

## Ags fall short to Huskers

By DOUG FUENTES  
THE BATTALION

At the start of its game against No. 2 Nebraska on Sunday, the No. 17 Texas A&M volleyball team sent a shot out across the bow of the Cornhuskers.

By winning the first game of the match the Aggies handed Nebraska its first game loss in Big 12 play.

The Cornhuskers picked themselves up off the mat and showed why they are the defending national champions by taking the next three games from the Aggies to win the match, 25-30, 30-24, 31-29, 30-24.

The Aggies (12-3, 5-2 in Big 12) lost their third match at home this season and second in conference play. Nebraska (15-1, 8-0 in Big 12) won its fourth-straight against the Aggies.

"I've seen this team do it all year long," said Nebraska coach John Cook. "They come back and win those tight games. They wear teams down. It was hard for A&M to play at the level they played at in the first game for two-and-a-half hours."

"We did it last year too," said A&M volleyball coach Laurie Corbelli. "We played a great first game, and we caught a great team off-guard and it makes them make a lot of adjustments. It's tough to sustain that. I think we can do a better job of trying, especially in game two. We had a major letdown. That's just a mystery of sports."

The Aggies rushed to an 8-1 lead thanks to two kills by senior outside hitter Erin Lechler. A&M stretched the lead to 19-11 on a kill by senior outside hitter Brandi Mount. Nebraska scratched its way back to cut the lead to three at 26-23 on a hitting error by Lechler.

A&M closed out the game by taking four of the next five points, sealing the game on a kill by freshman middle blocker Melissa Munsch.

The Aggies had a letdown in the second game, falling behind 27-17, before a kill by Nebraska's Anna Schrad closed the game and tied the match at one.

In the third game, the Aggies came out with the same fire they showed in

the first, jumping out to an 8-4 lead on a kill by Mount. Three straight service aces by junior middle blocker A.D. Achilefu pushed it to an 11-4 lead, seemingly putting the Cornhuskers back on their heels.

Nebraska did not waiver, promptly going on a 10-3 run to tie the game at 14 on a kill by Laura Pilakowski. Both teams traded the lead until Nebraska took a 28-26 lead on an error by Achilefu.

The Aggies did not go down without a fight, as two kills by Mount and another by Achilefu gave A&M a game point at 29-28.

Nebraska responded with three straight points of its own, taking the game on a kill by Amber Holmquist.

After the third game, Nebraska put the Aggies away in the fourth. A&M did manage to close the gap to 26-23 on a service ace by Munsch, but Nebraska scored four of the last five points to win the match.

Lechler led the Aggies with 20 kills but had 15 errors and managed only a .096 hitting percentage. Mount added 19 kills and Munsch chipped in 15.

## COLORADO

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Colorado defenders to pull down his second touchdown catch of the game. The catch gave the Aggies a 14-6 lead.

Colorado found the endzone with only 12 seconds on the clock before halftime, when Ochs found wide receiver Derek McCoy on a slant across the middle to cut the A&M lead to 14-12.

McCoy found an opening again on the two-point conversion, tying the game at 14.

"We needed somebody to step up and make a play, and Derek certainly did," said Colorado head coach Gary Barnett. "Somebody makes the play, and the game comes down to that, generally."

The Buffaloes capitalized on the Aggies' third quarter offensive woes, connecting on another field goal, this time from 39 yards.

Colorado added to its 17-14 lead on their next drive, moving 67-yards in 10 plays to score on a 2-yard run by running back Cortlen Johnson. The score marked the first time the Aggies have been scored upon in the final quarter this season.

After Colorado ran five consecutive running plays later in the game, the Buffaloes were forced to pass on third-and-nine.

Taking over at their own 42-yard line after a Wes Bautovich interception, the Aggies struck quickly, covering the 58 yards in two plays on passes from Farris to Murphy. Farris found Murphy on the second play for the 36 yard score, cutting the Buffalo lead to three points with five minutes left.

The Aggies looked determined on their next drive — then disaster struck.

After moving the ball to the Colorado 35-yard line with ease, Farris fumbled and Colorado wrapped up the Buffaloes' 31-21 victory.

"Colorado gambled and won," Slocum said. "This kind of game is hard on a team. The challenge is to go back and get recharged to play another tough opponent next week."



STUART VILLANUEVA • THE BATTALION

Senior outside hitter Michelle Cole digs a ball during the Aggies' loss to the No. 2 Nebraska Cornhuskers Sunday.

## SPORTS IN BRIEF

### A&M finishes second at KSU

The Texas A&M equestrian team opened its season with a second place finish in its first western show of the year.

Senior Quincy Cahill led the Aggies, earning reserve high point honors with a second place finish in open horse showmanship and a third place finish in reining.

Sophomore Amanda Ratliff was the only rider to point out of the class and advanced to the regional championships to be held in March in the intermediate horsemanship category.

## Cross country defends titles

By MAYA THOMAS  
THE BATTALION

For the second year in a row, the Texas A&M cross country team dominated the Texas A&M Invitational, defending its team titles and walking away with top honors.

Saturday's chilly winds and drizzling rain may have dampened the turf at the A&M golf course but did not dampen the performance of the A&M cross country team.

The No. 18 women's team made an impressive showing, with A&M graduate student Kathy Newberry and All-American Melissa Gulli finishing first and

second respectively, on the 6,000-meter course. Both Gulli and Newberry ran unattached.

Newberry finished with a time of 22:05 and Gulli, who was redshirted this season, finished with a very close time of 22:33. Gulli was trying to defend her title from the 2000 season at the A&M Invitational.

Katherine King finished ninth overall with a time of 23:28 and scored sixth in the team race. Scorers for the A&M team were Staci Cusimano, eighth; Ginger Beran, ninth; Kristy Bonn, 10th; Sarah Damarodas, 15th.

Saturday's victory was the A&M women's third consecutive win at the A&M Invitational.

The men's team clenched the

title for the second straight year, with junior stand-out Juan De Bastos winning at 26:09 on the five-mile course.

With his first place finish, De Bastos became the first A&M runner since 1996 to win the men's division at the Invitational.

"Near the finish I was thinking I've got to win it," De Bastos said. "The conditions were really tough, but everyone had to run the same course and had the same opportunity. I felt like I ran a really good race."

All of the men's team finished in the top 25 in the team race: Brandon Beasley, 10th; Tommy Bonn, 19th; Jayme D' Agnolo, 22nd; Andrew Cook, 23rd.



ANDY HANDCOCK • THE BATTALION  
A&M's Juan De Bastos crosses the finish line in first place on Saturday.

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