

Aggies travel to Missouri

BY DOUG SHILLING
The Battalion

It is amazing what a difference a season can make. At the beginning of the 1999 season, the Texas A&M Football Team's main focus was defending its Big 12 Championship and possibly making a run at the National Championship.

Now, it would be happy with just winning a game.

Fresh off a 37-0 thrashing at the hands of the University of Nebraska in Lincoln, Neb., the Aggies (6-3, 3-3 Big 12) will hit the road once again this weekend as they head to Columbia, Mo. to face the University of Missouri Tigers Saturday.

The Aggies will be searching for their first road win of the year, after being outscored 109-25 in its three games away from home this season.

The last time the Aggies won a road game was Oct. 31, 1998, when they defeated Oklahoma State University, 17-6, in Stillwater, Okla.

A&M junior offensive Chris Valletta line-man said despite the Ags not being in the Big 12 race, the game against Missouri still has a lot of meaning.

"We realize we're out of the Big 12 race," Valletta said. "It's really hard to swallow. What's on the line now is a bowl game. We determine where we go from here on out."

Both teams will be looking to bounce back after enduring 37-0 losses last weekend.

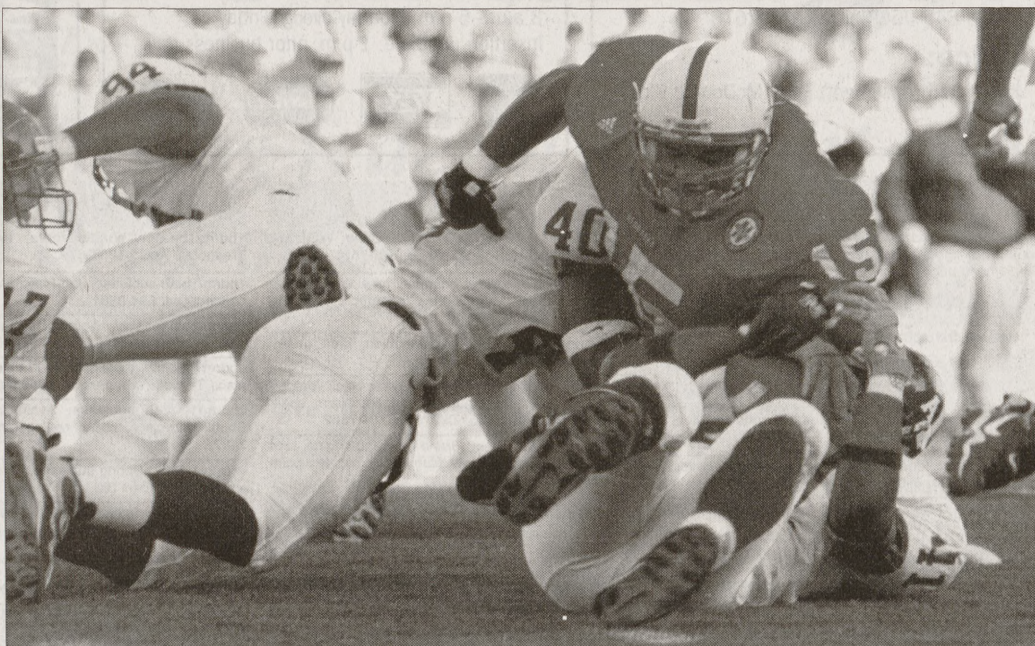
The Aggies stayed close with the Cornhuskers until the second half, when the Nebraska offense exploded for 31 points to cruise to the win.

The Nebraska defense held the Aggies to 118 yards of offense, including two yards rushing, both season lows. It was the first time in 142 games A&M had been shut out.

A&M coach R.C. Slocum shook up the team this week when he dismissed senior running back Dante Hall for disciplinary reasons.

Hall gained 179 yards on 53 carries in six games for the Aggies this year.

Slocum said it was a situation in which the two parties needed to part ways.



GUY ROGERS/THE BATTALION

A&M sophomore linebacker **Harold Robertson** recovers a fumble by Nebraska's **Willie Miller** in the first quarter of the Cornhuskers' 37-0 victory over the Aggies Saturday in Lincoln.

"I respect him for the contribution he has made in our program," Slocum said, "but we got into a situation where it was best for us to go our separate ways."

With Hall gone, senior running back Eric Bernard will start for the Aggies with freshman Joe Weber getting to see a considerable amount of playing time. Sophomore fullback Ja'Mar Toombs also could see action at the tailback spot.

A&M should have everyone healthy this weekend with the exception of sophomore linebacker Christian Rodriguez and freshman tight end Michael de la Torre, who are not expected to play.

The Tigers' 37-0 loss to the University of Oklahoma last weekend put Missouri's hope of having

a third-consecutive winning season in jeopardy.

In order for the Tigers to finish with a winning record, they would have to win this weekend, then travel to Manhattan, Kan. and defeat the Kansas State University Wildcats.

Missouri coach Larry Smith said the Tigers are going to try to bounce back this week.

"We are just trying to pick up the pieces and get ourselves ready to play a great game this week," Smith said.

The Aggies lead the all-time series against the Tigers 6-0, including last year's 17-14 win at Kyle Field.

Kickoff is set for 11:30 a.m. and will be televised as the Big 12 Game of the Week.

11th-ranked Ags set to face Kentucky

BY JASON LINCOLN
The Battalion

The Texas A&M soccer program has accomplished a lot in its seven seasons. One hundred-fifteen wins and a Big 12 Championship to top the list. But one thing A&M has yet to do is make a NCAA Championship Tournament run. Is 1999 the year?

The Aggies will look to top their best-ever NCAA tournament appearance Sunday when they face the University of Kentucky Wildcats in the second round.

The 13th-ranked Wildcats enter the match with a 16-2-2 record on the season.

The Aggies will try to keep Kentucky winless in the NCAA Tournament.

The Wildcats, who have made three straight tournament appearances prior to this season and have lost all three, had a bye in the first round.

Leading the Wildcats are forwards Anne Gage and Keri Boyce. Gage has 36 points, while Boyce has 30.

The Aggies will continue to rely on their depth to wear down the higher-seeded Wildcats. That strategy paid off for A&M

in the first round, as A&M was able to out last the University of Montana in a 2-1 win.

"Texas A&M is a skillful team that wore us down," Montana soccer coach Betsy Duerksen said. "From top to bottom, they're good on the ball. It's not one kid jumping out at you, it's a whole team."

A&M hopes to continue its strong possession game which has dominated ball control and allowed just 14 goals this season.

"To win a championship or just to be successful in this tournament, you've got to play your game," A&M soccer coach G. Guerrieri said. "You've got to be able to cope with what the other teams strengths are and not play to their strengths. And then you've got to find ways to win."

"The reputation Kentucky has is very similar to Montana. They're very physical, very athletic, very opportunistic and then they have the added benefit of playing at home."

With a win against the Wildcats, the Aggies would advance to their first "Sweet 16," where they would face the winner of the University of Minnesota-University of Nebraska match.



JP BEATO/THE BATTALION

A&M sophomore midfielder **Amber Childers** tries to take the ball away from a University of Montana defender Wednesday.



KIMBER HUFF/THE BATTALION

A&M sophomore guard **Andy Leatherman** drives toward the basket in last night's 68-59 win over the California All-Stars at Reed Arena.

Men's basketball team wins exhibition game

BY JASON LINCOLN
The Battalion

Jack had nine points and six rebounds on the night, including four offensive boards.

A&M had trouble getting into its rhythm during the first half.

The Aggies were tentative driving to the basket against the All Stars, shooting mostly jump shots with little success and allowing California to jump out to a 10-point lead.

A&M then slipped through to score one basket inside. Soon came another, as the Aggies went on a seven-point run to tighten up the score. As A&M started to find its inside game, the game's momentum began to turn.

"Our offense has to start with inside touches," Aggie men's basketball coach Melvin Watkins said. "For a while we weren't doing that. [We]

most of those questions focus on the youth of the team which features eight new players. The Aggies started to put an end to those questions before the season even started.

"If we get any kind of win right now it's going to be positive," A&M senior forward Aaron Jack said.

"It's really good for mentality."

SEE EXHIBITION ON PAGE 8.

Women's basketball begins preseason against Hungary

BY REECE FLOOD
The Battalion

overall record.

Senior forward Kera Alexander said she hopes this season will be more productive than last year's.

"I think our first goal is to improve over last year and take a lot of the close games we had and capitalize on them," she said.

The Aggies lost by an average of 8.6 points last year. Compared to the year before, when the Aggies lost by an average of 14.7 points, A&M seems to be improving steadily.

"We are moving in the right direction, but yet it [scoring margin] still counts as a loss," Gillom said.

Gillom said this year's non-conference schedule should help pre-

pare the Aggies with a 7-20

The Texas A&M Women's Basketball Team will tip off its season tonight at 7 with an exhibition game against Hungary at Reed Arena.

The Aggies will play one more exhibition game after tonight before the regular season starts on Nov. 23 against Sam Houston State University.

A&M women's basketball coach Reggie Gillom said she is excited about finally getting the ball bouncing and hopes the team can achieve its goals this year.

"The first goal is not to be last in the Big 12," she said.

Last year, Gillom's first at A&M, the Aggies finished with a 7-20

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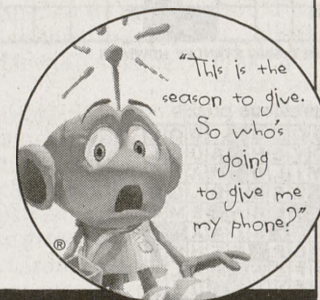
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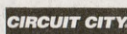
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