

FOOTBALL TOP 25

- 1- Nebraska (43)
- 2- Florida St. (26)
- 3- Florida
- 4- Kansas St. (11)
- 5- Virginia Tech
- 6- UCLA (1)
- 7- Wisconsin
- 8- Washington
- 9- USC
- 10- Michigan
- 11- Clemson
- 12- Miami Fla
- 13- Tennessee
- 14- Ohio St.
- 15- Texas
- 16- Notre Dame
- 17- Oklahoma
- 18- TCU
- 19- Illinois
- 20- Auburn
- 21- Purdue
- 22- So Mississippi
- 23- Michigan St.
- 24- Georgia
- 25- Mississippi St.

FILE GRAPHIC/THE BATTALION

Aggies dig out of first-half deficit

Second-half charge buries Miners

By JASON LINCOLN
The Battalion

Ja' Mar Toombs knew it all along. Nothing in the first half would matter if he could get the ball in the second. Never mind that Texas A&M trailed at halftime at Kyle Field to a non-conference opponent for the first time since 1992. Never mind that the Texas-El Paso offense moved the ball with little opposition. He just needed to get his hands on the ball. Then everything would be all right.

Toombs did just that, scoring three short touchdowns and catching a trio of passes for 41 yards to lead the Aggies to a 45-17 victory.

"Big man here (Toombs) came in [at halftime] and said, 'Just relax, I'll take care of it,'" said offensive lineman Chris Valletta. "After he scored that first touchdown, he came up to me and said, 'Told you.'"

UTEP's momentum came to an abrupt halt to start the second half when it tried to convert on a fourth and one in A&M territory. The Wrecking Crew would have nothing of it, and linebacker Jason Glenn came up with the stop.

The A&M offense came on the field to set up a 2-yard touchdown run by Toombs. Toombs added to his point tally after Jay Brooks blocked a punt by the Miners' Glen Beard that gave A&M the ball at UTEP's 1-yard line. It was routine for the 275-pound fullback to take it into the end zone.

After that, the Aggies could not be stopped at Kyle Field, scoring 17 more points in the final quarter, including six more by Toombs, who put it in from the 2-yard line.

"It's pretty much automatic," Toombs said. "If we get that close, we know we're going to score, especially when we get three cracks at it, but we only need one."

Unlike the previous two games, A&M brought a different attack to Kyle Field for the Miners' and its final game before conference play starts against Texas Tech in two weeks. Until now, the Aggies' highlights came

from the passing combo of quarterback Mark Farris and wide receiver Robert Ferguson. Saturday, Ferguson was limited to a single catch for A&M's first touchdown. Bethel Johnson provided the impact play at receiver, catching a career-high eight catches for 74 yards.

A&M also established a presence in the rushing game early. The Aggies scored their remaining five touchdowns on the ground with 236 yards. Sophomore running back Joe Weber led the ground attack with 95 yards on 11 carries.

Weber scored A&M's second touchdown by running the ball 30 yards down to the UTEP 16 before punching it in to put A&M up 14-7. Farris was the Aggies' second-leading rusher with 54 yards, showing the presence of mind to escape sacks and scramble for first-down yardage.

"If we win, I don't care if I don't throw for any yards," Farris said. "I'm not really concerned about numbers. Tonight I ran the ball a little more than usual. That's the way it is. One week it's somebody, the next week it's going to be someone else. That's how it needs to be, because they can't key on anybody."

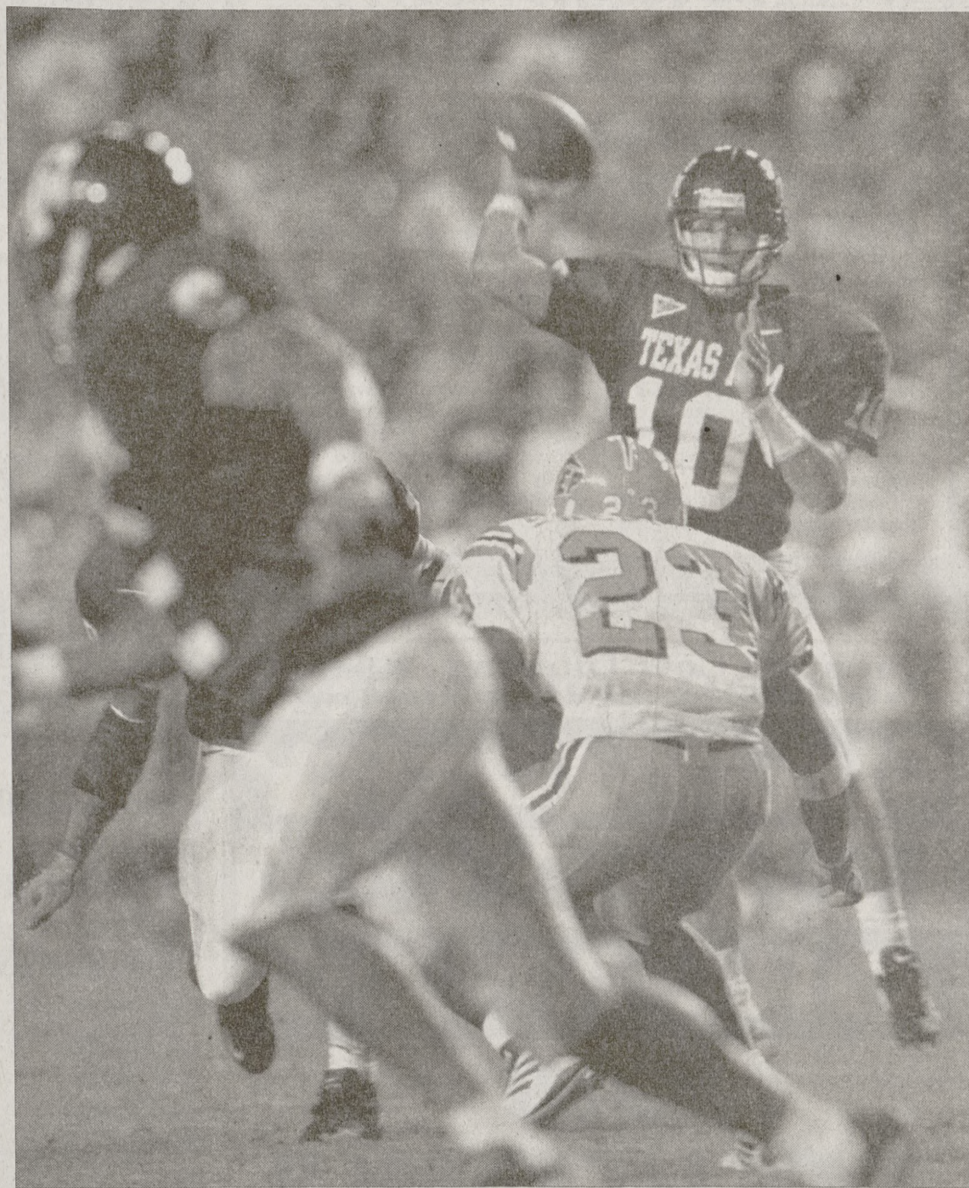
UTEP did not key in on any player on offense. Instead it focused on putting the Aggies' young secondary to the test. Senior safety Michael Jameson was out last week, recovering from a sprained ankle, and junior cornerback Jay Brooks lost his starting role to his roommate Sean Weston. A&M fielded two freshman and two sophomores for its entire defensive backfield.

The Miners attacked it early, passing for 168 yards and two touchdowns in the first half.

"Going into the game, I knew that with the youth and the injuries to the secondary they were going to complete some passes," said A&M coach R.C. Slocum. "I didn't imagine they'd be able to keep the ball like they did, but I attribute that to the poor tackling."

The Aggies' top-rated linebacker unit

See UTEP on Page 3B.



CHAD ADAMS/THE BATTALION
Texas A&M quarterback Mark Farris looks for wide receiver Robert Ferguson in the Aggies' 44-17 win over Texas-El Paso.

UTEP preps A&M for Tech Ags end Kansas' perfect season

You knew it was going to be an interesting evening for the Texas A&M football team when the University of Texas-El Paso drove 58 yards for a touchdown on its first possession. Well, at least it turned out to be an interesting half.



BLAINE DIONNE

Trailing 17-14 to a team like the Miners is not what a quality football team should do, but the Aggies' reaction in the second half is.

In the first 30 minutes, A&M was playing a soft-zone defense that was giving too much cushion to Miner quarterback Rocky Perez, who simply took what the Aggies gave him. Perez slowly picked the young A&M secondary apart, racking up 17 points and 213 yards of offense.

The Aggie offense played well enough in the first two periods, matching UTEP score for score, but it was not fooling the Miner defense as it thought it could go into the game.

During the break, however, the A&M coaching staff decided to let the Wrecking Crew get aggressive in the second half, and the decision paid immediate dividends.

On the ninth play of the Miners' first possession of the second half, UTEP coach Gary Nord went for it on fourth-and-one, but was stuffed by the Aggie defense. A&M then scored 31 unanswered points to seal the 45-17 win.

What is encouraging for the Aggies is the fact that they have the confi-

dence to come back from a deficit — and win it.

Games like Saturday's are a litmus test for football teams. The Aggies have proved so far this season that they can perform in three different situations — a hostile environment (Notre Dame), a total blowout (Wyoming) and a come-from-behind victory against a quality team that will contend for the WAC title (UTEP).

A&M now has a week to prepare for the opening of Big 12 Conference play against undefeated Texas Tech, a week which it will need. The Aggies' secondary and defensive line are still critically thin from injuries, and the bye week should help heal some bumps and bruises.

Tech's new head coach, former Ok-

lahoma offensive coordinator Mike Leach, who lit up A&M last year for 51 points, was probably licking his chops when he saw the passing numbers UTEP put up against A&M in the first three quarters. But he would be well advised to keep any confidence he has in check.

Both Wyoming and UTEP were predominantly passing teams, just like the Red Raiders. But both of them came to College Station, where the young A&M secondary was afforded a confidence boost from a home crowd while they learned.

That will translate into the Tech game when the Aggie secondary will be bolstered by a sellout crowd and the return of senior free safety Michael Jameson from an ankle injury.



CHAD ADAMS/THE BATTALION

Sopomore running back Joe Weber dives for the end zone in the first quarter against UTEP.

By BREE HOLZ
The Battalion

After being defeated in its first Big 12 Conference match of the season Wednesday against Missouri, the Texas A&M volleyball team bounced back to sweep the University of Kansas on Friday night, 15-8, 15-13, 15-9 at G. Rollie White Coliseum.

A&M's record moves to 5-3 (1-1 in the Big 12), while Kansas posted its first loss of the season and moved to 9-1 (1-1 in the Big 12).

"Defensively, we stayed really ag-

gressive," said A&M coach Laurie Corbelli. "We didn't stop two of Kansas' best hitters, but I was pleased with our overall performance."

The Jayhawks jumped to a quick 2-0 lead in the first game of the match, but A&M quickly gained momentum and scored nine straight unanswered points. Kansas was forced to call a timeout with the score at 9-2, but the Aggies responded with three more points.

The Jayhawks began chipping away at A&M's lead and held the Ag-

gies to nine game points before senior middle blocker Heather Marshall put the game away with a kill.

In game two, the Aggies posted the first two points, but Kansas quickly settled down and began taking control of the game. A&M moved to a 6-4 lead when Kansas called a timeout, but the Jayhawks came back and tied the score at 6-6.

A&M moved the score to 11-7, but the Jayhawks answered by scor-

See VOLLEYBALL on Page 3B.

No. 8 soccer team escapes UNT bar-

By REECE FLOOD
The Battalion

The Texas A&M soccer team's three-goal rally in the second half of Friday night's game against North Texas helped the No. 8 Aggies go on to a 4-3 overtime victory at the Aggie Soccer Complex.

Sophomore midfielder Jessica Martin ended the game with a goal three minutes into the first overtime. The goal marked the end of an Aggie scoring drive that did not begin until midway through the second half.

A&M found themselves down 2-0 at halftime despite outshooting the Mean Green 12-3. It was only the second time this season the Aggies did not score in the first half of a game.

A&M soccer coach G. Guerrieri said he was not happy with the first half performance and let the women know what they had to do to win.

"Half time was not PG rated," Guerrieri said. "Basically it was a gut check for us. We went in and said, 'We're playing well, but to win games you've got to do more in the last 20 yards.'"

Junior forward Anne Tamporello got things rolling for the Aggies with A&M's first goal. Senior defender Amber Reynolds broke away from North Texas and passed the ball to Tamporel-



CHAD ADAMS/THE BATTALION

Freshman midfielder Kristen Strutz dribbles toward the UNT goal in a 4-3 overtime victory.

See SOCCER on Page 3B.

Sydney 2000

Highlights:

Olympic Debut: The Sydney Games debuted the first-ever Olympic triathlon. Combining three established Olympic events, swimming, running and cycling, the inaugural race drew more than 300,000 spectators. The event was so successful, it has already been announced as part of the 2004 Athens Games.

Six golds for Thompson: 27-year-old Jenny Thompson swam the anchor leg for the gold-medal-winning 400 freestyle relay team. The most golds by a U.S. female athlete.

Schedule:

TV Schedule: Monday, September 18, 2000

NBC:

- 10 a.m. to Noon — Swimming; Water Polo
- 7 p.m. to Midnight — Gymnastics (Men's final); Swimming; Rowing; Equestrian
- 12:41 to 2:11 a.m. — Women's volleyball; canoeing

MSNBC:

- 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. — Women's basketball; softball; rowing.

CNBC:

- 5-9 p.m. — Boxing; women's weight lifting

Record Book:

Setting the Standard:

• In only two days of swimming competition in Sydney, four more world records were broken than in all of the '96 Atlanta Games.

Swimming: 8 new world records

Medal Watch:

	Gold	Silver	Bronze
USA	4	5	2
Aus	3	2	4
Fra	3	2	1
Jpn	2	2	0
Chn	2	1	4