

Sydney 2000

Aggies ready to defend Kyle Field



COURTESY TEXAS A&M SPORTS INFORMATION/THE BATTALION
Senior safety Michael Jameson returns to Kyle Field for the first time this year to lead the A&M secondary.

The off week has come and gone for the Texas A&M football team and it is a little healthier than it was after the UTEP game — and a lot more ready to play. At the team's weekly media luncheon Tuesday, the Aggies were talking about how excited they are to get back on the field to prepare for this week's game.

"Last week was kind of boring," said quarterback Mark Farris.

"Practices on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday were the same. It got pretty monotonous."

Coach R.C. Slocum said the Aggies are not only ready to get back on the field, but are especially ready for rival Texas Tech.

"In the past, the media has ho-hummed this game, the players have ho-hummed this game and the fans have ho-hummed this game," Slocum said. "But we've got to play to win against Tech. If you don't go out and execute, like we did last year, you've got no one to blame but yourself."

The Raiders have beaten the Aggies four of the last five years and are the last team to beat A&M at Kyle Field, with a 13-10 decision



in 1996. Last year, the Aggies traveled to Lubbock as the No. 6 team in the nation and came away with a loss that sent them into a downward spiral.

One of the reasons the Aggies have such a dismal record against Tech recently is, as Slocum said, their attitude toward their West Texas brethren. The game has never really mattered to A&M before.

It does this year. With a sold-out Kyle Field, there was a tangible energy in the air at the luncheon that said the Aggies are not looking past this game.

For the Aggie seniors, this is the last chance to break even against Tech, and, perhaps more importantly, to extend the nation's third-longest home winning streak against the last team to beat them at home.

Offensive lineman Chris Valletta

said the fact that he has not walked off Kyle Field a loser is a source of motivation for him.

"I've never really thought about it that way, but you're right," Valletta said when reminded of this fact. "That's amazing when you think about it."

Injury Report
Senior Michael Jameson, the only returning starter from last year's defensive backfield, will start for the Aggies this Saturday. He has missed the last two games with a high ankle sprain.

Sophomore linebacker Jarrod Penright will also be back in the lineup this week.

Sophomore offensive lineman Billy Yates practiced Sunday for the first time since two-a-days and could possibly play against Tech.

Junior offensive lineman Tango McCauley and junior linebacker Harold Robertson will be day-to-day this week and might play Saturday.

Ticket Watch
Texas A&M expects a crowd of over 80,000 for Texas Tech. All tickets are sold except for remaining student tickets.

Highlights:

Home run sends U.S. looking for gold:
The U.S. men's baseball team advanced to the gold medal game after Doug Mientkiewicz hit a game winning home run against South Korea. The hit came just one week after he hit a grand slam to defeat the same team in pool play.

Spain ends soccer's record run:
The U.S. men's soccer team entered the Sydney games never advancing past the first round. Tuesday, Spain ended their dreams of gold with a 3-1 win in the semifinals. The U.S. will play for the bronze medal Friday night against Chile.

U.S. duo wins gold on beach:
Dain Blanton and Eric Fonoimoana upset the third-seeded Brazilian team in the men's beach volleyball finals to win the gold medal. With the win, the U.S. holds the only two gold medals in Olympic beach volleyball competition.

Schedule:

TV Schedule: Wednesday
NBC (Prime time):
• 6 to 11 p.m. — Cycling, Track & Field, Wrestling, Diving
• 11:41 p.m. to 2:11 a.m. — Basketball
MSNBC:
• 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. — Baseball (gold medal game), Tennis, Equestrian, Volleyball

Medal Watch:

	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
USA	25	15	23	63
CHN	22	14	14	50
RUS	17	14	20	51
AUS	12	20	12	44
FRA	12	13	7	32

Eye on A&M

How A&M athletes are faring in Sydney:
Softball: Shortstop Jennifer McFalls and the United States' softball team rallied from three straight losses to successfully defend their gold medal from the 1996 Atlanta games.
Volleyball: Stacy Sykora and the U.S. volleyball team defeated South Korea, 16-14 in the fifth game to reach the semifinals.

Tamporello's three goals earn Big 12 recognition

STAFF AND WIRE

Texas A&M forward Anne Tamporello stepped up her game in the Aggie soccer team's first week of action against conference opponents.

She scored three goals over the weekend, earning the Big 12's Offensive Player of the Week.

Tamporello's success came at just the right moment as the Aggies' offense, depleted by injury, needed a new leader.

Tamporello filled that bill, scoring a single goal against Texas Tech on Friday and then adding two more against Colorado to give A&M a 2-0 start in conference and protect their No. 10 national ranking.

She now has four goals on the sea-

son on only eleven shots.

Her only previous goal of the season came against North Texas when the Aggies rallied to an overtime victory.

"Anne has been a sparkplug the last few games," said A&M coach G. Guerrieri. "She has really made the most of her playing time and deserves the recognition."

A&M defeated Texas Tech in the conference opener on Friday, 3-0. Sunday the Aggies blew out Colorado, 6-1. A&M is 7-3 on the season, with its only losses coming to No. 1 North Carolina, No. 18 Florida State and No. 8 Penn State.

The Aggies next match is Friday when they host New Mexico at the Aggie Soccer Complex. Kickoff is scheduled for 7 p.m.



STUART VILLENUEVA/THE BATTALION
Texas A&M forward Anne Tamporello lead the Aggie soccer team to a 2-0 start in Big 12 action last weekend, scoring three goals and earning Big 12 Player of the Week honors.

U.S. softball team rallies to win gold medal after trio of losses

Former A&M player Jennifer McFalls scores game-winner in extra innings to seal second straight gold

BLACKTOWN, Australia (AP) — Do you believe in voodoo? The U.S. softball team sure does.

Beaten three times in a row before they "washed away" their bad luck, the American women completed a stunning comeback by edging Japan 2-1 Tuesday night in extra innings to win their second straight gold medal.

This time the luck was all on their side when a fly ball by Laura Berg popped out of the Japanese left fielder's glove moments before a downpour drenched the field.

With runners on first and second and one out in the eighth inning, Berg looped one

over the head of Shiori Koseki, playing shallow in the slick outfield in a light rain.

Koseki moved in a step, then backpedaled desperately, snared the ball in her glove then watched it fall out as she somersaulted.

By the time she hurled a desperation throw over the catcher's head, pinch-runner Jennifer McFalls had scored the game-winner.

"I saw her going back on it, and the ball just went out of her glove," Berg said. "We've been very unlucky in this whole tournament, but luck finally went our way."

The United States did not need luck while compiling a 112-game winning streak. But after losing an unprecedented three consecutive games to reach the brink of elimination, the players held a light-hearted "voodoo cleansing" in their athletes' village shower to rid themselves of their bad fortunes.

So powerful coming in, with 16 years as the No. 1 team in the world, the Americans' winning streak ended last week with a 2-1 loss to Japan in 11 innings — a game in which they stranded 20 batters. The United States went on to lose the next two games in extra innings as well.

But while losses showed the team was vulnerable, they also made the tournament more interesting and the Americans more determined.

Once it became clear they would not cruise to the title — as they have in every major international tournament since 1983 — the other teams seemed energized.

The United States won its last two games of the round-robin to squeak into the medal round. Then the Americans avenged two of their three first-round losses, against China and Australia, to reach the gold medal game.

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