

# SPORTS

THE BATTALION

Page 5 • Monday, November 11, 2002

## Soccer team falls to NU, 1-0

By Troy Miller  
THE BATTALION

The No. 3 Texas A&M women's soccer team (17-4-1) dropped a 1-0 decision to the University of Nebraska (14-5-3) in the Big 12 Tournament Title game Sunday afternoon in San Antonio. The loss snapped a 16-game unbeaten streak for the Aggies, which is a school record.

A&M outshot the Cornhuskers 19-10, but the Aggies could not solve Nebraska goalkeeper Erin Miller who had eight saves in the match.

"This is a great win," said Nebraska head coach John Walker. "It was nice to come back and we showed a lot of character."

Nebraska had traveled the improbable road to the Big 12 Championship by beating No. 5 Texas 2-1 in semifinal action Friday before triumphing over the No. 3 Aggies.

"A lot of people have written us off in conference," Walker said. "We came back and beat the two teams that beat us this season. It was our finest victory."

Nebraska sophomore Jenna Cooper scored the game-winner in the seventh minute of action. Cooper took a direct free kick from outside the penalty box that deflected off the Aggie wall and back to Cooper. Cooper buried the ball into the upper right corner past outstretched Aggie goalkeeper Kati Jo Spisak.

The match was a defensive struggle that ended with only 11 shots-on-goal of the 29 shots taken in the match.

The Aggies had two great chances in the first half when sophomore Linsey Woodard banged a shot off the far post and senior Andrea Starns hit the crossbar. Miller tipped the shot by Starns up and off the crossbar.

With ten minutes remaining, the Aggies seemed to have scored the equalizer. A&M had loaded the box and got the ball past Miller, but the goal was disallowed for a foul called on Aggie sophomore Amanda Burke.



ALISSA HOLLIMON • THE BATTALION  
Texas A&M soccer players Kate Ripple, Carrie Berend and Becky Olson react to falling to Nebraska, 1-0, in the finals of the Big 12 Conference Tournament on Sunday in San Antonio.

The physical play of the match resulted in six yellow cards and one red card, which went to the A&M bench before A&M head coach G. Guerrieri was ejected from the game.

"Nebraska did the things they needed to do to win today," Guerrieri said. "They did a great job of not giving us a good look at the goal after they scored their goal."

The Aggies reached the tournament final by decisively beating eighth-seeded Oklahoma State 5-0 in the quarterfinals. Woodard, senior Heather Ragsdale, junior Kristen Strutz, sophomore Emma Smith and freshman Carrie Berend all scored goals in the match.

In their semifinal against the University of Colorado, the Aggies were deadlocked 1-1 for most of the game until Ragsdale scored in the eighty-first minute to put the Aggies up for good. Smith added a security goal in the eighty-fifth minute to put the Aggies up 3-1.

The loss to Nebraska snapped an eight-game scoring streak for Smith.

Senior Jessica Martin, Ragsdale, Strutz, and Berend were named to the all-tournament team.

The Aggies now wait to see where they will play in the NCAA Championship tournament. Selections will be announced at 3:30 p.m. on Monday.

## Aggies beat No. 20 MU in five games

By True Brown  
THE BATTALION

Laura Jones and Carol Price led the Texas A&M volleyball team Friday to its first win over a ranked opponent this season, upending No. 20 Missouri 30-24, 30-19, 28-30, 30-25 at G. Rollie White Coliseum.

A&M (17-7, 9-6) dominated the match from the opening serve, out-hitting the Tigers in every game, and capitalizing on a stellar defensive effort.

"It's starting to all come together," said A&M head coach Laurie Corbelli. "Things are just starting to click for this team. There are times in practice you can kind of see what it's supposed to look like, and then it's there."

The win was the fourth straight for the Aggies, who have found themselves in a tie for fourth place with the University of Texas in the Big 12 standings.

Jones recorded a match-high 22 kills and hit .422, while Price added 16 kills and an impressive .500 hitting percentage. Price tied her career high in blocks with seven as A&M's defense kept a hard-hitting Mizzou (20-6, 9-5) team in check most of the night.

"They're starting to get a real good groove with blocking," Corbelli said. "Blocking has always been a part of our game at A&M that has started

slowly, and we've started to get a good feel for it the more we've practiced it."

The Aggies quickly won the first two games, but the Tigers came strong in game three. Behind the hot hands of Mary Lauren Smith and Christi Meyers, Missouri held five point leads on five separate occasions before A&M rallied to tie the game 28-28 on a kill by Melissa Munsch.

The Aggie rally burned out and the Tigers won the game's last two points.

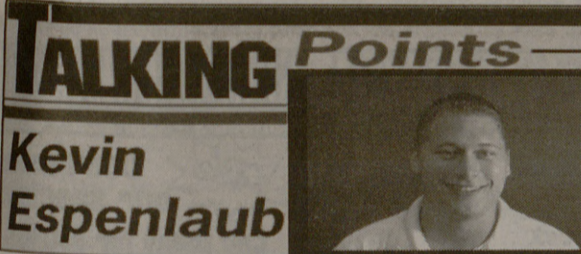
"We came back in game three and competed," said Missouri head coach Susan Kreklow. "We were controlling the ball a little bit more which was allowing us to run our offense. Game three was very competitive, but we had trouble sustaining our play."

A&M put any of Missouri's hopes at a comeback out the window quickly in game four, jumping to a 4-1 lead after a kill by Jones. The Aggies never trailed in the frame.

The win avenged a loss by A&M earlier this season in Columbia, Mo.

"We've been wanting to beat them for a long, long time," Jones said. "So we were a little extra pumped up at the beginning. We've been struggling all season (with confidence), and now in the second half of the season, we're starting to kick it in."

## Next week's QB decision will have long-lasting impact



After the celebrating ends around College Station following the Aggies upset over No. 1 Oklahoma, fans will notice that another dilemma has hit the Texas A&M football team.

Although sophomore quarterback Dustin Long has led the Aggies to unprecedented offensive success throughout the season, freshman quarterback Reggie McNeal finally had his day Saturday and performed as everyone had expected him to since coming to A&M.

"I knew going into the game that I would play a little," McNeal said. "But I didn't know I'd play almost the whole game. I just gave it 110 percent and it worked out."

But Aggie fans should be careful before asking for Reggie to start for the Missouri game and for the remainder of the season.

Let's not forget that Long has set a Big 12 record for touchdown passes in a game with seven against Texas Tech, set an A&M record for passing yards in a game with 399 against Kansas and has become the fastest A&M quarterback ever to reach 2000 passing yards.

Reggie has only had one game.

One very productive game, but one game nonetheless. "He came in and created some plays on his own," said A&M offensive coordinator Kevin Sumlin. "He looked first to execute the offense and put his legs into play afterward."

After everyone had thought the quarterback controversy was over, the heat will come back down on A&M head coach R.C. Slocum to choose between the player that has led his team all season and the player who has led his team over the nation's top team.

It comes as no surprise that R.C. is dodging the question already.

"I knew I wanted to play both of them," Slocum said. "We had the same game plan whether it was Dustin or Reggie in the game. (Reggie) had the hot hand, so we continued to go with him. I'm going to continue to get him in the game and develop him as a player."

Sitting in the background of his decision should be whether or not pleasing fans and making Reggie happy will cost A&M the opportunity of keeping Long on the roster.

Any quarterback with the numbers that Long has posted this season will have ample opportunity to move to a team where he will be appreciated.

Not to take anything away from Reggie, but R.C. should not sell the farm and drive Long out of town to help save his job by making the fans happy.

Slocum must face the heat and start Long on Saturday.

Reggie might be the future of A&M football, but if anything were to happen to the newly crowned Prince of Aggieland, the Aggies would be up a creek without a paddle and Long won't be around to bail them out.



JOHN C. LIVAS • THE BATTALION  
Sophomore quarterback Dustin Long attempts to break through the line early in the OU game.

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