



# 2000 TEXAS A&M BASEBALL

BY DOUG SHILLING  
The Battalion

For the Texas A&M baseball team, 1999 was a season to remember.

The Aggies captured their second straight Big 12 Championship, won 52 games and captured Regional and Super Regional titles, sending A&M to the College World Series for the third time in school history.

But with eight starters gone from last year's squad, the 2000 version of the Aggies will have a new look.

While the team will have tons of ability, it will be an extremely young group.

"I think it has talent; I like the talent of our ballclub," A&M baseball coach Mark Johnson said. "There is a jump from high school and junior college to Division I. It's a much faster game. But we'll have four or five freshmen out there at some times."

"It's going to be a season where we'll have to be patient

and one where the real critical thing is how we deal with failure. It's not going to be a journey with a smooth, straight path, it's going to have some bumps in it."

The only starters returning from last season are senior second baseman Sean Heaney and junior right fielder Daylan Holt.

A preseason All-American, Holt is coming off the best offensive season in Aggie history. He batted .341 and set A&M records with 34 home runs and 105 RBIs. Heaney is a three-year starter for the Aggies and last year hit .333 with 11 home runs and 48 RBIs.

With the team as young as it is, both Heaney and Holt have been given larger leadership roles on the team this year, being named co-captains for the 2000 season.

"They're taking on a big leadership role," Johnson said. "Not only those two guys, but I've asked all the returning guys to take an ownership in this team. Because we have so many new guys, the old guys have to lead the way."

Heaney said the returning players' job is to make sure

everyone comes together as a team.

"The main thing in college baseball is how your team chemistry is because the talent level is so even," Heaney said. "So the biggest key this year will be how the team gels together. And that's the older guys job to get everyone in here and playing together on the same page."

Coming into the season, the Aggies' starting lineup is still in question. While second base and right field are solid, all of the other positions are still up-for-grabs.

The battle for the first base position will be between freshman Travis Wong and junior transfer Jeff Freeman. The right-handed Wong played for the USA Junior team over the summer and the left-handed Freeman transferred to A&M from Cowley County Junior College.

Sophomore transfer Ryan Wardinsky has the inside track on being starting shortstop. Wardinsky came to A&M from Walla Walla Junior College in Washington.

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SALLIE TURNER/The Battalion

A&M senior second baseman and co-captain Sean Heaney hopes to lead the Aggies in 2000.

## New faces hope to lead Aggies

BY JASON LINCOLN  
The Battalion

Last season marked one of the best seasons in the history of Texas A&M baseball. The Aggies successfully defended their Big 12 Championship and advanced into the College World Series behind the power of the Aggie bats.

Following the banner season, the Aggies found themselves in a dilemma after the major league draft claimed eight A&M starters. That loss left only two familiar faces, Daylan Holt and Sean Heaney, to lead the new look of Aggie baseball taking the field this spring.

"Most people are aware, now, that this is a new ballclub," A&M coach Mark Johnson said. "We had eight guys off our team sign. Some were juniors, and some were seniors, but they were key position guys."

The Aggies brought in 19 new faces for this season to fill the void left by some of the most productive players in school history. Eleven freshmen and eight transfers will compete with the 10 returning lettermen and three squadsmen for the open positions.

"I hope by the time we get to conference, we can figure out who our starters are," Johnson said. "Right now there are a lot of open positions."

Johnson expects the A&M line-up to

See NEWCOMERS on Page 7.



SALLIE TURNER/The Battalion

A&M senior Matt Knight (L-R) and sophomores Ty Garner, Blake Whealy and Khalid Ballouli celebrate last year's Super Regional victory.

## Even with talent loss, A&M should have interesting year

The grass is freshly cut, the chalk lines have been drawn and the "Raggies" have come out of their winter slumber. It must mean it's time once again for Texas Aggie Baseball.



DOUG SHILLING

With the season A&M had last year, enthusiasm should be at an all-time high. A second straight Big 12 Championship and a trip to Omaha for the College World Series will do that.

The only problem with that enthusiasm

is that last year's team is no longer here. Eight starters from last year's squad were drafted and signed contracts with professional teams.

With those guys gone, the Aggies will have a dropoff this season. It's inevitable. It has nothing to do with the current team, it's just sheer numbers.

Gone from last year's squad are 54 percent of the home runs, 57 percent of the team's RBI, 58 percent of the wins and 65 percent of the innings pitched. Take away Daylan Holt's school record 34 home runs and only 20 percent of the Aggies' home run total is back this year.

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## Swinging for the fence Holt looks to improve on stellar 1999 season

BY DOUG SHILLING  
The Battalion

The road to becoming Texas A&M's home run king was a bit different for Daylan Holt. Instead of coming in and setting the world on fire, the junior right fielder went through an awkward period during his first season in Aggieland. Home runs and records were the farthest thing from his mind. He was just trying to find his place on the team.

"I remember for the first two weeks to a month, I was just scared," Holt said. "I felt like I had to impress the fans and all that stuff. It's very intimidating to come in here and play, and I was even on the home team."

"I think I made only four errors my whole four years in high school. Then I came here and went bonkers. It got to a point where a ball was hit to me and I could hear the crowd just sigh and go, 'Oh, no.' Then that would make me nervous."

Holt eventually settled down shook off his early season jitters and ended up having a productive freshman year. He started 59 games in right field and was the Aggies' designated hitter in five more games. Holt hit .316 with seven home runs and 48 RBIs and was even named second team Freshman All-America by Baseball America.

But as good as his freshman season

was, nothing could compare to the year he put together last year.

Holt did not merely break records last year, he obliterated them. In what was the best individual offensive season ever at A&M, he batted .341 with 34 home runs and 105 RBIs.

His 34 home runs led the nation and eclipsed the previous Aggie record by nine. His 105 RBI placed him second in

the nation in that category and smashed the old A&M record by 16 RBIs.

He also set A&M single-season records for at-bats (287) and total hits (228).

With the huge increase in production from one year to the next, A&M baseball coach Mark Johnson said Holt's athletic played a big role in his offensive explosion.

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A&M 2000 SCHEDULE			
Date	Opponent	Site/Time	
Feb. 4	! Washington State	Albuquerque, N.M. 2:30 p.m.	
Feb. 5	! Oregon State	Albuquerque, N.M. 2:30 p.m.	
Feb. 6	! Washington State	Albuquerque, N.M. 11:30 a.m.	
Feb. 8	UT-SAN ANTONIO	COLLEGE STATION 3 p.m.	
Feb. 11-12	at UT-Pan American	Edinburg, Texas 3 p.m., 1p.m. (DH)	
Feb. 15	at Southwest Texas State	San Marcos, Texas 3 p.m.	
Feb. 18-20	ARIZONA	COLLEGE STATION 3 p.m., 2p.m., 1p.m.	
Feb. 22	at Sam Houston State	Huntsville, Texas 2 p.m.	
Feb. 25-27	* KANSAS STATE	COLLEGE STATION 3 p.m., 2p.m., 1p.m.	
Feb. 29	* TAMU-CORPUS CHRISTI	COLLEGE STATION 3 p.m.	
March 3	* BAYLOR	COLLEGE STATION 7 p.m.	
March 4-5	* at Baylor	Waco, Texas 3 p.m., 2p.m.	
March 7	at Houston	Houston, Texas 7 p.m.	
March 10-12	* TEXAS TECH	COLLEGE STATION 7 p.m., 7p.m., 1p.m.	
March 14	at Lamar	Beaumont, Texas 7 p.m.	
March 17	# OHIO STATE	COLLEGE STATION 7 p.m.	
March 18	# CENTRAL MICHIGAN	COLLEGE STATION 1 p.m.	
March 18	* OREGON STATE	COLLEGE STATION 8 p.m.	
March 19	# CENTRAL MICHIGAN	COLLEGE STATION 7 p.m.	
March 20	# OREGON STATE	COLLEGE STATION 5 p.m.	
March 20	# OHIO STATE	COLLEGE STATION 8 p.m.	
March 24-26	* at Iowa State	Ames, Iowa 3 p.m., 1p.m., 1p.m.	
March 28	* SAM HOUSTON STATE	COLLEGE STATION 7 p.m.	
Mar. 31-Apr. 2	* at Kansas State	Lawrence, Kan. 7 p.m., 2p.m., 1p.m.	
April 4	HOUSTON	COLLEGE STATION 7 p.m.	
April 7-9	* OKLAHOMA	COLLEGE STATION 7 p.m., 7p.m., 1p.m.	
April 11	SW TEXAS STATE	COLLEGE STATION 7 p.m.	
April 14-16	* at Oklahoma	State Stillwater, Okla. 7 p.m., 6p.m., 2p.m.	
April 18	RICE	COLLEGE STATION 7 p.m.	
April 21-22	* at Nebraska	Lincoln, Neb. 6:30 p.m., 2p.m. (DH)	
April 25	SAM HOUSTON STATE	COLLEGE STATION 7 p.m.	
April 28	* at Texas	Austin, Texas 6:30 p.m.	
April 29-30	* TEXAS	COLLEGE STATION 7 p.m., 2p.m.	
May 12-14	* MISSOURI	COLLEGE STATION 7 p.m., 7p.m., 2p.m.	
May 17-21	Big 12 Tournament	Oklahoma City, Okla.	
May 26-28	NCAA Regionals	Campus Sites	
June 2-4	NCAA Super Regionals	Campus Sites	
June 9-17	College World Series	Omaha, Neb.	

  


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