

SPORTS

THE BATTALION

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Soccer team prepares for Sweet Sixteen action

Aggies traveling to California to tangle with UCLA

By Troy Miller
THE BATTALION

The No. 4 Texas A&M women's soccer team (19-4-1) looks to avenge its last trip to California as the team travels to Los Angeles to face No. 3 UCLA (18-3-0) in the third round of the NCAA Championship Tournament. On their previous trip to California this season, the Aggies dropped two 1-0 decisions to Stanford and the University of California.

This time is different for the Aggies. After those early season struggles, A&M reeled off 15 wins and one tie before dropping to Nebraska 1-0 in the Big 12 Tournament Final.

Now the Aggies are playing for a chance to get back to the Elite Eight, the benchmark for the program after advancing that far in the 2001 season. Ironically, that landmark win for the A&M program came in California against Stanford.

"Mentally we've prepared for every game this season like it's a championship

game," said senior Andrea Starns. "We've gone on the road and won some tough games at Oklahoma and at Nebraska. We're ready and excited to still be in the playoffs."

The Aggies most likely will not play another match this season at the Aggie Soccer Complex, where the team went 12-0-0.

UCLA, on the other hand, has suffered all three of its losses at the friendly confines of Drake Stadium.

"There are a lot of things that are similar to playing here," said A&M head coach G. Guerrieri. "The surface is the same, the weather is the same as the weather we've had in Aggieland, this week has been identical to Los Angeles."

"We've been on the road a lot this season. We've played a lot of top-ten teams on the road, and this is just another big game at a different venue."

This match brings together two of the hottest teams in women's soccer. UCLA

is on a current nine-game winning streak which includes a 1-0 double-overtime win over the University of Southern California in the second round to earn the right to play the Aggies.

A&M has picked up where it left off after having its 16-game unbeaten streak snapped. In their last two victories the Aggies outscored their opponents 9-1. Sophomore Emma Smith is a large part of the offensive output, as she has scored a point in 10 of the last 11 games.

"I just finally calmed down and decided to play my game," Smith said. "I went out there and had so much fun, took players on, and did what I love to do."

The Aggies will need big games from Smith and sophomore Linsey Woodard if they wish to advance past a tough UCLA squad.

"They have great balance in attack and defense," Guerrieri said. "They're incredible

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ALISSA HOLLIMON • THE BATTALION

A&M goalie Kati Jo Spisak makes a save in the Aggies second round game.

Volleyball team ready to take on Tech

By True Brown
THE BATTALION

Texas A&M volleyball coach Laurie Corbelli says she woke up Thursday morning thinking about Lubbock and the Texas Tech Red Raiders.

That may explain why her practice later that afternoon took on an intense physical tone and was full of defense, running and threats to let her team know she meant business before Saturday's road match with Tech.

"I think we're really trying to work on our fight and our do-or-die attitude," Corbelli

said, following Thursday's practice, which concluded with her players running a hefty set of line drills. "It's going to come down to our fighting attitude and our spirit, and when I don't see it, I just want them to remember what it feels like."

The Aggies (18-8, 10-7) will need all the fighting spirit they can muster against the Red Raiders this weekend.

Tech (12-14, 7-10) will be playing with a chip on its shoulder against the Aggies.

The Red Raiders lost an 11-7 lead in the fifth game at G. Rollie White Coliseum in mid-

October. A&M rallied for a 15-12 win to claim the match.

Corbelli wants her team to be ready for war in Lubbock.

"It has got to be there or we are history," Corbelli said. "I really believe that. I know (Tech) has it, and if we don't have it more, we will have a tough time."

The Aggies are coming off their worst home loss in six years. The Kansas State Wildcats swept A&M on Wednesday, ending the Aggies' five-match winning streak.

Sophomore outside hitter Melissa Munsch said that loss

added a sense of urgency to A&M's practice.

"It makes everything more urgent," Munsch said. "We need to do what we need to do readily. Sometimes we've had trouble coming into matches with intensity, but these drills help pick that up."

Adding more fuel to Tech's fire is the fact that the Red Raiders just managed something the Aggies did not: a win on the road against Colorado.

Tech swept the Buffaloes on Wednesday, while CU pulled

See **Tech** on page 8



RANDAL FORD • THE BATTALION

A&M junior Tara Pulaski spikes the ball as her teammates look on.

GIG the TIGERS

Calling all Aggie fans in or near Houston over the Thanksgiving

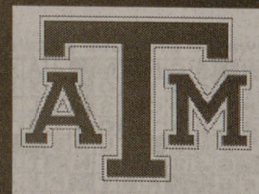
holiday weekend! Your men's college basketball team leads off

a basketball triple-header Saturday, November 30 at the

spectacular new Reliant Stadium. Support your Aggies

against the Tigers of LSU at 1:30 pm. Then stick

around for two more top college matchups:



Texas

@4:00pm vs

Seton Hall

Baylor

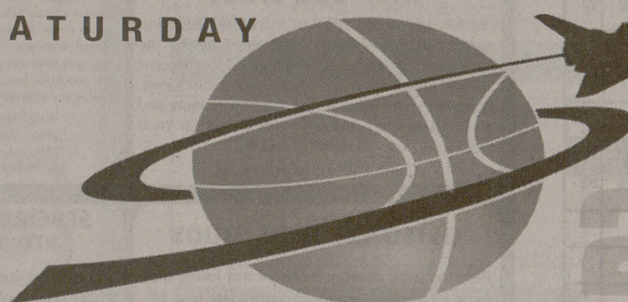
@7:00pm vs

U of Houston

Tickets start at only \$12 for admission to all three games.

SATURDAY

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