

# SPORTS

THE BATTALION

Page 3 • Tuesday, April 15, 2003

## Tennis teams set to battle with Big 12 implications

### Men heading to Baylor with chance to stay in Big 12 race

By Jeff Allen  
THE BATTALION

It has been a long, fruitful year for the No. 10 Texas A&M men's tennis team. Looking back to January, when the dual match portion of the schedule began, the team was surrounded with questions and doubt about whether there was enough experience to compete in the competitive Big 12.

The Aggies (20-6, 4-1 Big 12) entered the season looking at a roster that had just one senior, All-American Ryan Newport. He was surrounded by a cast that included three freshmen and two sophomores.

Once again the Aggies will be put to the test Tuesday in Waco as they travel to take on the Big 12-leading and No. 6 nationally

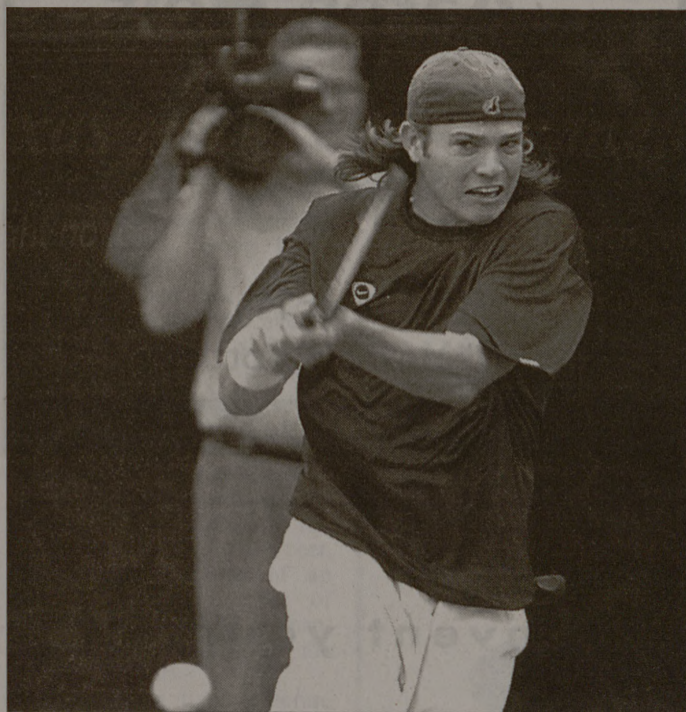
ranked Baylor Bears.

"We've got a great challenge ahead of us," said A&M Head Coach Tim Cass. "I told the guys that in life you try to open up doors and provide yourself opportunities, and what you do with those doors that you open up is probably how you'll be judged. We have a door that's cracked open."

The door that Cass is referring to is the 2003 Big 12 regular season title. After a rigorous schedule, the Aggies have worked their way into a tie for second place in the Big 12 with No. 16 Texas.

Baylor, which is defending champion and has won the regular season two of the last three years, is in soul possession of first place after downing Texas last Friday in Austin, 6-1.

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JOHN C. LIVAS • THE BATTALION

Senior **Ryan Newport** returns a shot against Texas Tech April 4 at the A&M Tennis Center. The Aggies will try to stay in the Big 12 race against Baylor.

### Women begin three-match road trip with visit to Austin

By Blake Kimzey  
THE BATTALION

After playing its first five matches of the season on the road, it seems fitting that the Texas A&M women's tennis team will finish out its schedule with a three-match road trip taking it through Austin and up into Kansas.

Coming off a draining 4-3 setback to No. 11 College of William & Mary on Saturday, the prospect of playing the University of Texas tonight in Austin should give the Aggies (14-9, 6-2 Big 12) ample ammunition to bounce back with reprisal.

The Longhorns (9-11, 7-1 Big 12) are also looking to rebound after falling to the same William and Mary team on Sunday.

Knowing that A&M is coming

off a loss and just behind his team in the Big 12 conference standings, UT Head Coach Jeff Moore said his team is ready for a duke-it-out match on its home court.

"As an inexperienced team, we are going to have to be operating on all cylinders if we want to win this match," Moore said. "We get fired up to play A&M the same way they get fired up to play us."

Texas is led by a host of freshmen, such as Kendra Strohm at No. 1 singles, which epitomizes a Longhorn team peppered with youth and inexperience.

After winning the Big 12 last year, Texas has a narrow grasp on first place in the conference, and A&M Head Coach Bobby Kleinecke says his team can earn the win if it plays to its strengths.

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## Baseball team returns home to meet UTA

By Dallas Shipp  
THE BATTALION

The No. 17 Aggie baseball team returns to Olsen Field tonight for its first home game in two weeks to host the University of Texas-Arlington at 7 p.m.

The Aggies (29-11, 10-5 Big 12) and the Mavericks (25-15, 13-2 Southland) are coming off a weekend full of offense.

The Aggies completed their sweep on the road against Kansas State Sunday with a 16-3 win that was called after seven innings due to the 10-run rule.

Following the sweep, A&M moved into third place in the Big 12 standings behind

Texas and Nebraska. The Aggies are one game behind the Cornhuskers for second place and two games behind the Longhorns.

There was no paucity of offense for the Aggies, who scored 34 runs on 47 hits during the weekend series.

Junior center fielder Justin Ruggiano was one player who exploded offensively this weekend for the Aggies. Ruggiano went 7-for-12 at the plate with three home runs and 10 RBIs against the Wildcats.

"We've had a number of guys that have consistently hit over .300 and Ruggiano is one of them," said A&M Head Coach Mark Johnson. "This weekend he really went off in some key spots. We had a number of guys get six or seven hits but (Ruggiano) had 10 RBIs

with his and it magnified his performance, he certainly had a great weekend."

After this weekend Ruggiano leads the Aggies with seven home runs and is second on the team with a .343 batting average and 31 RBIs.

"It's contagious when guys start hitting," Johnson said. "I was pleased we answered the call and hit the ball well."

Despite the Aggies offensive output, it still did not meet the numbers put up by UTA in its series against UTSA.

The Mavericks swept the Roadrunners in San Antonio with 41 runs on 51 hits in the three game series. UTA had at least 17 hits in

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Texas A&M Head Coach **Mark Johnson** discusses strategy with freshman catcher **Kevin Whelan** at third base in the game against SHSU on April 1.



## Resurrection Week April 14-16

Sharing with Texas A&M the true meaning of Easter!

"And He died for all so that they who live might no longer live for themselves, but for Him, who died and rose again on their behalf"

-2 Corinthians 5:15

### TUESDAY

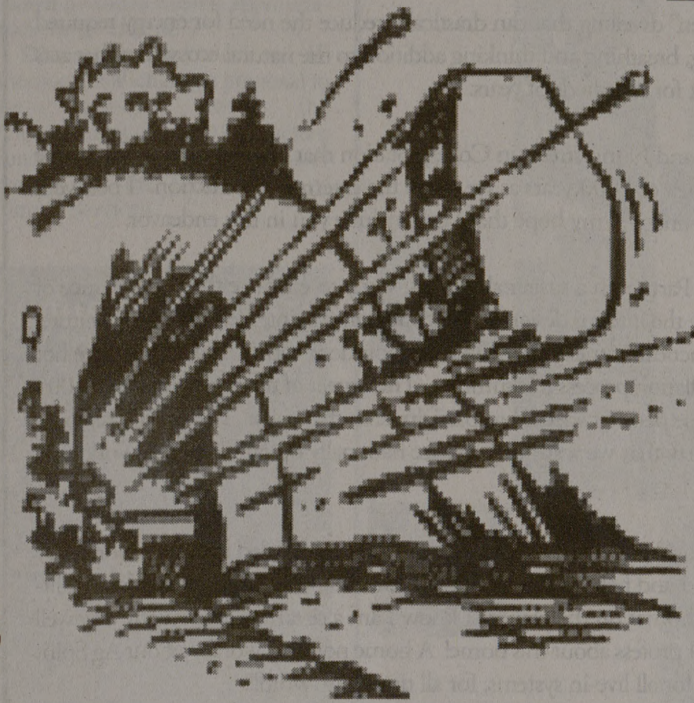
**Crucifixion Drama**  
-Rudder Fountain  
12:00 noon

**Billiards Trick Shots**  
with **Steve Lillis**  
-The Commons  
5:00 p.m.

### WEDNESDAY

**Outdoor Concert**  
**Lindsey Kane**  
-Rudder Fountain  
12:00 noon

**Dr. David Craig**  
"Is there historical evidence  
for the Resurrection?"  
-Rudder 601  
7:00 p.m.



24 Hr. House of Prayer  
Academic Plaza

resweek@tamu.edu