

Aggies could make things interesting in Big 12 South

By Troy Miller
THE BATTALION

Opposing coaches look at the Big 12 South and feel like they have been warped into a dream from "Nightmare on Elm Street." From top to almost the bottom — Baylor doesn't quite fit — the Big 12 South could stand alone and be the toughest division in all of college football.

Every season, Oklahoma and Texas are preseason favorites to win the national championship, and with young talent and a new coaching staff, Texas A&M figures to be there soon as well. Oklahoma State is quickly gaining more respect and becoming a feared power in the Big 12 South. Texas Tech has been tough in the past with Kliff Kingsbury at the helm, but a down year for the Raiders is on the horizon. The Bears were picked to finish last again this year in almost every poll and, while new coach Guy Morriss hopes to change that soon, don't look for a lot of improvement anytime soon.

Oklahoma

Preseason No. 1 Oklahoma seems to be the team to beat this season in the Big 12 South, but that's nothing new for coach Bob Stoops and the Sooners. "We've earned a reputation over the last several years as being a good football team," Stoops said. "Regardless of where we're at, we get everybody's best shot and we're used to that."

The Sooners defense could be the best in the nation this season and showed what it could do in a 37-3 win against North Texas on Saturday.

Texas

The Longhorns know they have to get through the OU defense if they expect to finally win a Big 12 Championship under coach Mack Brown. Texas is 0-3 against OU since Stoops took over in Norman, and the Longhorns want to break that streak Oct. 11 with a new quarterback and an offensive line that doesn't have a lot of Big 12 game experience.

"I like what I see up front," Brown said. "We've got some inexperience in the offensive line, and we're not where we want to be, but we're getting better."

Behind the line will be junior quarterback Chance Mock, who backed up Chris Simms last season. Mock has a lot to prove this season if he wants to hold off sophomore Vincent Young from taking his position.

But Brown said he feels like Mock will be ready to play this year for the Horns.

Mock will have the luxury of throwing to a

TROY MILLER'S BIG 12 PREDICTIONS SOUTH			
1.		OKLAHOMA	11-1, 7-1
2.		TEXAS	10-2, 6-2
3.		TEXAS A&M	8-4, 6-2
4.		OKLAHOMA ST.	8-4, 4-4
5.		TEXAS TECH	4-8, 2-6
6.		BAYLOR	2-10, 0-8

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strong set of receivers and two running backs in Cedric Benson and Selvin Young that any Big 12 team would love to have.

Texas A&M

Coach Dennis Franchione has brought a sense of team unity and a win-now attitude to an A&M team that was already abundant in young talent. Quarterbacks Dustin Long and Reggie McNeal might be the best one-two punch at the position in the Big 12.

While McNeal started Saturday's game against Arkansas State, it looks like he and Long will still be battling to nail down the starting job.

The deep Aggie receiving corps adds to the already long list of exceptional receivers in the Big 12, but the Aggies lack depth in key areas. The offensive line was already thin before the loss of senior Andre Brooks to retirement and junior Jami Hightower to injury. The entire defense is thin, relying on inexperience and, in some cases, true freshmen to step in and provide time in a backup role.

If Franchione can work some magic, and the Oklahoma State offense lives up to its billing, a four-way race for the Big 12 South could be in the making.

Oklahoma State

Oklahoma State is poised to take on the big boys of the Big 12 in 2003 as it returns an impressive offensive trio. Junior quarterback Josh Fields, senior running back Tatum Bell and senior wide receiver Rashaun Woods all have a shot at being atop the Big 12 leaders this year.

Add redshirt freshman receiver D'Juan Woods, Rashaun's brother, to the mix, and the Cowboys might have the most lethal, battle-tested offense in the Big 12.

SPORTS IN BRIEF

Dawson and Zorn win more gold

Texas A&M compound archers Amber Dawson and Mary Zorn ended a medal-laden summer by leading the

United States to a team gold medal at the World University Games on Friday.

The United States defeated the South Koreans who were led by individual gold medalist Mi-Yeon Choi, 25-22 in the gold medal match.

Dawson and Zorn will combine to form two-thirds of the most decorated collegiate compound team of all time this season.

Texas A&M begins its competitive season on Nov. 7 at the Aggie Invitational.

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APPLICANTS: Please type your responses on a separate piece of paper, and attach a résumé and samples of your work (stories you have written for publications or classes, pages you have designed, photos taken, drawings made or other creative samples—just show us what you can do).

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- 2) What experience do you have that relates to the position for which you are applying? (include classes, seminars, etc.)
- 3) What changes do you feel would improve the quality of *The Battalion*? Give special attention to the section for which you're applying.

Turn in applications at 014 (basement) Reed McDonald Bldg. Interviews will begin immediately. For information, call Elizabeth Webb, 845-3313.

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Wayne Slater, Austin Bureau Chief, *Dallas Morning News*

Panelists

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Cindy Lawson, Executive Director, University Relations
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