

# SPORTS

THE BATTALION

Page 1B • Tuesday, September 16, 2003

## Big 12 falters against other BCS conference teams

By Stephen Hawkins  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

DALLAS — The small pocket of Arkansas fans celebrated victory at Texas by chanting "S-E-C!" and "over-rated." Colorado gave up the most points it has at home in 20 years, and couldn't pull off a Notre Dame-like comeback against Washington State, losing 47-26 to the Pac-10 Cougars. Iowa State watched as visiting Iowa's 321-pound offensive tackle Robert Gallery led a victory charge to claim the Cy-Hawk Trophy that goes to the winner of the in-state rivalry. The 18th-ranked Hawkeyes of the Big 10 won 40-21 to get the trophy back for the first time in six years.

It was a tough Saturday for the Big 12 against teams from the Bowl Championship Series.

After those games were done, Nebraska had to return to the ground to rally for a 18-10 win over Penn State to prevent a BCS shutout for the Big 12.

OK, the Big 12 still has the nation's No. 1 team — Oklahoma built a 38-0 halftime lead and rolled to a 52-28 win over Fresno State — and a 26-6 record against non-conference opponents.

But what about the long-term implications?

"With the BCS, if you lose early it's not OK, but it's fine as long as you win these next 10 games," said Texas receiver Roy Williams. "We're still in it. We worked too hard in the summer and in two-a-days to

let everything go downhill after one ballgame."

The Longhorns (1-1), coming off consecutive 11-win seasons,

have their eyes on a national title. But that goal took a hit, and their 20-game home winning streak ended, with the 38-28 loss in the first regular season meeting since 1991 against old South West Conference rival Arkansas.

"I don't know if stunned is the right word," said Longhorns coach Mack Brown. "I'm disappointed. Not happy."

Texas dropped seven spots to No. 13 in the new Associated

Press Top 25 on Sunday. That was one slot above poll newcomer Arkansas.

Colorado (2-1), the Big 12 North champion the last two years, had five turnovers and gave up three touchdowns of more than 70 yards.

Washington State, a week after blowing a 19-0 lead and losing in overtime to Notre Dame, scored 24 points in the first 6:39 of the second half to put away the Buffaloes, who plummeted out of the Top 25 from No. 17.

"We just had a total breakdown," said Colorado coach

Gary Barnett.

The Buffs may have lost more than the game, with quarterback Joel Klatt (injured right shoulder) and running back Bobby Purify (high ankle sprain) both injured. Barnett said Klatt is doubtful to next week's game at No. 10 Florida State.

Nebraska ran on 72 of its 78 plays, including 16 straight on an 80-yard drive for go-ahead touchdown on the opening drive of the second half to beat Penn State. Josh Davis carried 32 times for a career-high 179 yards and Jammal Lord added 100 yards on 20 attempts.

While saving some face for the Big 12, the Cornhuskers (3-0) also avenged a 40-7 loss at Penn State last season. They moved up three spots to 15th in

the new poll.

The Big 12, 4-1 against the BCS before Saturday, won't have to wait long for a chance to make up for the second Saturday in September meltdown.

There are four games next week against BCS teams, but three are on the road: Texas A&M (2-0) at No. 8 Virginia Tech, Colorado at Florida State, and Texas Tech (2-0) at North Carolina State, coming off a triple-overtime loss to defending national champion Ohio State. Oklahoma is home against UCLA.

After that, there are only two more games against BCS teams — No. 9 Pittsburgh at Texas A&M, and Texas Tech at Ole Miss on Sept. 27 — before all the Big 12 teams start going head-to-head in three weeks.

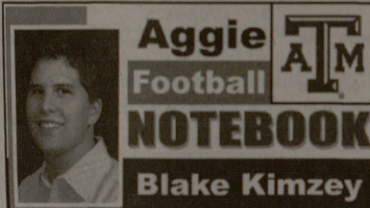
"I'm disappointed. Not happy."

— Mack Brown  
UT football coach

## Aggies taking a page from Holtz

It looks like Texas A&M football coach Dennis Franchione is taking his cadence from South Carolina coach Lou Holtz. With a bout against Virginia Tech looming Thursday, Franchione makes it sound like the Aggies haven't got a chance at putting points on the board.

This is an old Holtz tradition: butter them up with humble pie and then convincingly dismantle them on game day.



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"These guys are averaging 500 yards on offense, playing great defense, 36 first downs in one game and a whole bunch of first downs in the other, great punt returner, great kicking game team, they block punts like crazy and they're a top-10 ranked team," Franchione said of Virginia Tech. "I don't think we could ask for a much tougher first road trip."

The Aggies could legitimately be in danger of leaving the scoreboard blank if their offensive and defensive woes aren't eradicated before Thursday.

### Linebacking 101?

Fresh off receiving an earned scholarship, walk-on senior linebacker Scott Stickane could be getting a lot more playing time. With senior Jared Morris out for the season with a torn patella tendon in his left knee, there is a gaping hole in the defensive middle. Suffice to say the coaching staff feels the week-and-a-half break in its schedule is little more than a reprieve in facing Virginia Tech at less than full strength.

With four candidates waiting in the wings for the promotion, Franchione and defensive coordinator Carl Torbush will be doing a lot of plug-and-play this week in practice. With Stickane as the front-runner to replace Morris, Franchione & Co. will also look at sophomore Archie McDaniel, freshman Ta Ta Thompson and junior Blake Kendrick at middle.

"(Jared Morris) worked very hard at practice, I think he was a stabilizer out there for our defensive guys," Franchione said. "Scott (Stickane), I think, will be a lot



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With middle linebacker Jared Morris (not pictured) out for the season, walk-on Scott Stickane will see a lot more playing time, starting with Thursday night's game against Virginia Tech.

like him in that regard. His intangibles are very good."

### A good problem to have

Reggie or Dustin? Courtney or Derek? These redundant questions, almost guaranteed to linger all season, are good questions to have if you are Franchione. Despite playing sophomore quarterback Reggie McNeal the entire game against Utah, Franchione continues to maintain that the separation between the two is still a fine line.

It was the score, not job security, that kept McNeal in the game for its entirety. Expect Franchione to keep the masses guessing from week to week.

"There's not a great deal that separates those two guys yet," Franchione said. "We'll watch the week of practice, and see how they do."

Freshman Courtney Lewis gave the Aggies their first 100-yard rushing performance since junior Derek Farmer juked for

122 yards last season against Texas. Is Farmer's featured back status in jeopardy? Looking at the carry disparity could be telling. Lewis ran the ball 16 times compared to just five handoffs for Farmer.

### T-Murph

Look for Virginia Tech to key in on junior receiver Terrence Murphy. About the only thing Murphy didn't do against the Utes was kick field goals. Murphy took an end around handoff 80 yards for A&M's first score against Utah and piled up a lot of yardage against the Utes. He nabbed four catches for 76 yards and had kickoff returns of 58 and 77 yards that set the Aggies up for 10 points.

Find a math major, because that is roughly 251 of 507 total all purpose yardage, meaning without Murphy the Aggies' production would have been cut in half. Consider Murphy the newest offensive juggernaut for the Aggies, because in all likelihood, Virginia Tech certainly is.

## A&M, VT officials keeping eye on Isabel

Estes Thompson  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

TOPSAIL BEACH, N.C. — Residents up and down the East Coast boarded up windows with plywood, hauled their boats inland and stocked up on generators, batteries and flashlights Monday as a fearsome Hurricane Isabel churned toward land with winds howling at 140 mph.

Forecasters said Isabel could hit anywhere from North Carolina to New Jersey late Thursday or early Friday with sustained wind of up to 130 mph.

Even though the storm was still at least three days away, coastal residents were already taking precautions, and the Navy faced a decision on whether to move Atlantic Fleet ships out of harm's way.

Officials at the Virginia Tech Athletics Department announced Monday that it did not anticipate any changes to Thursday night's Texas A&M-

Virginia Tech football game, scheduled for 6:30 p.m. Virginia Tech has implemented a special committee to monitor Isabel.

A&M athletics director Bill Byrne said the Aggie football team will not change any of its prescheduled routines.

"We are proceeding with our schedule of traveling to Roanoke, Va., on Wednesday," Byrne said. "We will make the public aware of any changes to the scheduled contest. Foremost in our decision process is the safety and well-being of our student-athletes and fans."

At Taylor's Do-It Center hardware store in Norfolk, Va., assistant manager George Wolf said he was swamped with customers as soon as the doors opened at 8 a.m., and large batteries and flashlights were sold out.

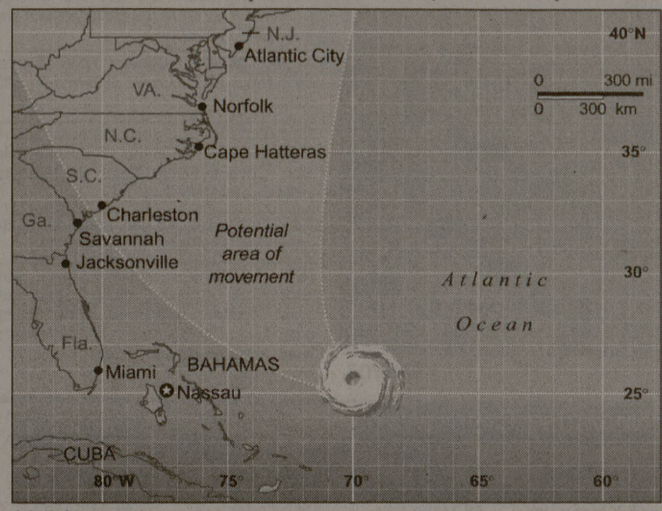
"You would have thought we were giving stuff away," Wolf said. "I just sold my last 30 sheets of plywood," Wolf said.

See Isabel on page 3B

### Hurricane Isabel turns northwest

Position: 25.6° N, 70.0° W  
Movement: NW at 8 mph

Sustained winds: 125 mph  
As of 5 p.m. EDT Monday



SOURCE: AccuWeather

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