

Aggies fall to Kansas, 64-57

By Troy Miller
THE BATTALION

It was a tale of two halves as the Texas A&M women's basketball team dropped a close decision to the University of Kansas Jayhawks 64-57.

The Jayhawks (8-9, 1-5 Big 12) used a 17-0 run to start the second half and 19 points from freshman forward Crystal Kemp to win their first Big 12 conference game in 21 tries. Kansas' last victory was also against A&M (8-9, 1-5 Big 12) in College Station on Feb. 28, 2001.

"For everyone but (junior Leila Menguc) this is our first conference win," Kemp said. "We wanted this for ourselves and for our coach. It's kind of indescribable right now."

Kemp also provided 11 rebounds in the winning effort to complete the third double-double of her young career. Four of Kemp's 11 rebounds were offensive. As a team, Kansas pulled down 19 offensive boards.

"This team is very capable of pounding the offensive boards," said Kansas Head Coach Marian Washington. "Nineteen offensive boards, I'm very encouraged. That area was awesome."

Kemp scored 11 of her 19 points from the free-throw line

as she shot 11-12 from the charity stripe. Kansas shot 18-20 from the free-throw line in the game while A&M only shot 5-7.

"I think another big stat in this game is 5 for 7 and 18 for 20," said A&M Head Coach Peggie Gillom. "We fouled and put them at the line and we didn't get to the basket."

The Aggies opened the game by making their first two shot attempts to give the Aggies their first lead at Reed Arena in the new year. They had not led in a home game since their 67-46 victory against Texas Southern University on Dec. 29, 2002.

After battling closely with the Jayhawks, the Aggies used a 51.5 percent first half shooting performance to lead 38-28 at halftime. The Aggies led by as much as 11 in the half.

Freshman guard Natasha Summerville fueled the Aggies as she scored all eight of her points in the first half.

After coming out of the locker room, the Aggies went cold, making no baskets in the opening 7:53 of the second half. The Jayhawks used that time to go on a 17-0 run to take the lead 45-38.

"We came out in the second half as well as we ever have so far this season," Washington said. "A lot of good energy and great focus paid off for us."



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Kansas freshman forward Crystal Kemp defends A&M's Lynn Classen.

Aggie junior Lynn Classen ended the run when she scored at the 12:03 mark. Classen scored six of A&M's 19 second-half points to lead the Aggie effort with 13 points.

Twenty minutes after the final buzzer sounded and the

game was over, the Jayhawks were still celebrating their victory in the halls underneath the Reed Arena stands.

"We have some people crying," Kemp said. "We have some people so excited that they're still not calmed down yet."

Men's tennis sweeps tripleheader

By Jeff Allen
THE BATTALION

To say it was a perfect day for tennis would be a stretch. Old Man Winter's grip on the Texas A&M Varsity Tennis Center was firm Saturday, with winds pushing the temperature into the low 40s and unrelentingly overcast skies. The bleak surroundings, however, did not hamper the beginning of another men's tennis season.

In front of an announced crowd of more than 500 faithful, the No. 13 Aggies managed to fend off the cold and occasional drizzle, putting away their first three wins of the season in a tripleheader against A&M-Corpus Christi, Texas Pan-American, and Trinity University.

"We've got to develop a certain toughness," said A&M Head Coach Tim Cass.

"Obviously the weather and conditions were extremely difficult. I thought we did a pretty good job to fight through that."

Out of the gates, things looked about as gloomy as the weather. The Aggie men were sluggish against Corpus Christi in the doubles matches, falling behind early. Fortunately, that trend did not continue. The A&M men came back to squeak out all three doubles matches, earning a point to give them the early lead.

"We had a slow start in doubles," Cass said. "That was sort of our speed bump for the day, but once we got over it, we played a pretty solid day of tennis."

The wins, however, did not silence the rising concerns about the Aggies' doubles play, an aspect of the Aggie squad which remains suspect heading into the meat of its schedule.

During the fall portion of the schedule, the Aggies were led by the sophomore duo

of Lester Cook and Ante Matijevic, who climbed to a career high national ranking of No. 5. Despite the ranking, the pair is facing separation, as they did against the Islanders on Saturday, in order to strengthen the team.

"Our guys are willing to do whatever it takes to improve the doubles play," Cass said. "We're probably going to have to manufacture some doubles points, we're not going to have the luxury we've had in the past, where we have had three very solid (doubles) teams."

After the rough doubles matches, the Aggies cruised for the remainder of the afternoon. The men swept Corpus Christi in singles play, losing only one set in all six individual matches. They put the Islanders away with a final score of 7-0. The story did not differ too much after that in the contests against Texas Pan-American and Trinity University.

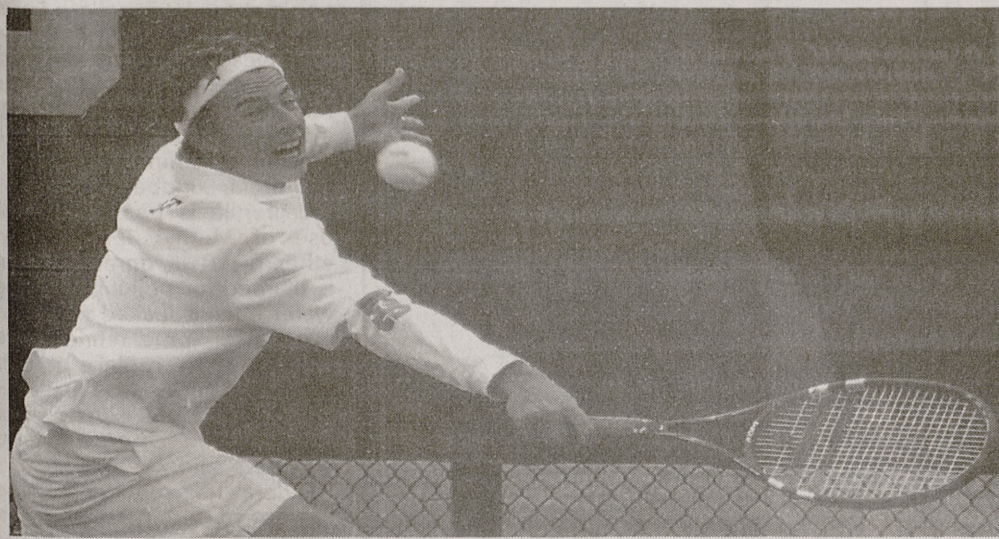
After skipping the doubles matches due to the weather, the Aggies made quick work of the men from Texas Pan-American, shutting out the Broncos 6-0, again dropping only a single set.

The Aggies also had the opportunity to work in some fresh young faces that they will be looking to contribute as the season matures. Freshmen Cameron Fenner, Matt Loukes and John Nallon accounted for half of the Aggies' points against the Broncos, each winning their individual matches. Nallon and Loukes also added wins in their singles matches against Trinity and Corpus Christi.

"It's different playing a team match (for the freshmen)," Cass said. "This gives them a better feel of what to expect the rest of the season."

The Aggies finished the afternoon in stride against Trinity University, following the modus operandi they had set throughout the day by sweeping the Tigers in six matches, while dropping a lone set.

Next, the Aggie men face the No. 12 University of Texas Longhorns. The two rivals are set to square off in a dual match next Saturday at the Texas Cup in Austin.



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Sophomore Lester Cook stretches to return a shot during a match this weekend at the A&M Varsity Tennis Center. The Aggies started the season 3-0 after sweeping the tripleheader Saturday.

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