

SPORTS

THE BATTALION

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A&M seeks revenge in Big 12 matchup at home with CU

By True Brown
THE BATTALION

When the University of Colorado came to G. Rollie White Coliseum last season, the result was not pretty for the Texas A&M volleyball team.

The Buffaloes handed A&M a 3-2 loss, its first conference defeat of the season, and left the Aggies (14-7, 6-6) with a bitter taste in their mouths.

Colorado repeated the favor earlier this season in Boulder, winning another 3-2 match to give A&M its first conference loss again.

The revenge-minded Aggies will get their chance at redemption Saturday, when they host the Buffaloes (11-11, 5-7) at 2 p.m.

The memory hasn't left the Aggies and even prompted some mild trash talking from A&M players after Wednesday's victory against Oklahoma.

"They came here last year and won, and we haven't forgotten," said senior middle blocker A.D. Achilefu. "Get ready. They're in our minds."

In the match earlier this season, the last three games were decided by a total of just eight points, as the teams were almost even in kills, assists and digs. A&M outhit Colorado, but it was not enough to pull out the victory.

The loss began a rough stretch for the Aggies, who have been burdened at times with inconsistent play. A&M has managed just a .500

record since the loss at Colorado, and a win Saturday would boost the Aggies above that mark in league play for the first time since Oct. 2.

"We've been really focusing on consistency," said middle blocker Carol Price. "We'll be ready to play."

A&M's focus on consistent play payed off against OU, as A&M demolished the Sooners in the first two games.

The Aggies hit .339 in the first two games while stifling OU's attack. The Sooners managed just a .138 mark.

The win was the 20th consecutive win over OU and it was the Sooners' eight straight loss this season.

Despite a home loss to Nebraska on Wednesday, the Buffaloes will likely bring a better game than Oklahoma was able to bring into College Station.

"We match up really well with Colorado," said A&M head coach Laurie Corbelli. "My team will be really fired up and ready to go, and they are still tasting what happened in Colorado, and it's not a good taste. Colorado knows we are ready to play them."

The match has the potential to factor into the final Big 12 standings, as A&M currently holds the sixth place in the league while Colorado is just one game back.

"We've had some good experiences here (against Colorado) and then that one bad one," Corbelli said. "We know that it can happen, and that's even better for us to know that we can't let it slip away. We know we can beat this team."



ALISSA HOLLIMON • THE BATTALION

Sophomore Terrence Murphy attempts to avoid two Nebraska defenders on Saturday at Kyle Field.

Football team visits OSU

By Kevin Espenlaub
THE BATTALION

The Texas A&M football team is looking to rebound from a disappointing home loss against Nebraska last weekend when it travels to Stillwater, Okla., to face the Oklahoma State University Cowboys on Saturday at 11:30 a.m.

The Cowboys (3-4, 1-2) are coming off of a bye week after defeating Nebraska 24-21 on Oct. 19.

The win in Stillwater was the first time in 41 years that the Cowboys had defeated the Cornhuskers.

"With Nebraska you knew that they were going to line up and run it at you and when they threw, it kind of caught you off guard," said OSU defensive tackle Kevin Williams. "A&M does a great job of mixing (its plays) up."

After setting records with its offense during the previous three games, the Aggies (5-3, 2-2) were halted by Nebraska.

Sophomore quarterback Dustin Long threw for 269 yards, but had two fourth quarter interceptions that stopped Aggie drives in an attempt to close Nebraska's gap.

"We know we are a good offense," Long said. "We just have to execute better down the stretch. We have to go back to the drawing board and try to get better each week."

The Wrecking Crew is coming off a week in which it allowed 381 rushing yards to Nebraska with two rushers earning over 100 yards. The defense will need to stop OSU's Tatum Bell to stay in the ballgame this week.

"(Nebraska quarterback) Jammal Lord will not carry the ball for Oklahoma State," said OSU head coach Les Miles. "We will attack A&M differently. Nebraska really stepped up (against A&M). They just kept fighting back and I saw some great throws."

Bell rushed for a career high of 182 yards against the Cornhusker defense

that allowed only 53 rushing yards to the entire Aggie offense last week.

"Everytime we've been to Stillwater, it's been hard," said A&M head coach R.C. Slocum. "I think this year, they've gotten better as the season has gone on. They have talented receivers and a fast tailback."

The Aggies have won all six meetings between the schools since joining the Big 12 Conference.

When the teams met last year at Kyle Field, the Aggies pulled out a 21-7 victory and only allowed 199 yards of total offense to the Cowboys.

When the Aggies last visited Stillwater in the 2000 season, A&M escaped with a 21-16 win.

"Nebraska had a great defense and Texas A&M will come in with the same type of defense," said OSU tight end Billy Bajema. "We know we are up against a tough opponent. We feel if we have a good week and get our offense ready to go we can do some good things."

Soccer team prepared to battle Texas for regular season title

By Troy Miller
THE BATTALION

When the rivalry between Texas A&M and the University of Texas is discussed, the figure 13-0 comes to mind. The Texas Longhorn mascot was branded with a 13-0 stamp after A&M defeated Texas 13-0 in 1917. The 13-0 mark later got changed to Bevo, the current name for the longhorn.

There is another 13-0 that many Aggie and Longhorn fans might not think of. Since 1993, the first year of A&M women's soccer as a varsity sport, the Aggies (14-3-1, 8-0-1) have gone 13-0 against the Longhorns (14-2-1, 9-0-0). The two teams will battle Friday night at the Aggie Soccer Complex with the Big 12 regular season title going to the victors.

"(The 13-0 record) should put a doubt in (Texas') mind," said A&M head coach G. Guerrieri. "For us it should, knowing history is on our side, give us some more confidence coming into (the game) but that's it, it won't have any bearing on what goes on the scoreboard in this game."

The No. 5 Aggies are riding a 13-game unbeaten streak into their match with the No. 3 Longhorns. The Aggies are also 9-0 at home this season.

Texas is riding a 12-game unbeaten

streak. Something will have to give Friday. "Knowing that we control our own fate," said Aggie junior Kristen Strutz, "I think that's pretty empowering."

These two squads have been on a collision course all season long. Playing an almost identical schedule, both teams have lost to the same schools, No. 1 Stanford and No. 2 North Carolina. The only discrepancy is that Texas beat No. 16 California while the Aggies dropped a 1-0 decision to the Golden Bears.

"It's just the next game in a series of little championships that we've played," said senior Andrea Starns. "I think that we'll be ready to go. We've proved that we can come through adversity, we can come from behind, and we're excited it's at home and it's going to be a great day."

The Longhorns have only given up 11 goals on the season. Junior goalkeeper Darci Caruthers has started eight games this season and has a .28 goal-against average. Sophomore goalkeeper Alex Gagarin started the other nine games and has given up eight goals.

"Defensively they are very organized," Guerrieri said. "They are very difficult to get behind."

A&M's goalkeeping has been dominated by freshman Kati Jo Spisak. Spisak has

a 1.02 goals-against-average after starting all 18 games this season. As the season has worn on, Spisak has shown more aggressiveness in the Aggie net.

"We've been working in practice on extending my range and getting meaner in the box," Spisak said.

The Longhorn forwards might pose the largest problem for the Aggies. The three K's, Kelly McDonald, Kelly Wilson, and Kylee Wosnuk, have scored 24 goals this season for the Longhorns. McDonald leads the group with ten. Junior midfielder Kati McBain has added seven goals to develop a highly potent offensive attack for Texas.

"(Texas') three forwards, all three of them, are big time attacking players," Guerrieri said. "You can't just look for a match up on one of them because the other two can hurt you just as bad."

Sophomore Linsey Woodard leads the Aggies and the Big 12 with 13 goals. Senior Heather Ragsdale has eight goals while sophomores Emma Smith and Christina Echavarry each have seven.

"(The 13-0 record) is in the back of our minds, but every game is a new game," Strutz said. "(Texas) is pretty good this year."

In this "Battle for the Big 12" the Aggies hope history stays on their side.



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Sophomore forward Linsey Johnson defends the ball from a Kansas player Saturday.

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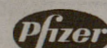
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