

SPORTS

THE BATTALION

Sydney 2000

Highlights:

Forgetting the Past: The U.S. men's soccer team left a 75-year history of Olympic failure behind in Sydney. Never having advanced past the first round, the men advanced to the quarterfinals on Tuesday.

Going for seven: U.S. swimmer Jenny Thompson qualified third fastest for the 100 freestyle. Thompson has a record six gold medals but has yet to win one individually.

Schedule:

TV Schedule: Wednesday

NBC (Prime time):

• 6 to 11 p.m. — Swimming, Gymnastics, Basketball

• 11:41 p.m. to 2:11 a.m. — Volleyball, Cycling

MSNBC:

• 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. — Softball, Rowing, Cycling, Tennis

CNBC:

• 4 to 8 p.m. — Boxing, Basketball

Record Book:

Swimming: U.S. swimmer Tom Malchow won the gold medal in the 200 butterfly, setting an Olympic record time of 1:55.35.

Medal Watch:

	Total	Gold	Silver	Bronze
USA	18	7	6	5
AUS	17	5	6	6
CHN	16	6	3	7
FRA	13	5	6	2
JPN	7	3	3	1

Eye on A&M

How A&M athletes are faring in Sydney:

Softball: Shortstop Jennifer McFalls and the United States' softball team suffered their first defeat in 112 games after an overtime loss to Japan.

Volleyball: Stacy Sykora and the U.S. volleyball team look to remain undefeated against Croatia for a top placing in the final pool.

Archery: Victor Wunderle looks to upset the Koreans' sweep of medals in archery competition. Wunderle is currently in the quarterfinals.

Volleyball travels to Oklahoma

BY BREE HOLZ
The Battalion

The Texas A&M volleyball team will attempt to take its second Big 12 Conference win tonight at 7 when it battles Oklahoma at the OU Field House in Norman, Okla.

The 23rd-ranked Aggies are 1-1 in the Big 12 with a 5-3 overall record while the Sooners are 0-1 in league play and hold a 5-4 overall mark. The contest with A&M will be OU's first home match of the season.

The Aggies hold the all-time series lead over the Sooners, 21-1, with OU's only win in 1979. Last year, A&M defeated OU 15-7, 15-10, 15-5 in College

Station and swept the Sooners in Norman 15-7, 15-6, 15-5.

In 1999, the Sooners finished in 10th place in the league with a 3-17 record. This year, they are once again picked to finish 10th.

OU returns three starters from last year's squad, which finished 8-22 overall. Senior middle blocker Cathy Cook has led the way for the Sooners so far with a .409 hitting percentage and an average of 4.80 kills per game.

As a team, OU is out-hitting its opponents .277 to .208 and averaging 15.23 kills per game.

The Sooners dropped their first Big 12 match to the University of Colorado

on Saturday night, 3-0. The Aggies defeated Kansas Friday night, 3-0, but were upset by Missouri last Wednesday, 0-3.

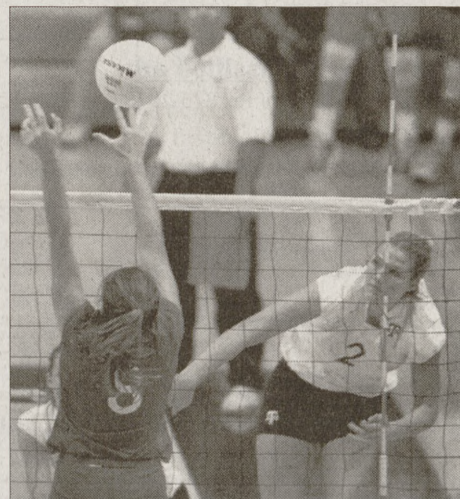
A&M's practices have become more intense since its loss to Missouri last week.

"We have been a lot more focused in practice since that disaster," said junior defensive specialist Beth Weynand.

The veterans have been instrumental in getting the team focused again for the remainder of the Big 12 season.

"After we lost, we realized that in our practices we were just going

See VOLLEYBALL on Page 3B.



Freshman outside hitter **Beth Skypala** and the Aggies travel to Oklahoma today.

Return of a leader

Marshall leads Aggie volleyball with aggression

BY BREE HOLZ
The Battalion

When Heather Marshall decided to play volleyball at Texas A&M, coach Laurie Corbelli did not explain the Twelfth Man, Midnight Yell or "Howdy." She did not have to. Marshall was already bleeding maroon.

Marshall, a 6-foot-1 senior middle blocker from Carrollton, Texas, said choosing a college was not difficult because she dreamed of attending A&M.

"I grew up an Aggie," she said. "My dad is Class of '69 and my sister is Class of '99, and it's just something I've always wanted to do."

Marshall was also heavily recruited by Ohio State University, Notre Dame and Georgia Tech during her senior year. At Newman Smith High School, Marshall captured numerous district awards, including Defensive Player of the Year in 1995 and Outstanding Hitter in 1996.

In her first season at A&M, Marshall saw little playing time, competing in 18 matches and 26 games. She became a starter for the volleyball team her sophomore year, but midway through the season, she suffered a second-degree sprain to her ankle that benched her for the remainder of the season. When she recovered her junior year, her starting position had been taken by someone else.

"My injury set me back for the majority of my junior year," she said. "Not only did it set me back physically, but it took me out mentally as well."

Marshall said, since her injury, she has become a stronger player both physically and psychologically.

"I've definitely become a better player," she said.

"I'm not a power hitter, but I'm a smart player. I think sitting out my junior year also helped me learn how to outsmart my opponents."

Teammate junior outside hitter Michelle Cole said even though Marshall was not a starter last year, her presence was felt on and off the court.

"Ever since my freshman year, I have looked up to Heather's determination and competitiveness, and she doesn't even play my position," she said. "She works harder than anybody else. If she makes a mistake, it doesn't matter because she's on the next ball. You can just see it in her eyes."

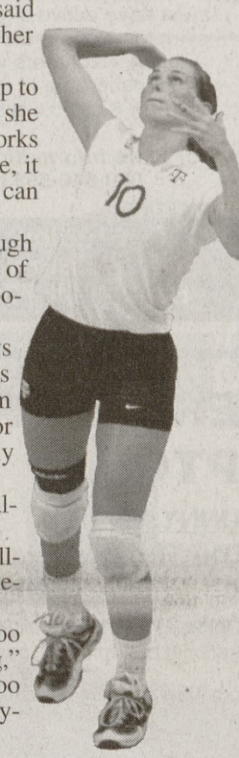
In 1999, four senior starters led the Aggies through their best season in history. In 2000, Marshall, one of only two senior starters, will assume a leadership position.

"Heather is consistently competitive and always fighting on the court," Corbelli said. "That makes her a great role model for the team and gives them a foundation and an example of what fighting for two hours throughout an entire match actually means."

"When you have one of your older players always fighting, it makes for great leadership."

Marshall said she thinks her teammates are willing to follow her aggressiveness on the court to become dominant.

"I'm very demanding and sometimes maybe too demanding on the court, but it seems to be working," she said. "I don't think I've gotten on anybody too hard this year, and I'm just going to keep on everybody until I'm told otherwise."



A&M football uses week off to heal



on each other all preseason, the Aggies entered the 2000 season in worse shape than any other time in coach R.C. Slocum's tenure.

The Aggies had to deal with injury losses on both sides of the ball, with the most critically depleted area being the defensive backfield. Two

sophomores and two freshmen were forced to plug the holes at safety and cornerback positions left open by graduation and injury. A&M was able to make it out of its non-conference stretch relatively unscathed with a 2-1 record.

Last week Slocum said he usually does not like to have a

bye week this soon in the season and that he prefers to keep a routine. This year, he admits, the break comes at an opportune time.

"Normally, I don't like the open week this early," Slocum said. "But this may come at a

See NOTEBOOK on Page 3B.

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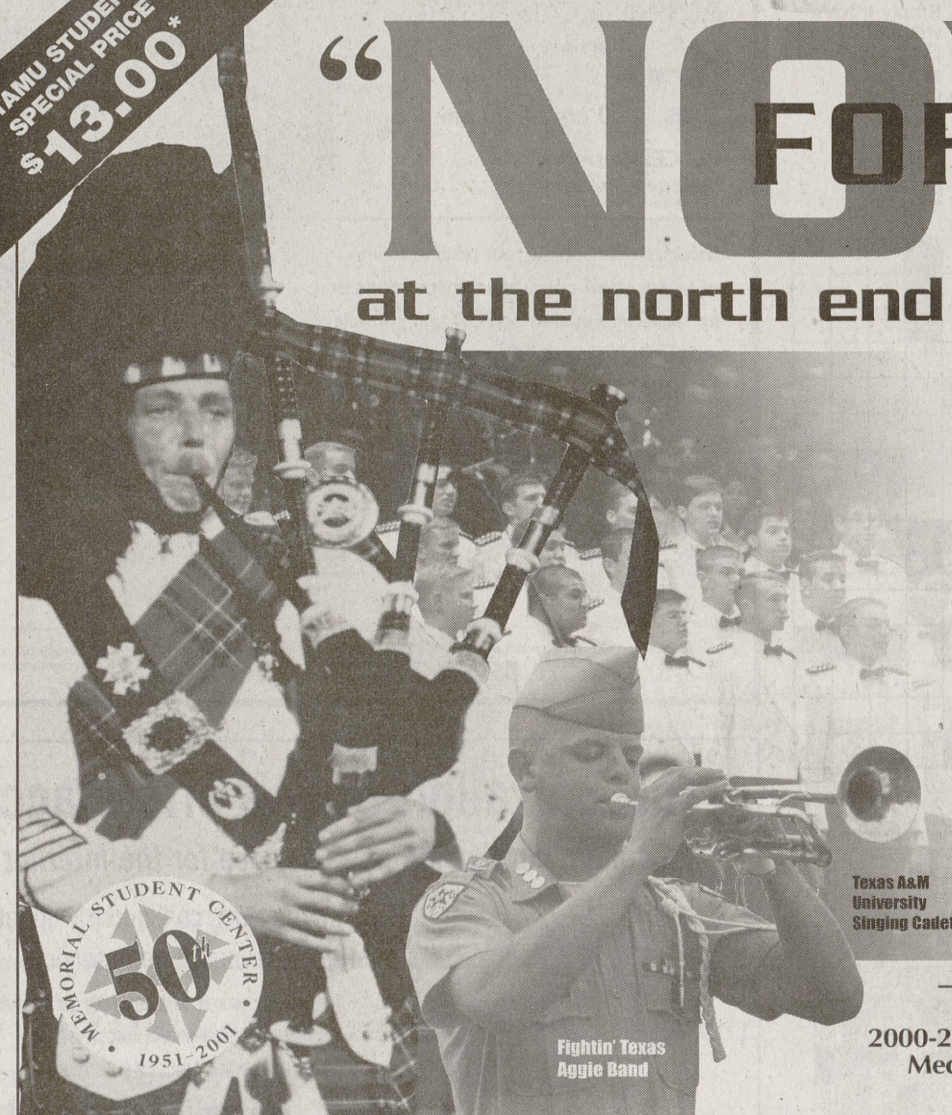
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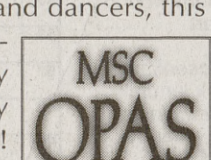
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