

## Redemption is key for Aggs in Big 12 tourney

### A&M men open against Colorado

By Kevin Espenlaub  
THE BATTALION

When the Big 12 men's tennis tournament begins Friday afternoon at the A&M Varsity Tennis Center, there will be an interesting story line waiting for the third-seeded Aggies (18-5, 5-2).

If they can advance past their first round match against sixth-seeded University of Colorado (12-10, 2-5), their chance for redemption could come as early as Saturday when the Aggies could meet the second-seeded University of Texas (20-2, 6-1). The possible contest would be a rematch of last week's match in Austin that saw the Aggies lose to the Longhorns, 4-3.

"We played Colorado a few weeks ago and beat them 6-1," said A&M freshman Lester Cook. "We are not overlooking them, but we are pretty confident that we can beat Colorado, and we're definitely looking forward to a rematch against Texas."

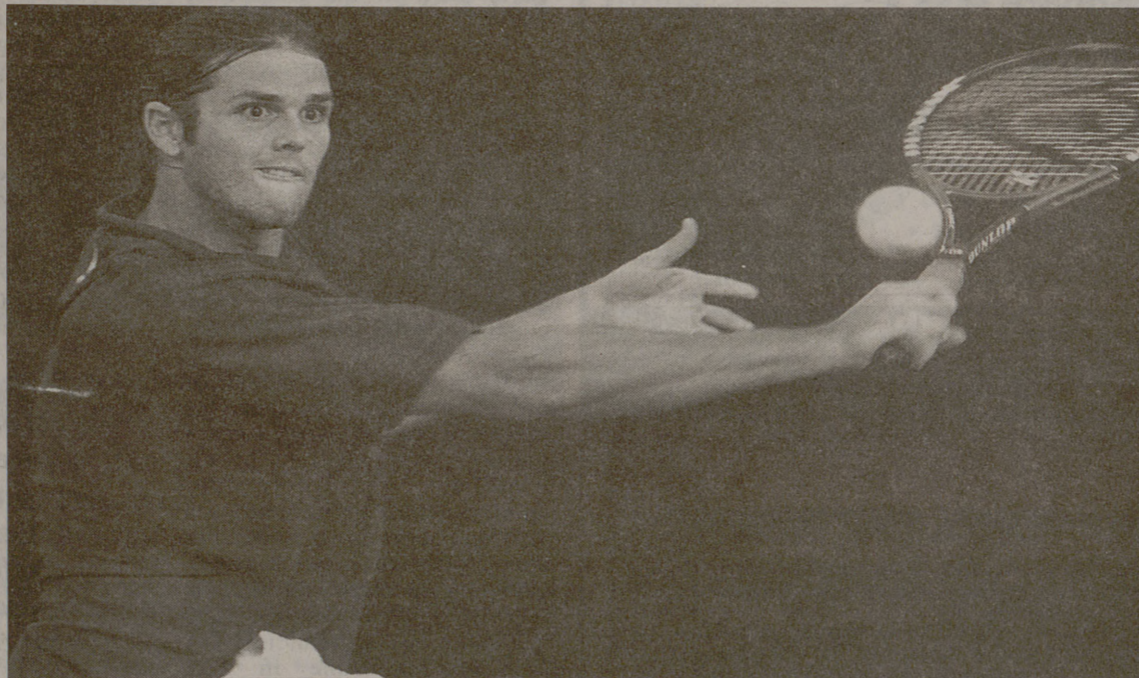
Of the eight Big 12 schools with men's tennis programs, Texas holds the top three seeds, led by Baylor University (22-1, 7-0), which will begin action against Oklahoma at 10 a.m. Friday. The Bears claimed a 4-3 victory in College Station on Saturday over the Aggies to claim the Big 12 regular season title.

The winner of the tournament will have to win three matches in as many days, and the Aggies hope to blow through Colorado and Texas to earn a chance to take on Baylor in the finals on Sunday.

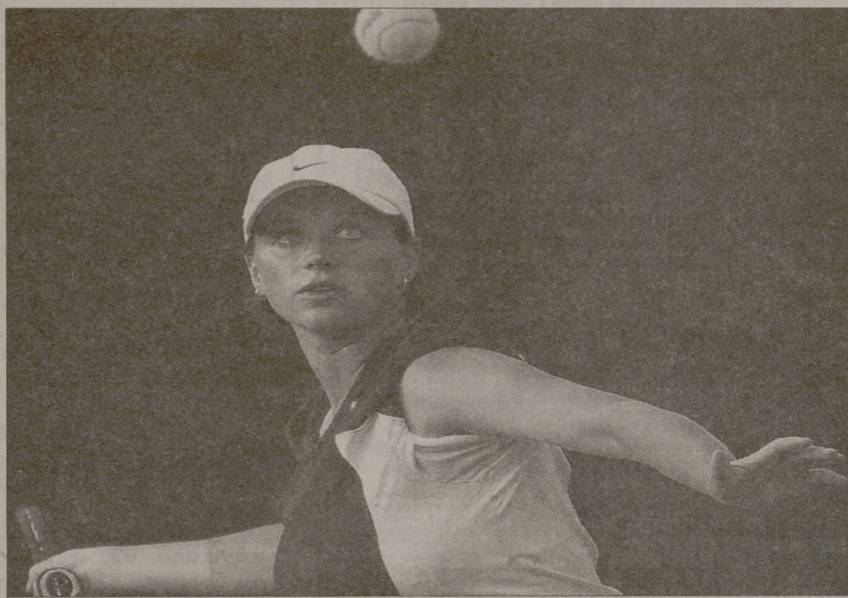
"We've addressed as a team the fact that we have to take one match at a time this weekend," said A&M head coach Tim Cass. "We're planning on making a few adjustments, in particular with our doubles lineup, coming into this tournament, and hopefully in those losses to Texas and Baylor, we've been able to learn some things and the outcome will be different if we meet them again this week."

The Aggies play at 4 p.m. on Friday against Colorado and, with a victory, would be set to play

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Above: Texas A&M senior Keith From slices a backhand against Baylor on Saturday at the Varsity Tennis Center. From has been battling injuries for the last two weeks, but is expected to play this weekend in the Big 12 tournament. The Aggies are defending tournament champions. Right: A&M senior Olivia Karlikova prepares to return a volley against Kansas on Friday. Karlikova and the A&M women's tennis team will search for the first women's Big 12 tournament title in school history.



PHOTOS BY STUART VILLANUEVA • THE BATTALION

### Women take aim at championship

By Dallas Shipp  
THE BATTALION

The No. 23 Texas A&M women's tennis team is on a mission this weekend as it hosts the 2002 Big 12 tournament. Anything less than the tournament title will not be good enough.

After losing to No. 10 Texas in a regular season matchup, the Aggies watched as the hope of their first Big 12 championship slipped through their hands. However, they will get a second chance at the Longhorns in the Big 12 tournament finals if both teams advance.

The University of Texas enters the tournament with the No. 1 seed after winning the regular season title and will face the winner of No. 8 Colorado (11-11, 4-7) and No. 9 Texas Tech (9-12, 4-7) in their first match of what should be a stroll to the championship match on Sunday.

The Aggies enter the tournament with the No. 2 seed and will face the winner of No. 7 Oklahoma (14-7, 4-7) and No. 10 Nebraska (13-8, 3-8), who has struggled in Big 12 play this season.

"It's a big advantage to play No. 2," said senior Olivia Karlikova. "It gives you a better opportunity to make it to the finals and get another chance at Texas, which is what everyone wants."

Although the Aggies should have no problem advancing to the finals against Texas on Sunday, they know how important each match is and are not looking past anyone.

"We have to take it one match at a time," said A&M senior Majorie Terburgh. "We cannot look ahead to playing Texas on Sunday. Every team is dangerous."

The Aggies are looking to advance to the finals for the first time since 1997 and are the only team in the field with a legitimate shot at knocking off the Longhorns, who have won every Big 12 title since the conference's inception in 1997.

The tournament was moved from Lubbock earlier this season after Texas Tech was unable to finish its new facilities by a given date. This is the


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