

Ags stunned by Horns

By Dallas Shipp
THE BATTALION

The No. 23 Aggie women's tennis team headed into Wednesday's match against the No. 11 Longhorns with visions of its first Big 12 championship. The University of Texas dashed those visions, beating the Aggies 6-1 in front of 501 fans, the largest crowd ever at a Texas A&M women's tennis match.

"It was a great crowd, and they were into the match from the start," said A&M head coach Bobby Kleinecke. "I am sorry we didn't give them a win."

After being swept in the doubles for the first time this season, the Aggies headed into singles play already down 1-0.

"I was disappointed in the doubles," Kleinecke said. "I felt like we didn't play well, and that was a big part of the match. We came out and gave them that point, and all of a sudden your backs are against the wall to start the

match. We have to come out and play better in doubles."

The Aggies are now 0-4 when losing the doubles point.

In singles play, the leadership provided by the seniors from Texas proved to be the difference in the match and gave the Longhorns wins on courts 1-4.

"I am always ready for matches like these," said Texas senior Vladka Uhlirova. "We just proved we are tough. It's about hitting the right shots at the right time under pressure."

While the Horns were led by solid play at the top of the lineup, Aggie sophomore Jessica Roland extended her losing skid to five straight matches against Uhlirova on court No. 1.

"[Roland] is starting to get down on herself, and that is a tough thing to come out of. It's just going to take a match to get her there," Kleinecke said.

In addition to Roland's struggles, A&M was without the play of senior

Martina Nedorostova, who sat out her singles match due to a back injury she re-injured in her match against Kansas State on Saturday. Nedorostova is listed as day-to-day and may be able to play against Kansas in the regular season finale on Friday night.

The lone bright spot for the Aggies was the play of sophomore Roberta Spencer who moved up to No. 5 to face the Longhorns' Lindsey Blau after Nedorostova was forced to sit her match out. Spencer won the match in straight sets giving the Aggies their only point of the match.

"I was happy with the results and feel good all around about the way I played," Spencer said. "I just went out there and played off of adrenaline and heart. It was disappointing to lose the title. Hopefully we will get a chance to play them again here at home in the Big 12 tournament."



STUART VILLANUEVA • THE BATTALION
Texas A&M's Jessica Roland returns a shot during the Aggies' 6-1 loss to UT Wednesday night. The loss eliminated A&M from the Big 12 regular season championship.

Olsen magic returns, 2-1

By True Brown
THE BATTALION

Olsen magic made a dramatic return to Aggieland on Wednesday night, thanks in part to two errors by Southwest Texas State in the bottom of the ninth inning. Trailing 1-0 heading into the final frame, the Aggies scored two runs with no outs to earn their 30th win of the season, 2-1.

The win capped a solid performance on the mound for the Aggies (30-13, 9-6 Big 12) by starting pitcher Steven Ponder, who allowed two hits and one run while striking out 11 batters in six innings. Ponder's 11 strikeouts were one short of his career high.

"Steven Ponder stole the show," said A&M head coach Mark Johnson. "He started to throw strikes and got into a pretty good groove, and when he's in a groove he has a real biting breaking pitch,

and he is good. This was definitely his best outing of the spring."

Catcher Justin Pouk started the rally by ripping a double down the left field line off of Southwest Texas State (25-17) reliever Michael Gultz. Left fielder David Evans followed Pouk's hit by blooming a 1-0 pitch into right field and scoring Eric Reed, who was pinch-running for Pouk.

Reed's run prompted SWT coach Ty Harrington to bring in Dickie Gonzalez to relieve Gultz.

With Evans on first base and no outs, the Bobcat meltdown began. A&M first baseman Neal Stephenson laid a bunt down the third base line, but SWT third baseman Marc Coles over-ran the ball, allowing Evans to go to second base and Stephenson to take first.

The next hitter for A&M, Ryan

A&M softball comes up empty

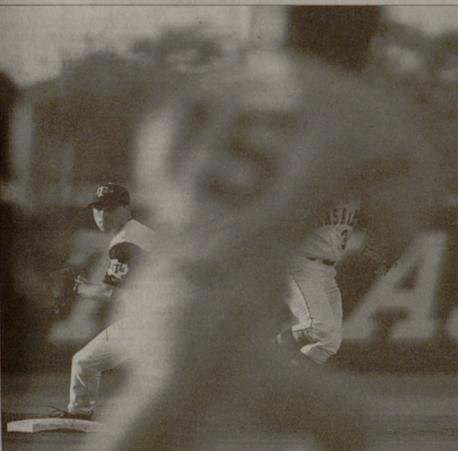
By Micala Proesch
THE BATTALION

Softball is a game of inches where every play counts. Players cannot afford to let up for even one pitch, as good teams will pounce on each mistake and take advantage of every opportunity.

The Texas A&M softball team held the short end of the stick as Baylor capitalized on three A&M errors to blank the Aggies, 3-0, at the Aggie Softball Complex Wednesday night. With the loss, the Aggies fell to 33-12 overall and 6-7 in Big 12 play, while the Lady Bears (42-13, 9-5 Big 12) continued to roll through their Cinderella season, setting a new school record with nine conference wins this season.

The game remained scoreless until the sixth inning.

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JOHN LIVAS • THE BATTALION
A&M second baseman Ty Garner throws to first during the Aggies' come-from-behind 2-1 win over Southwest Texas State.

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