

# Soccer team looks to keep title hopes alive

By Troy Miller  
THE BATTALION

The No. 6 Texas A&M women's soccer team has continued to overcome challenges on the road in the Big 12. Since Sept. 29, the Aggies (12-3-1, 6-0-1) have had only one game at the Aggie Soccer Complex.

After compiling an 11-game unbeaten streak since Sept. 15, the Aggies are thinking home sweet home when they take on the University of Missouri (10-4-2, 4-2-1) and the University of Kansas (11-3-2, 4-2-1) at the Aggie Soccer Complex.

"The whole energy just stepping on the field at home with the fans," said sophomore forward Emma Smith. "Just being on your field gives you so much confidence."

A&M women's soccer head coach G. Guerrieri enjoys the extra time he has with his team before home games.

"For one thing we get to train three times this week," Guerrieri said. "Just the fact of getting one more day of practice and playing in front of the 12th Man is a big thing. We've been playing in front of record crowds at other people's places so it's been reasonably hostile environments."

One such environment is the University of Oklahoma, which was previously third in the Big 12. The Aggies used a late goal by Smith in the 84th minute to capture a hard-fought 1-0 win.

"It is a very big win," said senior defender Jessica Martin. "We always have a lot of trouble with that team. We seem to always meet up with them in Big 12 tournament play and it was a really big win to beat them on their field."

The Aggies are used to overcoming obstacles during their Big 12 run this season. A&M came away with its first ever win against Nebraska in Lincoln, and came from behind to tie a tough

Baylor squad in Waco.

"Every time you step over another obstacle and you learn from that experience, you take one more giant step towards being a champion," Guerrieri said. "You're not handed a championship. You have to overcome various degrees of adversity to get to that end."

"We know now that we can't overlook anything because all kinds of different challenges have been posed to us."

Missouri and Kansas have pulled into a third-place tie in the Big 12 standings. The Aggies hope home-field advantage helps, as they need two victories to stake a claim to the Big 12 title.

"It's nice to play at home again," Martin said. "Especially against (Missouri and Kansas) because they're very good teams. It'll help having the crowd behind us and not having to travel."

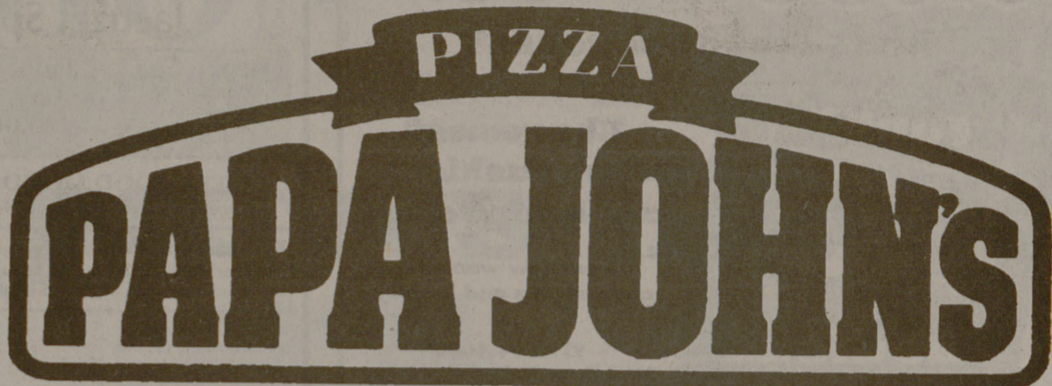
Missouri comes into the match with the Aggies on a three-game win streak. Sophomore forward Melissa Peabody leads the Tigers with 10 goals and eight assists, and has fired the ball 82 times at the net this season.

"Missouri has always been a real dynamic attacking team," Guerrieri said. "They're scoring a huge percentage of their shots. Kansas poses big defensive issues and they have a couple of very crafty attacking players."

Missouri and Kansas pose two more obstacles to an Aggie team that has overcome more challenges than any team in recent memory.

"Being the team that we are," Smith said, "when it gets down to the last 15 minutes and we're tied 0-0 you just don't want to win for yourself but for the team, for the fans, and for everybody. It creates a lot of emotion and you go out there and get the job done."

A&M will play Missouri Friday at 7 p.m. and Kansas on Sunday at 1 p.m.



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**NEWS IN BRIEF**

**Heisman coming to campus Saturday**

The Heisman Trophy will be in College Station for the Texas A&M-Nebraska football game on Saturday.

The 2002 Heisman Trophy Tour, presented by Suzuki, will be outside G. Rolie White Coliseum at 3 p.m. where fans will have a chance to take their picture with the trophy.

All of the fan pictures taken with the trophy will be viewable on the tour's Web site, www.voteheisman.com.

The trophy has been making stops at different games all season to see Heisman candidates, and will be here this week to see Nebraska running back Ddraan Diedrick.

The Heisman Trophy will be awarded to the nation's top player Dec. 14 in New York.

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