

The Battalion

Ags prepare for Mizzou

NOTEBOOK



LAZARUS

The Texas A&M Football Team (6-3, 3-3 Big 12) will take on the University of Missouri (4-5, 1-5 Big 12) Saturday in Columbia, Mo. The game is set to kick-off at 11:30 a.m. and will be televised regionally as the Big 12 Game of the Week.

A&M/Missouri Facts

The Aggies lead the all-time series between the two teams, 5-0. In their five wins, they outscored the Tigers, 156-27. Three of the victories were shutouts. Last season at Kyle Field featured the closest game played between A&M and Missouri, a contest in which the Aggies used a late turnover by the Tigers to kick a field goal and win, 17-14. The most lopsided game of the series took place in 1993, when A&M crushed Mizzou, 73-0, at Kyle Field.

Both teams are coming off 37-0 losses on the road, with A&M losing to Nebraska and the Tigers being falling to Oklahoma. The Tigers have to win their last two games to become bowl-eligible.

Bowl Bound?

Saturday's 37-0 loss to Nebraska officially ended A&M's hopes of a third consecutive Big 12 South championship. But with six wins on the season, the Aggies have already qualified for a bowl appearance. The Big 12, however, is guaranteed only six bowl games, so if the Aggies were to lose out and finish at 6-5, a postseason opportunity would not necessarily await them.

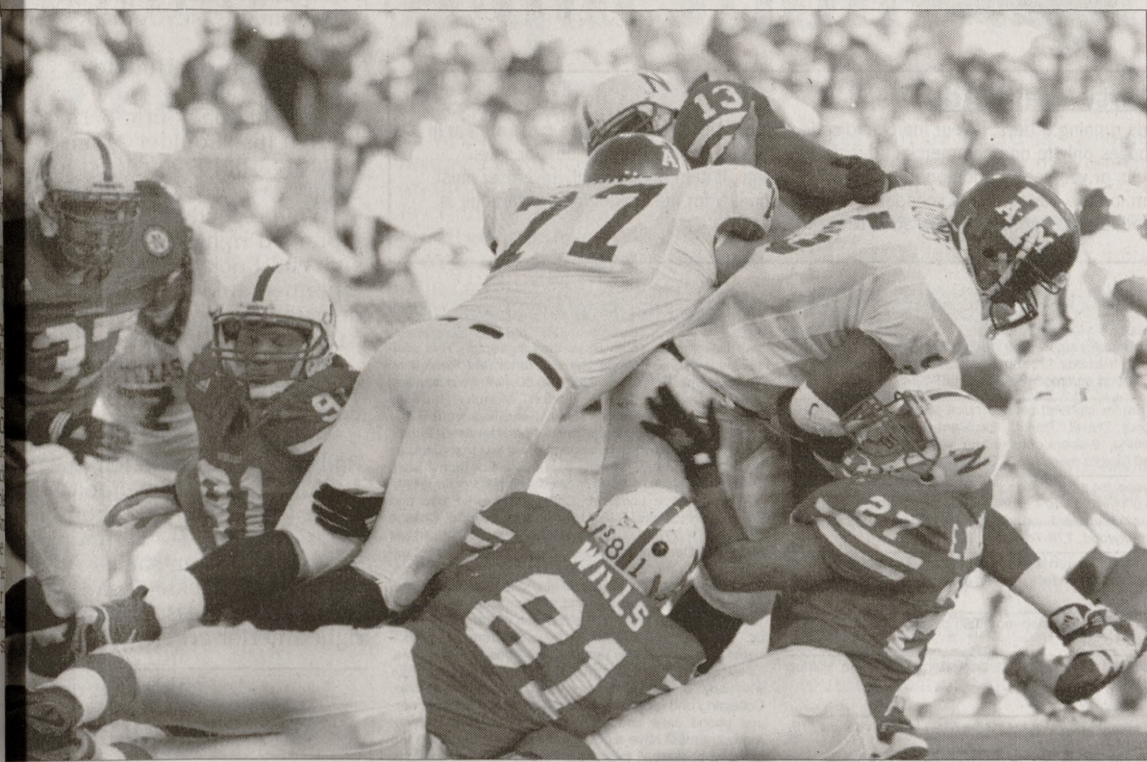
"I don't think anybody is going to take a team that's lost its last three games," A&M offensive lineman Chris Valletta said. "Why would they?"

Lechler Nears Record

Senior punter Shane Lechler's eight punts against Nebraska Saturday gave him 253 for his career, qualifying him to make a run at the NCAA's career record punt average (minimum 250 punts). Lechler currently is averaging 44.5 yards a punt, which would break former Mississippi punter Bill Smith's 13-year old record of 44.3.

Lechler also has 35 40-yard plus punt average

SEE AGGIES ON PAGE 8.



GUY ROGERS/THE BATTALION

A&M sophomore running back Ja'Mar Toombs (right) runs the ball up the middle with the help of sophomore offensive lineman Seth McKinney (77) against the University of Nebraska Saturday in Lincoln, Neb.

Texas, K-State have inside track for Big 12 Championship game

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DOUG SHILLING

As the season winds down, so are the divisional races in the Big 12 Conference. Only a handful of teams are still in the conference race. Three games involving Big 12 teams will be televised Saturday. The Texas A&M-Missouri game at 11:30 a.m. and the Kansas State-Nebraska game at 2:30 p.m. will be televised regionally.

The Texas Tech-Texas game at 6 p.m. will be televised nationally.

Rematch in San Antonio

The two participants in the Big 12 Championship game could be determined this weekend. With wins this weekend, Texas and Kansas State will win the South and North divisions, respectively.

This would set up a rematch of an earlier matchup this season in which the Wildcats defeated the Longhorns in Austin, 35-17. After leading 17-14, the Longhorns gave up three straight touchdowns to fall to K-State.

To get there, both teams will have to beat teams they have not been successful against in the past.

K-State travels to Lincoln to take on the seventh-ranked Nebraska Cornhuskers.

Despite winning a record 21 straight conference games, including a 40-30 win over the Huskers last year in Manhattan, Kan., the Wildcats have not won a game in Lincoln since 1968, and K-State coach Bill Snyder has lost all five games in Lincoln as Wildcats head coach.

Meanwhile, the 10th-ranked Longhorns host Texas Tech this weekend. Texas has struggled at home this year, with both of its losses coming at Memorial Stadium.

On top of that, the Longhorns also have struggled against the Red Raiders in past seasons. Tech has four of its last six against Texas, including the last two.

Going Bowling

With their wins last weekend, Oklahoma and Texas Tech inched closer to

reaching the six wins needed to be eligible for a bowl.

The teams need one more win each to reach the magic mark. Four schools — Kansas State, Nebraska, Texas and Texas A&M — already have reached the six wins needed to participate in a bowl.

The Big 12 Conference is guaranteed six spots in the postseason: the Bowl Championship Series (winner of the Big 12 Championship game), the Southwestern Bell Cotton Bowl, the Culligan Holiday Bowl, the SYLVANIA Alamo Bowl, the Insight.com Bowl and the Sanford Independence Bowl.

Odds and ends

Colorado quarterback Mike Moschetti went over 2,000 yards passing on the

season Saturday, marking the eighth consecutive year CU has had a 2,000-yard passer. Kansas' 373 yards rushing against Baylor was the top rushing performance by a Jayhawk squad under head coach Terry Allen.

Nebraska has won 94 straight games when it rushes for at least 300 yards. The Cornhuskers outrushed Texas A&M Saturday, 335-2.

Texas Tech's 99-yard drive in the second quarter against Iowa State Saturday ties the school record and is the longest drive of the season for the Red Raiders.

Oklahoma's sellout home game against Oklahoma State marks the first time since 1987 the Sooners have sold out every home game in a season.

Doug Shilling is a junior agricultural journalism major.

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