

SPORTS

THE BATTALION

Page 1B • Thursday, November 7, 2002

Soccer team begins run in Big 12 Tournament

By Troy Miller
THE BATTALION

The No. 3 Texas A&M women's soccer team (15-3-1, 9-0-1) is looking to defend its 2001 Tournament title and its 2002 regular season championship this week in San Antonio at the Big 12 Championship Tournament. The last time the Aggies won a regular season title was in 1997, when they went on to win their first-ever tournament crown.

The 2002 season has been full of ups and downs. The Aggies have a 14-game unbeaten streak, which is a team record for consecutive games without a loss. The streak started after dropping three matches in a row, which is the team record for most consecutive losses.

With the Aggies 2-1 win against No. 5 Texas Friday, giving them the regular season title, the Aggies secured the first end of the Big 12 Championship double-dip. Now that the first goal has been met, the Aggies are moving on to the next step in their quest.

"We're reassessing our goals for the rest of the way," said head coach G. Guerrieri. "We consider (the Big 12 Tournament) to be a season unto itself." The Aggies enter the tournament as

the number one seed by virtue of their first place finish in the regular season. They begin by facing off against the eighth-seeded Oklahoma State Cowgirls who are making their program's first Big 12 Tournament appearance.

The Cowgirls are coming off a 3-2 win against archrival Oklahoma. OSU sophomore Jeni Jackson scored a hat trick, or three goals, in the last six minutes to overcome a 2-0 deficit and give the Cowgirls their first Big 12 Tournament birth.

"(OSU) is going to be a hungry team," said Big 12 Offensive Player of the Week Emma Smith. "It's going to be a good game for us to go in and play first. It'll be a good hard game."

Smith has picked up her game as she has scored six goals in the last six games and is on a current six-game point streak. Coupled with sophomore Linsey Woodard, whose 13 goals lead the Big 12, the Aggie offense is running on all cylinders.

"(Our midfielders) have been unbelievable at getting behind people and sending in crosses," Smith said.

Freshman Kati Jo Spisak, the Big 12 Newcomer of the Week and First-Team All-Big 12 selection, has continued to

improve her aggressiveness in the net. Spisak made six saves against Texas, including a save on a penalty shot.

The rest of the defense, anchored by First-Team All-Big 12 selection Jessica Martin, has forced opponents away from their strategies.

"All over the field everybody, throughout the season, has stepped up," said senior midfielder Heather Ragsdale. "As a team we have started to play a lot better overall."

The competition in the Big 12 Tournament should be fierce. Texas, the No. 2 seed, did not lose a game until it faced the Aggies. No. 3 Nebraska won the Big 12 Tournament in 1996, 1998, 1999, and 2000 and No. 4 Missouri has netted 13.9 percent of its shots.

"We should be nothing but confident," Guerrieri said. "The players should have experienced the satisfaction of what hard work brings, and they've worked hard."

The Aggies begin play at 11 a.m. on Thursday against Oklahoma State at Blossom Field in San Antonio. The winner of that game will take on the winner of Missouri vs. Colorado in Friday's semifinal.



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A&M sophomore Linsey Woodard battles for the ball against Texas last week.

Texas baseball team given probation for coach's violations

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I feel like I'm speaking for all mothers. I want to say to my daughter and to every daughter who ever felt pressured to abort by her mother, I'm sorry. I had no right to ask that of you.

I had no right to insist that you choose between your love for your baby and your love for me or your father. I honestly thought it would help to save the future we always wanted for you. I never imagined how it could affect you forever.

Can you ever forgive me?



I'm sorry for not having been there for you. I was afraid, confused...

I've never forgotten you or our baby. Speaking for all the men who skipped out on the women who trusted us, urged an abortion, or simply didn't fight hard enough for our relationships with both you and our children, I'm sorry.

I'll always be sorry.



I want to tell my boyfriend, whose baby I aborted, I'm sorry. I did it without even telling you, except afterwards...just to make you feel the same hurt I was feeling.



For myself, and all of us women who have used our abortions to dump on men, I'm sorry. We were just so confused, frightened, and hurting.



For myself, and all fathers, to all of our children who were too afraid to tell us about their pregnancies—too afraid to face our disappointment, or even our anger—I'm sorry.

I'm sorry I made you feel that you had to be perfect. I'm sorry that when you were a child, I didn't build up enough trust in you so that you would know that your mother and I would have stood beside you.

Given some time to adjust, we would have helped. We would still have loved you, and been proud of you, and been proud of our grandchild.

But we failed you. We failed to give you the confidence to have your child and to rely on us.

I'm sorry.

I was prejudiced. I just assumed that having a baby, in your situation, was automatically a bad thing. I encouraged or went along with the abortion because it was easier than helping you to find a better solution.



As a medical procedure, abortion is easy to do. The alternative—helping people to welcome a child into the world—is hard. That takes time and commitment.

It was easier for me just to offer you an abortion—cheap love. I'm sorry.

What you really wanted was help. I took the easy way out.

I'm sorry that I encouraged you to abort. I know I made it sound so easy.

What I didn't tell you was that I had buried my own pain about abortion. I wanted to convince myself, as much as you, that my abortion wasn't so bad.

Worse, in encouraging you to abort, and seeing you abort, I was somehow hoping that your abortion would make me feel a little better. After all, I liked you, and if you also had an abortion, then somehow that was proof that I could still be likable too.

As you can tell, I was really messed up. I'm sorry.



I'm sorry for all the times I was insensitive.

I'm sorry for the times I did *not* speak on abortion when I had a chance to shape your future choices.

I'm also sorry for the times when I *did* speak on abortion without emphasizing God's love for you, and my love for you.

Instead, I only said how wrong it was—piercing your soul with words of blame—when what you really needed was a gentle word, a reminder that we all make mistakes. We all fall short.

But our God is so loving that if we run to Him when we fall, He will always tend to our wounds and make us whole again. This is what I knew. This is what I *wanted* to share with you. But so often, the words never came out right. I'm sorry.

Allow me to speak for every minister of every denomination who has ever failed you: I'm sorry. Every minister of God tries to faithfully preach both God's law and His mercy. But so often we end up preaching more of one than the other, and the message becomes unbalanced.

Please, forgive us our failings, just as God will surely forgive you yours.



www.afterabortion.org

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