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4B

Monday, April 29, 2002

Aggies sweep two from Missouri

By Micala Proesch
THE BATTALION

The Texas A&M Aggies knew they had to get back on the horse this weekend. Not only did they get back on, but they rode the horse right over Missouri to take both games in their season finale.

The Aggies finished the regular season strong, as they rallied to overtake Missouri, 6-1, Sunday after blanking it 7-0 on Saturday. A&M (36-14, 9-9 Big 12) has secured the fifth seed in the Big 12 tournament, which kicks off this weekend in Oklahoma City.

The Aggies bounced back from two tough road losses to No. 4 Nebraska and No. 14 Texas to dominate the Missouri Tigers. The Aggies rode the long ball to victory on Saturday, as sophomore right fielder Sherah Atkins drove a grand slam over the left-field fence, and junior catcher Selena Collins added two more solo shots, bringing her season total to 14.

Collins added a single to go 3-for-3 in the game, and her 14 home runs have her tied with Oklahoma's Leah Gulla for the lead in the Big 12.

Sunday, A&M broke the scoreless tie in the fourth inning when senior second baseman Lisa Klam lined a double to right center to score junior shortstop Crystal Martin. Missouri responded in the sixth as leadoff batter Sara Vassmer slapped a ball to second base and was safe on a high throw by Klam that pulled first baseman Kelly Ferguson's foot off the bag. Melanie Fisher lined a shot off the right-field wall to plate Vassmer and even the score.

In the bottom of the sixth, the



ALISSA HOLLIMON • THE BAT
Texas A&M's Lisa Klam slides safely into home plate under catcher Mary McGrave during the Aggies 6-1 win Sunday.

Aggies had the bases loaded with two outs and senior Kelly Ferguson up to bat. Ferguson drew a walk for a run, which began a five-run rally for the Ags.

"We started to feel a bit of pressure when they tied the ballgame like that," said A&M head coach Jo Evans. "For Ferguson to get that walk and show such discipline at the plate was crucial for us."

This game marked the end of the home careers of four Aggie seniors. LaToya Rose, Lauren Ripple, Klam and Ferguson took their positions on the field for the last time at the Aggie Softball Complex.

Klam, a four-year starter for the Aggies and this year's lead-off batter, captained the team for the past three years and felt a little emotional to know that

her time on the field was over. "It felt like my first time out there all over again," said. "With all the nerves, everything, it was definitely a little emotional."

Evans praised Klam as the hardest worker (she has coached in (her) 17 years head coaching).

Ferguson was last year's team MVP and leaves with a career batting average above .300.

"She absolutely loves the game," Evans said. "She wants to win, and I love the kids like that in our program."

The Aggies head to Oklahoma City Friday morning to take on the Baylor Bears in their first game of the Big 12 tournament. First pitch is set for 11 a.m.



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