

Ags roll over Kansas

By BRIAN RUFF
THE BATTALION

The No. 13 Texas A&M volleyball team held off an upset-minded Kansas Jayhawk team 3-1 Wednesday night at G. Rollie White Coliseum to record its third consecutive win.

"We are really happy about this win," said A&M volleyball coach Laurie Corbelli. "Teams are out to beat us. We are ranked thirteenth in the country, and we know we are the hunted. Every match we do win is a big bonus."

The win was the Aggies' (21-4, 14-3 Big 12) third in a row, and they also have won nine out of their last 10.

The Aggies and the Jayhawks battled early on during the first game, but with the score knotted at 12 a piece, the Aggies began to pull away behind freshman outside hitter Melissa Munsch.

Munsch dominated the first game against the Jayhawks, pounding eight kills to help A&M tally nine-straight points to pull away from the Kansas squad. Munsch pounded three-straight kills during the Aggies' streak, and also played well defensively, posting three blocks in the first frame.

"I was really connecting well with Jenna [Moscovic] tonight," Munsch said. "I was just going up and thinking that I was going to get the ball and put it away. I had total confidence in our team knowing that I can go up swinging at any ball and they are going to be there to cover me if I get blocked."

In the second game, the Aggies started right where they left off, jumping out to take a 3-0 lead. Kansas was not able to recover falling behind, 20-10. The Jayhawks battled back to within four points at 11-7, but Munsch gave the Aggies a spark again, pounding a ball that was sitting just above the net back into the Kansas front line.

Soon after Munsch's kill, the Aggies went on a six-point run, and the Jayhawks were unable to recover. Senior outside hitter Erin Lechler ended the game with a kill, giving the Aggies a 30-20 win.

A&M hit extremely well in the first two games, hitting .357 and .351 to hang on to their lead.

In the third game, Kansas found its groove, and took the opening point to claim its first lead of the match.

The Jayhawks did not relinquish their lead by capitalizing on nine errors by the Aggies. Kansas took a nine-point

lead 27-18, but the Aggies mounted a comeback and closed the Kansas lead to just four points, 28-24.

"It was frustrating to know that by the time they reached 27-28 points we started to feel that rhythm again," said senior outside hitter Erin Lechler. "It actually helped us going into game four, keeping that momentum."

The Jayhawks held on to defeat the Aggies, despite their late attempt at a comeback. Kansas senior middle blocker Kylie Thomas connected on a kill to end the game, 30-25.

"We kind of lost our rhythm," Corbelli said. "Our passing started to take a dive, and our hitters had two blockers on them every time."

The Aggies were not able to keep up the hot hitting of the first two games in the third frame, hitting just .125.

A&M came back in the fourth game and jumped out to a 4-0 lead and were lead in by sophomore middle blocker Tara Pulaski, who had five kills in the fourth.

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— Laurie Corbelli
A&M volleyball coach

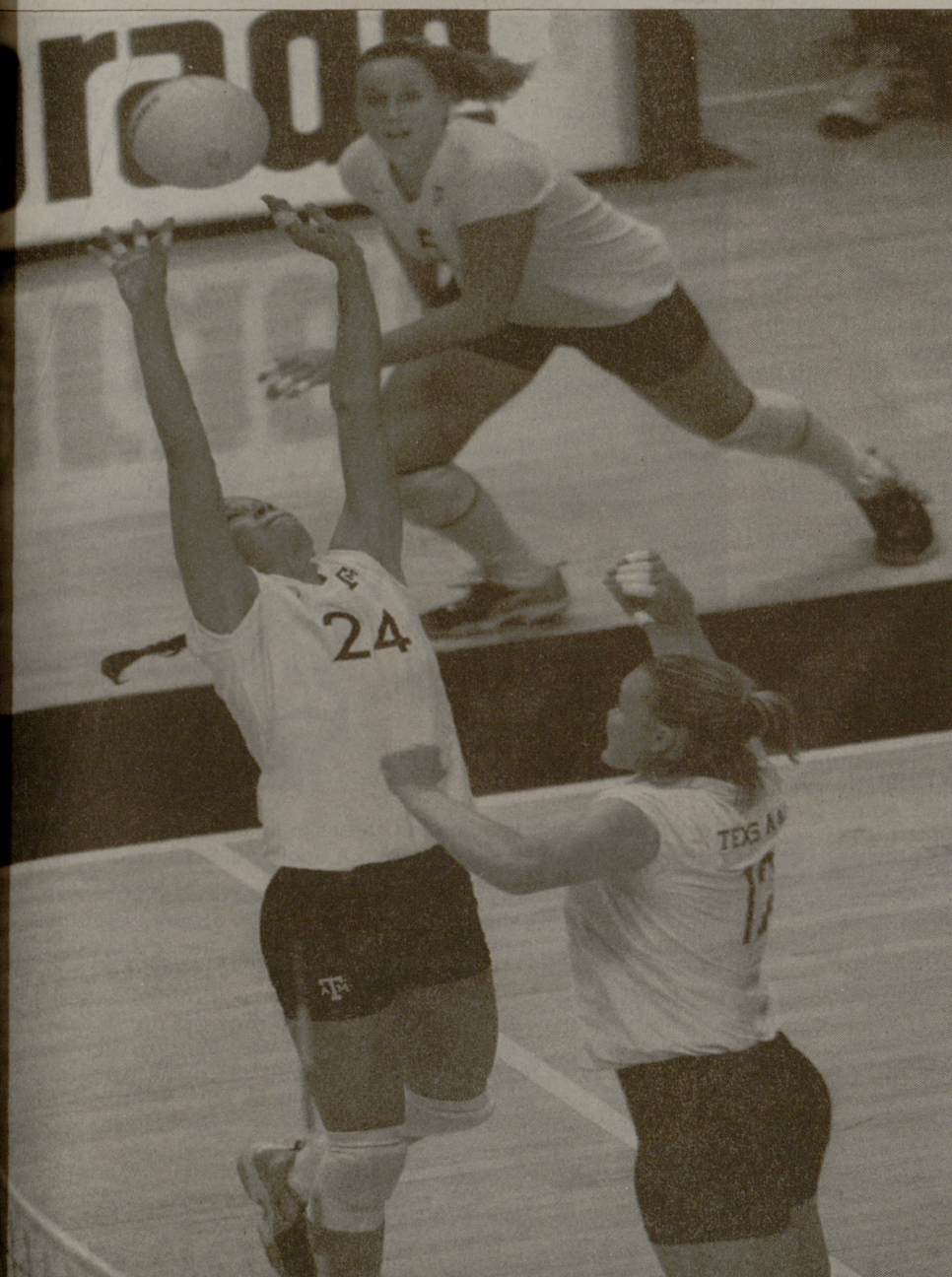
"When we pass well and are really focused on getting the ball up to Jenna [Moscovic], our offense is really hard to stop," Corbelli said.

Kansas committed 10 errors in the final game, handing the Aggies, who hit the ball considerably better in the fourth game, a 30-19 win.

Moscovic led the Aggies with 47 assists and Lechler added 16 kills. Senior outside hitter Michelle Cole had 24 digs against the Jayhawks, moving her into fourth place all-time for career digs.

The Aggies will be back in action Saturday when they travel to Manhattan, Kan., to take on the No. 22 Kansas State Wildcats.

"We have out-hit them (Kansas State), out-blocked them and out-dug them and still lost in the past," Corbelli said. "We are going to have to be emotionally and mentally prepared for a battle."

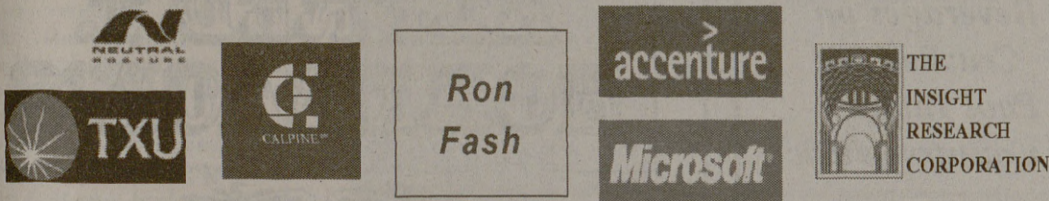


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Senior setter Jenna Moscovic sets the ball behind her to senior outside hitter Brandi Mount who advances toward the net. Moscovic had 47 assists during the Aggies 3-1 win.

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