

SPORTS

THE BATTALION

Page 1B • Thursday, January 29, 2004

No. 25 A&M women's tennis opens season in Kentucky

By Jon Gilbert
THE BATTALION

Ojeda. "Our goal is to be in the top 10 and we have a chance to get a real good win."

Senior Jessica Roland agrees that the competition will be tough this weekend.

"Kentucky is top-15 and Duke is top-10," Roland said. "It will be competitive."

The Aggies are led by Roland, ranked No. 26 in the nation in singles, who is coming off a year where she went 25-14 overall, 19-8 in team matches, and competed individually in the NCAA Championship. Roland also participated in doubles with junior Helga Vieira in the NCAA Championship.

"We're really focused on this season," Roland said. "This team is on its way up. What we've achieved is the best I've seen."

Other key returnees from last year's championship team include senior Roberta Spencer, junior Lauren Walker and sophomore Nicki Mechem. Last year Mechem had an

After winning the 2003 Big 12 conference championship, competing in four consecutive NCAA tournaments, and compiling a 150-68 record since 1995, the Texas A&M women's tennis team has gained a lofty status.

And with the territory comes high expectations.

A&M's Intercollegiate Tennis Association No. 25 pre-season ranking is the second-highest of any Big 12 team behind No. 17 Texas.

The Aggies begin their quest to repeat as Big 12 champions this weekend as they travel to Lexington, Ky., for three matches. A&M takes on No. 13 Kentucky on Friday at 1 p.m. followed by Maryland on Saturday and No. 9 Duke on Sunday.

"The competition will be tough, just as tough as we'll see the rest of the season," said A&M assistant coach Allison



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Senior Roberta Spencer returns a serve during a match against Texas A&M-Corpus Christi during the 2003 season.

impressive 30-9 overall record.

A&M's first home match is Feb. 14 against Rice University, with the conference season beginning on Feb. 27 when Iowa State

visits. Other significant matches include a visit to Waco on April 8 to take on Baylor and an April 20

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SPORTS IN BRIEF

Aggie women drop seventh straight game

The Texas A&M women's basketball team dropped its third straight game to a top-15 opponent when it lost to No. 7 Texas Tech 65-56 Wednesday night in Lubbock.

The Aggies (7-11, 0-7 Big 12) never allowed more than a 10-point margin in the second half after being down 30-29 at the break.

The Red Raiders (18-2, 4-2) were led by forward Cisti Greenwalt's double-double. Greenwalt had 19 points and 11 rebounds.

A&M senior point guard Toccara Williams had another outstanding game as she scored 16 points and dished out six assists.

Senior forward Lynn Classen added another 16 points while pulling down nine rebounds.

The Aggies face Iowa State Saturday at 7 p.m. at Reed Arena.

guard Jake Sullivan and junior center Jared Homan both added 20 points. Homan also pulled down 10 rebounds and contributed seven blocks to the Cyclone effort.

Aggie forward Jesse King came back from a nagging foot injury to give a dominating performance. King led the Aggies with 21 points and 11 rebounds in 29 minutes of play.

Sophomore guard/forward Antoine Wright added 17 points. Freshman point guard Acie Law IV had his second straight impressive game as he poured in 13 points and dished out two assists in only 19 minutes of play.

Iowa State set a Big 12 record for free throw attempts with 53 in the game. The Cyclones hit 28 of 42 free throws in the second half due to 25 Aggie fouls in the half.

Iowa State hit 21 of 28 free throws in the last four minutes of the game to seal the win.

A&M will return home to face No. 18 Texas Saturday at 12:30 p.m. at Reed Arena.

Aggie men lose another close game

The Texas A&M men's basketball team continues to fall just short as it lost to Iowa State, 89-82, Wednesday night at Hilton Coliseum in Ames, Iowa.

After holding a 36-33 lead at halftime, the Aggies (7-9, 0-5 Big 12) quickly relinquished the lead in front of a raucous Cyclone crowd. The Cyclones opened the half on an 11-2 run over the first 6:31.

Iowa State (12-4, 3-2) had three scorers with more than 20 points, led by freshman guard Will Blalock's 22. Senior

Basketball yell practice set for Friday afternoon

The Texas A&M yell leaders will hold a yell practice for both of A&M's basketball teams that will take place at 12:30 p.m. Friday at Rudder Fountain.

A&M men's basketball head coach Melvin Watkins and A&M women's head coach Gary Blair are scheduled to attend along with various players from both teams.

The Aggie men play No. 18 Texas on Saturday at 12:30 p.m. followed by the women, who play Iowa State at 7 p.m.

A&M men renew rivalry with SMU

By Jordan Meserole
THE BATTALION

Old rivalries will be renewed this Saturday when the No. 14 Texas A&M men's swimming and diving team faces Southern Methodist University in Dallas.

The Mustangs (3-0) and Aggies (7-1) have been facing off against each other since 1933, the first year A&M had a full varsity swimming team. Similar to the

outcome of that first meet, a 48-44 win for the Aggies, many of the meets between the two have been nail biters. A&M head coach Mel Nash feels that this year will be no different.

"They have a performer in every event that could beat us," Nash said. "Every single event is going to be a toss-up."

The Aggie men look to remain undefeated on the road this weekend, while the unranked Mustangs hope to keep their

undefeated record intact.

SMU holds 18 more wins in the series against the Aggies, but A&M has been gaining ground recently, going 4-1 over the past five years.

SMU head coach Eddie Sinnott recognizes A&M's power in the pool but said he isn't too concerned about it.

"Right now, is A&M a better team than

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