down there. We have to be on the same page and focus even harder when we get in the red zone because teams pick up their defense inside the 20 [yard line]."

"It's not anything special that other teams are doing; it's what we're not doing."

He said the Aggies need to concentrate on winning this weekend's game rather than trying to iron out the long-term offensive glitches.

"Baylor is 1-3, but their defense has always been pretty good," he said. "I don't think we can go [into the game] focusing on one aspect of game. We have to go in focusing on winning. First and foremost this weekend, we need to win the game and in the midst of it, try to see what is wrong with the running game."

A&M football coach **R.C. Slocum** said people often try to pinpoint specific reasons for mistakes, but there is more than one reason for the errors in the Tech game.

"What I am disappointed in is inside the 20 [yard line]," he said. "You're always trying to put your finger on a reason, and there is usually not one reason. We've had some assignment errors, which I attribute to the fact that we're replacing two guys in our line that left this year. We haven't functioned well as a unit. It's been too inconsistent."

He said the running game has suffered from several blows, such as senior running back **D'Andre "Tiki" Hardeman** being injured.

Slocum said the Tech game was diffi-



GUY ROGERS/THE BATTALION

Senior cornerback **Jason Webster** wraps up Texas Tech University fullback **Sammy Morris** during Saturday night's game against the Red Raiders. The Aggies host the Baylor Bears this Saturday at 1 p.m. at Kyle Field.

cult because when the Aggies fell behind, he looked at the situation as a whole and decided that the best way to catch up was to concentrate on the passing game.

He said he can never remember coaching two games in a row without an offensive touchdown.

Senior offensive lineman **Chris Valletta** said he is offended by public assump-

tions that the Aggies lack the necessary talent to run the ball.

He said he expects fans to question the situation when a No. 5 team gets beaten by Texas Tech, since the Red Raiders had lost two games beforehand. He said fans watch football to analyze the teams and the games, but he refuses to believe that A&M has a poor running game.

"I don't think it's that we can't run," he said. "I can't agree with that because as an offensive lineman, that's my job and our job up front, to open up holes to run. We take it personally when people are saying, 'they can't run, so they throw the ball.'"

"That's a pride issue, and we're not going to swallow that. We can't."

## Harriers host A&M Cross Country Invitational

BY BLAINE DIONNE  
The Battalion

Texas A&M University is hosting one of the region's largest cross-country meets today with a total of 1,000 collegiate and high-school runners descending on the Texas A&M Golf Course to compete for two days.

The Texas A&M Cross Country Invitational is considered one of the best college meets in the region A&M cross country head coach **Dave Hartman** said.

"This meet is one of the largest in the region as far as number of runners," Hartman said.

There will be a field of 23 schools competing, consisting of Texas and Louisiana schools, along with Auburn University and Mississippi State University.

The Texas A&M Men's Cross Country team comes into the meet No. 3 in the region, behind the University of Arkansas and the University of Texas.

The women currently are ranked sixth, but A&M sophomore runner **Melissa Gulli** said the rankings were reached in error.

"It's wrong!" Gulli said, joking. "No, the ratings aren't really affecting us, I think that's just paper and they aren't giving us enough credit, and I think we'll show them on Friday."

While top ranked Arkansas will not be competing this weekend, the Longhorns are, and Hartman said the challenge to run against Texas and the 22 other schools is one the team is looking forward to.

"This is a quality meet with some very good teams competing," Hartman said. "The competition on both sides will be tough, but I'm really excited to host a meet like this."

The women's and men's teams are enjoying their nice starts to the 1999 season. Impressive finishes in their opening meet in Seattle two weeks ago at the Sundodger Invitational have the team confident about the season.

"It was a good way to start the season," Hartman said. "But we didn't run a great race, so we know we are going to drastically improve as the year goes on."



FILE PHOTO/THE BATTALION

The Texas A&M Cross Country teams will host the Texas A&M Cross Country Invitational Saturday. The women's race starts at 6 p.m. with the men starting 10 minutes later.

A win by the Aggies this weekend would accomplish something no other A&M cross country team has done. Since the inception of the Aggie Invitational in 1988, the Aggie Harriers have never won their home meet.

With the talent in place on this year's squad, senior **Carl Stewart** said he hopes that trend will come to an end this year.

"It's really the first time we've had a good enough team to have a chance to win our own meet," Stewart said.

Hartman said a win this weekend would be

nice, but he is more worried about the Pre-NCAA meet in Indiana next week because of its greater implications on the Aggie's season goals.

"We'll be running against approximately 15 to 20 of the top 25 teams in the country up in Bloomington, Indiana next week," Hartman said. "So we want to have a good race this weekend, but we're definitely not peaking towards this."

The university division races will be on Friday, with the women's 5,000-meter run starting at 6 p.m. and the men's 5.1-mile race beginning at 6:10 p.m.

### SPORTS IN BRIEF

#### Volleyball to take on Oklahoma Sooners

After being upset by the unranked Baylor University Bears, the Texas A&M Volleyball Team (12-3, 3-2 Big 12) is set to take on Oklahoma University tomorrow at 7 p.m. at G. Rollie White Coliseum.

The University of Oklahoma Sooners (6-9, 1-4 Big 12) return four starters from last season's team. They finished 1998 with a 10-22 overall record and placed 10th in the Big 12 conference with a 4-16 record.

A&M won the most recent contest between the two teams on November 13, 1998, sweeping the Sooners 15-8, 15-7, 15-5, at the University of Oklahoma Field House.

Both squads head into tomorrow night's match with a recent Big 12 conference loss. The Sooners were recently defeated by conference rival University of Kansas, 3-1.

#### Softball heads to Spring Klein toumey

The Texas A&M Women's Softball Team will continue its schedule of preseason play this weekend at the Spring Klein Invitational Spring, Texas. The Aggies will open tournament play against Southern Mississippi Saturday at 11 a.m. Coach **Jo Evans** said she is

pleased with the progress the team has been making and is looking forward to the tournament.

"The Spring Tournament will be a good measuring stick for us as a team," Evans said. "We will see some great pitching and face some top-twenty teams."

Evans said in preparation for this caliber of competition, the Aggies have continued to work on their hitting and fine tune their timing and rhythm.

The Aggies will also face the University of Coastal Carolina Saturday at 3:00 p.m. They will then play a doubleheader Sunday beginning at 9:00 a.m. against the University of Louisiana-Lafayette.

#### Baseball begins Fall World Series

The annual Texas A&M Fall World Series will begin tonight at 7 at Olsen Field.

The Fall World Series is a best-of-five game intrasquad series.

The "Redskins" will be managed by A&M volunteer assistant coach **Mike Haverty**, while the "Trappers" will be managed by A&M assistant coach **David Coleman**.

All games will be played even if the winner of the series is determined in less than five games.

Fans are encouraged to attend and there is no charge for admission.

Game 2 of the series will take place Saturday night at 7.

The three remaining games will be played next week.



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