

## Aggies close with win over UH

### A&M finishes Houston tourney with 2-1 record

By Troy Miller  
THE BATTALION

HOUSTON- Aggie sophomore Logan Kensing gave up two earned runs and seven hits in eight innings to earn the victory over No. 13 University of Houston 4-2 in the Minute Maid Park College Classic. "Kensing gave us a big time outing," said Texas A&M baseball Head Coach Mark Johnson. "That was a great performance. He had good movement and kept the ball down, so I thought that Logan was the key for us."

Houston's only runs against Kensing came in the bottom of the fourth inning when Houston junior Adam Bluhm singled home two runs. Kensing threw nine strikeouts in the game and earned all-tournament honors in his first career start. "I woke up today and it was probably the longest day I've had in a long time,"

Kensing said. "(Houston) chased a lot. They were looking for a fastball right off the bat so I tried to bust them in and then they'd back off."

After three scoreless innings where Houston owned the lone hit, the Aggie bats came alive. Junior center fielder Justin Ruggiano started the fourth inning by doubling to the gap in right-center field. Junior catcher Justin Pouk was then hit by Houston pitcher Garrett Mock. Junior designated hitter

Scott Beerer singled home Ruggiano on the next at bat. Beerer went 2 for 4 in the game as he was selected to the all-tournament team. Freshman Cliff Pennington and junior Brian Bowe both earned a RBI in the inning to give the Aggies a 3-0 lead.

After the two-run fifth for Houston the Aggies added an insurance run when Beerer singled on a 0-2 pitch to bring junior Cory Patton home to give Beerer his second RBI of the night. "Beer got us a big hit with two strikes

and no balls," Johnson said. "I'm sure they'd like to have that one over again."

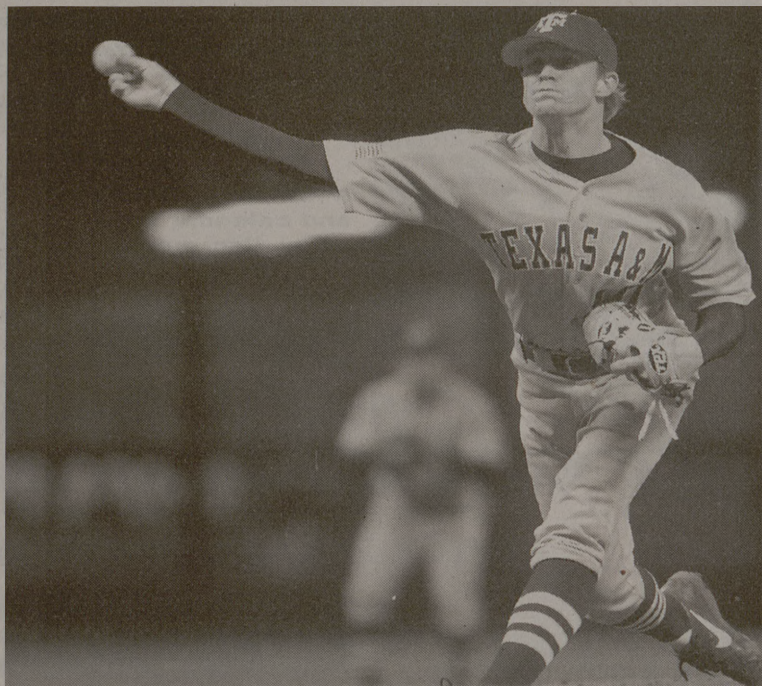
A&M sophomore pitcher Robert Ramsey earned his first save of the year as he came in to pitch the ninth inning and struck out the side.

The Aggies' win gave them a 2-1 mark in the tournament. A&M began by playing No. 2 Rice and losing 10-5.

The Aggies bounced back Saturday and beat the University of Louisiana-Lafayette 11-1 before taking on Houston Sunday. Senior Zach Dixon earned the win and a spot on the all-tournament team by striking out 12 in 8.1 innings of work.

"We'd like to have won all of them," Johnson said. "The best ball game played by one team was Rice against us. Everybody is a good ballclub, it's a good tournament."

The Aggies see their next action when they travel to Huntsville to take on Sam Houston State. The game will begin on Tuesday at 7 p.m.



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Logan Kensing helped the Aggies to a 4-2 victory over the University of Houston.

## Tennis teams sweep weekend action against rival LSU

### Men claim doubleheader

By Jeff Allen  
THE BATTALION

A little more than two weeks ago, Texas A&M men's tennis Head Coach Tim Cass sat behind his desk at the Varsity Tennis Center and said his team was heading to Florida in search of an identity.

"Right now our identity is in the past," he said. "The reason we are ranked No. 12 is based on what we did in the past, and this team is going to have to learn whatever they are capable of learning."

Back at the Tennis Center Saturday, the Aggies (5-3), now ranked No. 19, faced a familiar situation. After losing their last three matches, the Aggies stood across the court from No. 24-ranked LSU (5-1) in the first match of a doubleheader. Some of the Aggies' questions were answered in the 5-2 win over the Tigers. Any remaining doubts were cleared up five hours later in a 6-1 win against the University of Texas-San Antonio Roadrunners.

At around 2 p.m. a crowd just short of 900 spectators witnessed the men finally break out of the doldrums that have been plaguing them and capture the all-important doubles point from LSU. It was the first time the Aggies managed to grab the point in their last three matches

— a trend that directly coincided with a three-game losing streak.

The doubles point in the LSU match gave the Aggies the momentum they needed to capture the match and end their losing streak, as well as questions regarding a lagging doubles game.

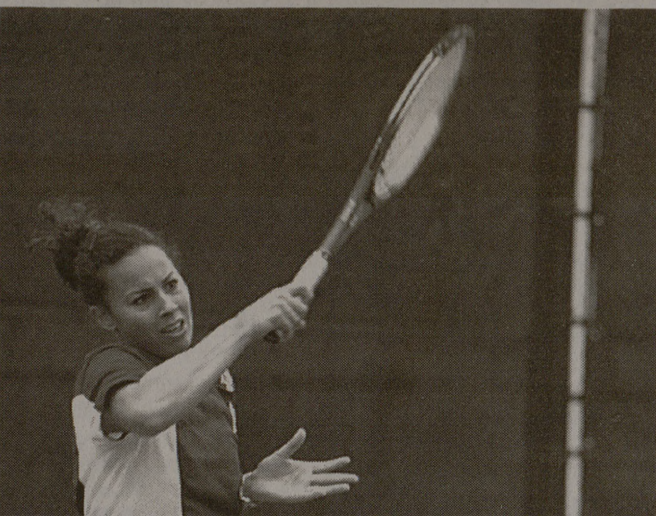
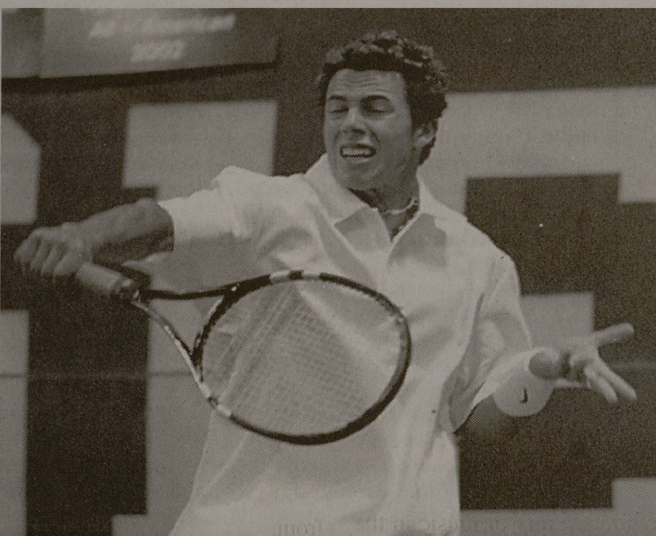
"We got the doubles momentum and it carried over to the singles," Cass said.

Once in singles competition, the men were able to claim the three matches they needed for the win with relative ease, getting wins from senior Ryan Newport, sophomore Ante Matijevic, junior Khalid El Dorry and freshman Matt Loukes. The A&M men dropped sets at two and six. One of the losses was dropped by sophomore Lester Cook.

When it came time to face UTSA, the sun was down, the wind picked up and the temperature was steadily falling. About 30 brave souls shivered in the stands as the Aggies made quick work of the match against the Roadrunners. The victory extended the Aggies' current home winning streak to five games.

The match was over, but A&M's Cook, who had been moved to court one due to

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PHOTOS BY ADAM A. KRAZER • THE BATTALION

Top: Sophomore Lester Cook returns a shot against UTSA this weekend. Bottom: Junior Jessica Roland takes a forehand against LSU on Saturday.

### Women topple Tigers, 5-2

By Blake Kimzey  
THE BATTALION

Coming into last weekend's bout with the Texas A&M women's tennis team, the No. 63 Louisiana State Tigers had recorded shutouts in each of their five wins to open the season at 5-1. The Aggies, on the other hand, entered their home opener carrying a deceptive 2-3 record with hopes that facing non-conference rival LSU would be the sparkplug they needed to get them back on track.

The Aggies were able to capitalize on being at home for the first time all season as they downed the Tigers 5-2. Both teams faced the February elements on Saturday that elevated the level of match difficulty, complete with the biting cold and overcast skies that epitomize late winter. The No. 32 Aggies came out sluggishly, dropping two of the three doubles matches 8-6 and 8-4. LSU went on to win the doubles point, which put the Aggies in a precarious situation, especially early on in match play.

"It was a tough day to play," said A&M Head Coach Bobby Kleinecke. "The wind was a factor in the doubles, and to drop the doubles point put us in a dangerous position, especially against a team such as LSU."

The Aggies, nonetheless,

forged ahead, going into singles play with a much-needed win at the No. 1 doubles when Ashley Hedberg and Lauren Walker collaborated to rally back for victory.

"We were down, 5-1, at No. 1 doubles, but we took the momentum away from LSU by coming back and winning that match," Kleinecke said. "That was a turning point in the match."

From that point there was no looking back as the Aggies went on to dominate singles play. LSU had no answer for A&M, which initiated a healthy barrage of singles victories from the No. 1 through the No. 5 singles.

"It's tough to have such a young team go into a tough environment like Texas A&M and win," said LSU Head Coach Tony Minnis.

The lone Aggie defeat in singles play came at No. 6 singles, as LSU freshman Camila Calieri downed A&M freshman Seva Iwinski, 6-4, 7-6. The Aggies showed the fire they have been playing with all season as they made easy prey of the Tigers after facing early match adversity in doubles play.

"The girls got fired up and didn't panic and won the first four singles matches to decide the match. That made it easy for

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## Aggies end two-game skid, 69-54

By Marcus White  
THE BATTALION

A crowd of 1,135 was on hand to see what turned out to be freshman Melissa Picone's coming out party as the Texas A&M women's basketball team defeated the Nebraska Cornhuskers 69-54 at Reed Arena Saturday.

Led by Picone's career-high 12 points, the Aggies (10-12, 3-8) halted a two-game skid by sending the Cornhuskers (8-14, 1-10) back to Nebraska with another conference loss.

Picone, redshirted for medical reasons last season, was five for nine from the field including two three-pointers that caught Cornhusker defenders off guard. Picone had been averaging 1.3 points in just less than five minutes per game this season before her explosive performance off the bench against Nebraska.

"You don't know when your time's going to come," said A&M Head Coach Peggie Gillom. "You just have to be ready, and tonight was Melissa's night."

Junior A&M point guard Toccara Williams posted a double-double, leading the Aggies with 10 rebounds while chipping in 10 points. She also went six for six from the free-throw line, leading the Aggies to a season-best 85.7 percent from the charity stripe. Junior center Lynn Classen added 12 points and sophomore guard Sabrina Mitchell contributed nine points and eight rebounds.

A&M struggled on the floor in the first half,

falling behind by as many as seven points. Nebraska forward Alexa Johnson scored 13 points on six of eight shooting in the first half as the Aggies trailed the Cornhuskers 34-29 at halftime.

Johnson and Nebraska faced a much more determined Aggie team in the second half. Thanks to sound shooting and stout defense, the Aggies quickly ran off 10 points while holding the Cornhuskers scoreless for nearly six minutes to open the period.

The Aggies were finding open shots in the Cornhuskers' 2-3 zone defense throughout the second half. Picone nailed her second three-pointer of the game during the 10-0 run that gave the Aggies their first lead of the second half.

"I looked for (the shot), and it was there," Picone said. "So I took it."

Nebraska's first two shots of the second half were back-to-back three-pointers from forward Greichaly Ceparo and guard Shahidrah Roberts that gave the Cornhuskers a one-point lead that which proved to be their last of the game.

On the following possession, freshman Rhianna Reed dished one of her career-best seven assists to junior Janae Derrick who hit a 20-foot three-point baseline jumper that gave the Aggies a one-point lead they would not relinquish.

Reed added a bucket and hit all four of her attempts from the free-throw line in the game's final two minutes for six of her career-best 10 points on the afternoon.

A&M picked up their defensive intensity after the first half, forcing turnovers and effectively

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## Softball team wins Invitational

By Pete Burks  
THE BATTALION

In a weekend wrought with gloomy weather and tough competition, the No. 24 Texas A&M softball team fought off the elements, Brigham Young University and McNeese State University to come out on top in the first half of the St. Joseph's Aggie Invitational.

The Aggies went 3-1 on the weekend, becoming tournament champions by defeating McNeese State twice, by the scores of 5-2 and 1-0, and splitting their two games with BYU. Although A&M and BYU each posted a 3-1 record on the weekend, the Aggies were declared the victors, having outscored BYU with a point differential of +10 for the Aggies to +1 for the Cougars.

The results of the tournament came as a stark contrast to those of the Fiesta Bowl tournament the Aggies played in last weekend. In the series held in Arizona, A&M struggled to a 2-3 record. After this weekend, the Aggies improved their overall record to 8-4 this season.

In their first game against BYU (5-3), the Aggies came out with a vengeance, scoring six runs in the first two innings on their way to a 9-1 rout of the Cougars. BYU starting and relief pitchers Nikki Anderson and Brooke Boyce felt the brunt of the Aggies' wrath, surrendering a combined nine earned runs and fourteen hits in four and one-third innings of work.

A&M sophomore second baseman Adrian Gregory and senior catcher Selena Collins helped spark the Aggies to the win, each wielding a hot bat throughout the game. Gregory went two for

four with three runs batted in, while Collins slugged three hits and added two runs batted in from the cleanup spot.

Aggie junior Jessica Slataper handcuffed BYU's offense with nasty pitching, holding the Cougars to two hits and recording her fifth complete game this season. A run-rule of the Cougars marked the second time this season A&M has accomplished the feat.

"We've got to give the credit to their hitters who hit the ball really well," said BYU Head Coach Gordon Eakin. "We are trying not to put too much emphasis on the game today, but score more runs than they do tomorrow."

Eakin's team did indeed respond the next day, shutting down the Aggies 2-0. Although Slataper made a valiant effort throwing her sixth complete game of the season, she was unable to get the help she had received from her teammates the day before. BYU starter Mandy Flint silenced the Aggie bats, limiting A&M to just two hits.

The Aggies fared better against McNeese State, completing a weekend sweep of the Cowgirls. Defensively, junior A&M pitcher Lindsay Wilhelmson led the charge, throwing her first complete game this season with six strikeouts. Again, Gregory came through, going four for four with an RBI to lead the Aggies to a comeback win of 5-2 after falling behind early 2-0. When the two teams tangled again, the Aggies came out with similar results, giving Wilhelmson her second complete game win of the weekend.

McNeese State Head Coach Scott Eastman said he was pleased with the work he got from his team.