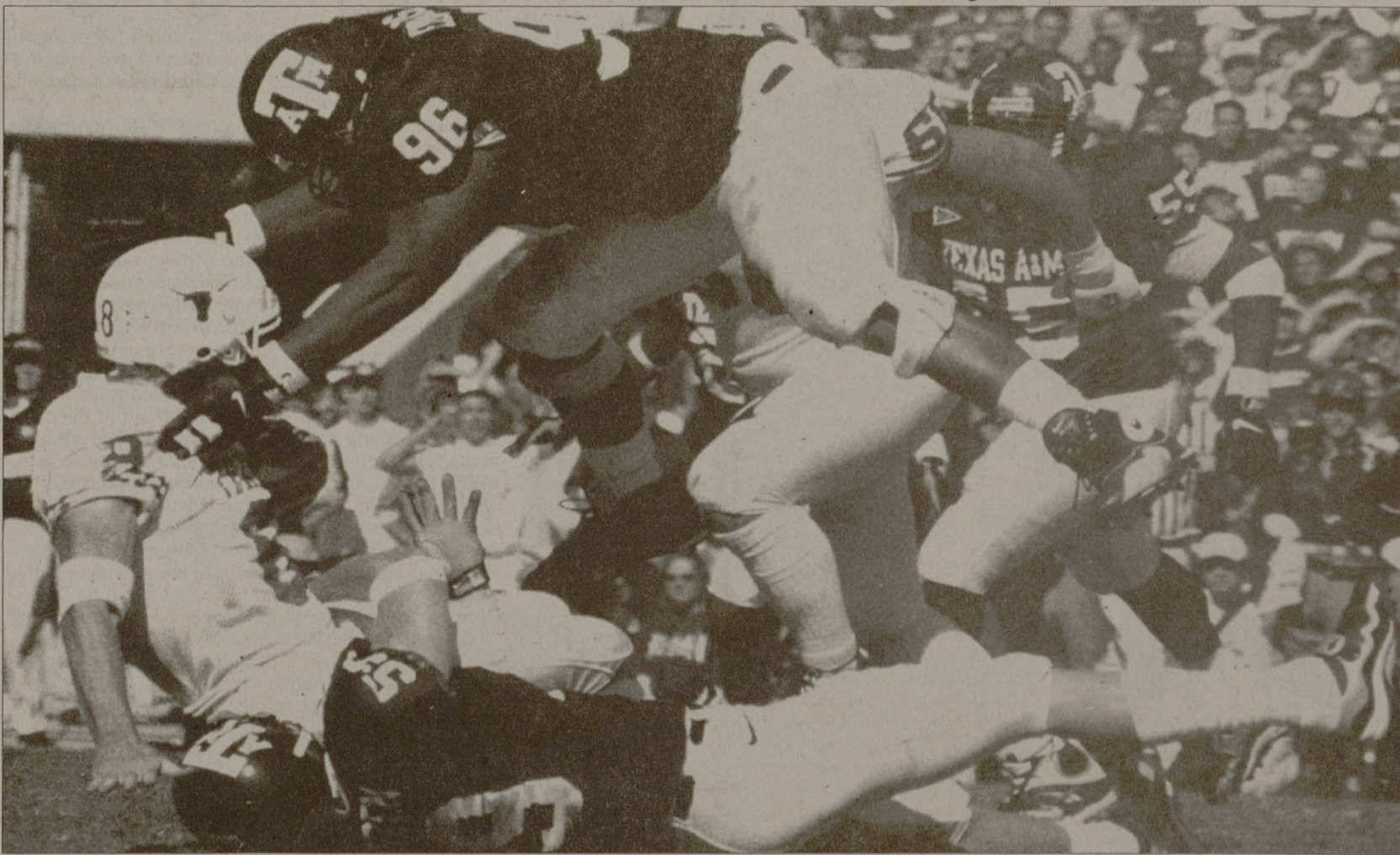


SPORTS

THE BATTALION

Rivalry Revived



FILE PHOTO/THE BATTALION

Texas A&M defensive lineman Ron Edwards and the Wrecking Crew defense put the pressure on Texas' highly touted freshman quarterback Chris Simms in 1999's 20-16 Aggies victory. This season Simms will draw the start again and the Wrecking Crew is just as ready.

UT talk provides extra incentive for Ags

(AP) — So much for a friendlier, kinder Texas A&M-Texas rivalry.

After a year of softened opposition caused by the 1999 Aggie Bonfire collapse at A&M that killed 12 and injured 27, Longhorn linebacker D.D. Lewis got things back on track when he observed that the best way to stop jumbo A&M fullback Ja'Mar Toombs was to hit him in the mouth.

Tuesday, it was the Aggies' turn. "Right back at him, let's go get hit in the mouth a few times," Toombs said. "I laughed at it. It's sort of like he's issuing a challenge and I gladly accept. I plan to get hit in the mouth but I don't think I'll fold."

Toombs came up big for the Aggies in last year's emotional-tinged game, rushing for 126 yards and scoring two touchdowns in a 20-16 victory for A&M. That was a year ago, when Toombs weighed 265 pounds.

At a slimmed-down, more agile 255, he rushed for 72 yards against No. 1 ranked Oklahoma last week and scored on a thrilling 27-yard run, carrying three Sooners into the end zone.

"He's (Lewis) trying to say last year was a fluke and it really wasn't," Toombs said. "I played a good game last year. I carried 37 times and I didn't fold."

Toombs' teammates thought it unwise to rattle their big fullback.

"I wouldn't be calling Ja'Mar out," said injured linebacker Jason Glenn. "He almost ran over me and I'm on crutches. You place your bets. There isn't anybody who can stop Ja'Mar right now. He's been on a rampage lately."

Coach R.C. Slocum read Lewis' comments to the team after Monday's practice and suggested a more subdued response.

"I've always had a philosophy, based on experience or my personality, before a game the guys who are the real winners are so concerned about game preparations they don't have time to talk a lot," Slocum said. "During a game, he's so concerned about doing his job he doesn't have time to talk. After the game he doesn't have to talk because he's won the game."

Slocum is hoping his philosophy will ring true again.



FILE PHOTO/THE BATTALION

Ja'Mar Toombs ran over the Texas defense for 126 yards in 1999's win.

Nation's third longest rivalry returns to old form for 2001

By BLAINE DIONNE
The Battalion

The defrosting of turkeys has begun, families are reuniting for the holidays and, capping off the impending Thanksgiving feeding frenzy, is the annual Texas A&M vs. Texas matchup.

While the No. 12 Longhorns (8-2, 6-1 Big 12) are ahead in the all-time series by 33 wins, the rivalry has become much more competitive recently.

The No. 22 Aggies (7-3, 5-2) have taken 12 of the last 16 meetings, winning last year's emotional Bonfire game, 20-16, in front of the then-largest crowd to witness a football game in Texas.

For a rivalry that has been punctuated over the years by the supposed hatred between the two schools, even bubbling over into pregame brawls at times, the last few meetings have been surprisingly civil.

At Austin in 1998, feelings were close to brotherly as Ricky Williams stole the show, breaking Tony Dorsett's all-time NCAA rushing record en route to winning the Heisman. In the week preceding that game, the Aggies all but conceded the record to Williams and ended up losing the game on a last-second field goal.

Last year, the aftermath of the 1999 Aggie Bonfire collapse put football into perspective, according to offensive lineman Chris Valletta.

"Last year put everything in perspective for both the schools, you know, what football really is. It's not a life or death thing," Valletta said. "The Bonfire tragedy changed that reality for all of us."

This year, things are starting to get back to normal, evidenced by Texas linebacker D.D. Lewis' comment about A&M fullback Ja'Mar Toombs.

Lewis told the Associated Press, "All you got to do is hit him in the mouth and he'll fold."

Toombs had little to say in return.



TOOMBS

"We'll just see what happens on the field," Toombs said.

Talking or not talking is special to both sides. This is the 107th time the Aggie horns have squared off in placing the rivalry at No. 3 in football's all-time matchups.

This year's game pits the No. 1 scoring defense against the conference's top scoring offense in the Longhorn State Series.

Texas running back Mitchell leads the conference in purpose yards, averaging 100 per contest and drawing attention to that other famous Texas player, Ricky Williams.

"Not to take anything away from Ricky, because he was a great player but I think Hodges might be quicker to the corner," said linebacker Harold Mitchell. "Mitchell's a real good player."

"All you got to do is hit him (Ja'Mar Toombs) in the mouth and he'll fold."

University of Texas

"We'll just see what happens on the field."

—Ja'Mar Toombs

Texas A&M

Aggies make final bid for tourney with holiday stretch

Longhorn rivalry provides emotional finish to season

By BREE HOLZ
The Battalion

The longtime University of Texas-Texas A&M rivalry will continue Saturday night when the Aggie volleyball team hosts the Longhorns at G. Rollie White Coliseum in its final home match of the season. First serve is set for 7 p.m.

Seniors Christy Clark, Claire Harvey and Heather Marshall will be honored Saturday night when they play their last match at G. Rollie White.

"I'm ready to leave it all on the floor," Marshall said. "I just want to have fun and finish strong and try to enjoy these last few weeks of volleyball."

Clark said she is excited to finish her career against Texas at home.

"It's pretty much the icing on the cake," she said. "Also, I think it's going to help the team out because of all the emotion that's going into this particular match. I'm really looking forward to it."

Texas holds an 8-10 Big 12 record

and sits in seventh place in the conference. The Longhorns have not won in College Station in the last two seasons.

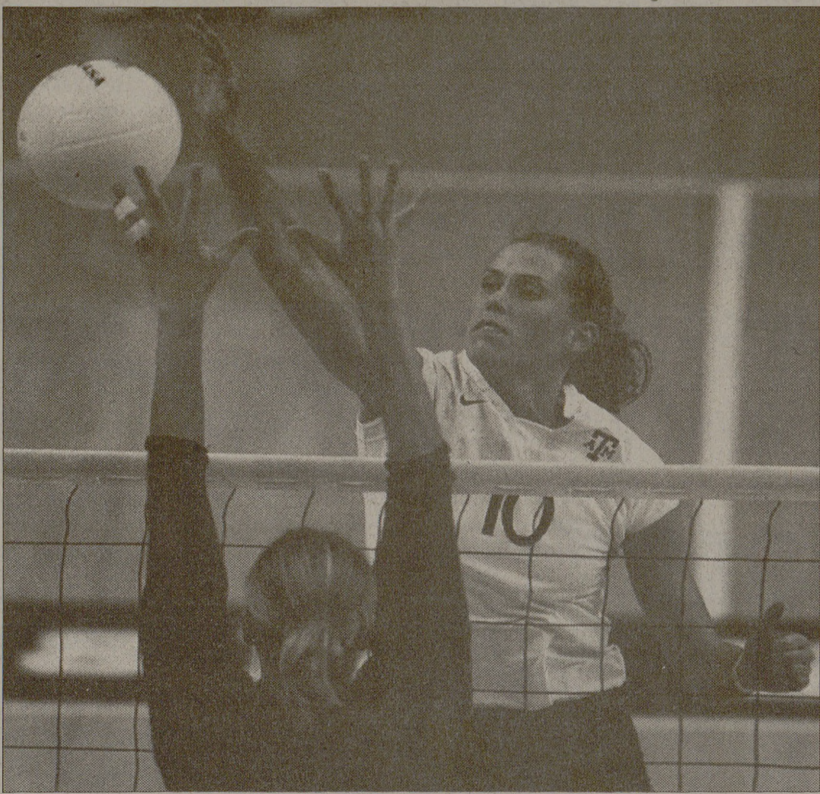
"Texas has a young team, but they will come armed," said A&M coach Laurie Corbelli. "But anything can happen, and we're going to have to play very well to beat them."

The Longhorns and Aggies have battled 68 times dating back to 1974. Texas leads the series, 53-15, and defeated the Aggies last season in Austin.

"We're definitely going to be fired up for this match because it's Texas," said outside hitter Michelle Cole. "It's going to be a battle."

A&M defeated the Longhorns in Austin earlier this season, 3-1, for the first time since 1979.

"We're playing with a lot of confidence right now, and playing at home is going to be great," Cole said. "We've been playing very consistently, and we've been focusing on our own game."



FILE PHOTO/THE BATTALION

Texas A&M senior Heather Marshall will play her last two regular season games in G. Rollie White against Texas and Kansas State during the holiday.

Kansas State offers chance to rebound from loss to Tech

By BREE HOLZ
The Battalion

After a crucial loss to Texas Tech on Saturday, the No. 25 Texas A&M volleyball team will battle No. 24 Kansas State University today at G. Rollie White Coliseum at 7 p.m.

Kansas State boasts a 14-4 Big 12 record and a 20-6 overall record and sits in second place in the conference behind No. 1 Nebraska. A&M sits in fourth place and holds a 12-6 league record and a 17-8 overall mark.

In the Preseason Big 12 Coaches Poll, the Wildcats were picked to finish in fourth place and currently hold a six-match winning streak.

Kansas State defeated A&M earlier this season, 3-2, in Manhattan, Kan. However, the Wildcats have never won in College Station.

"A&M is known for playing well at home, and I think that's really going to help us," A&M coach Laurie Corbelli said. "But Kansas State is going to come in tough and ready to get a win."

Corbelli said the team's confidence has not been tainted by the loss to Tech.

"The team is not discouraged," Corbelli said. "Tech played really well in volleyball, so we have to be down about. The team is confident and they've got a lot of talent."

Kansas State was victorious at the University of Colorado on Saturday, 3-0. Outside hitter Lisa Clark was awarded Big 12 Player of the Week because of her contribution to the Wildcats' win over Colorado.

"I'm expecting a great performance tomorrow night," Corbelli said. "We're going to have a great defense and serve tonight."

Outside hitter Christy Clark said the team will have to focus on the game to be successful.

"Kansas State is going to be really strong, and we really need Clark said. "We've just got to go out there and do what we're going to do. It's a lot easier to win at home, in front of our home crowd."

Congratulations Graduating Seniors!
Bring this ad in for a free gift when you order announcements or purchase a cap & gown.

ROTHER'S BOOKSTORES

Eclipse HAIR DESIGN 694-9755
Color Correction Specialist

118 Walton Dr.
Across from Main Entrance to Texas A&M

IF YOU ORDERED a 2001 Aggieland and will not be on campus next fall to pick it up, you can have it mailed. To have your yearbook for the '00-01 school year mailed, stop by 015 McDonald Building or telephone 845-2613 (credit cards only) between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday and a \$7 mailing and handling fee.

Cash, Check, Visa, MasterCard, Discover and American Express accepted.

AGGIELAND 2001