

SPORTS

THE BATTALION

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A&M shines on diamonds over the weekend

A&M wins Domino's Pizza Aggie Baseball Classic

By Kyle Davoust
THE BATTALION

The No. 14 Texas A&M baseball team had luck on its side Sunday, as it escaped with a 9-7 victory over the mistake-prone Arkansas Razorbacks at Olsen Field.

In what could have been an easy victory for the Razorbacks, the Aggies were able to rally from a 7-4 deficit by scoring five runs, three earned, in an error-filled ninth inning.

Entering the ninth, the Razorbacks seemed to have the game in hand with their three-run lead and sophomore closer Zach Butler on the mound.

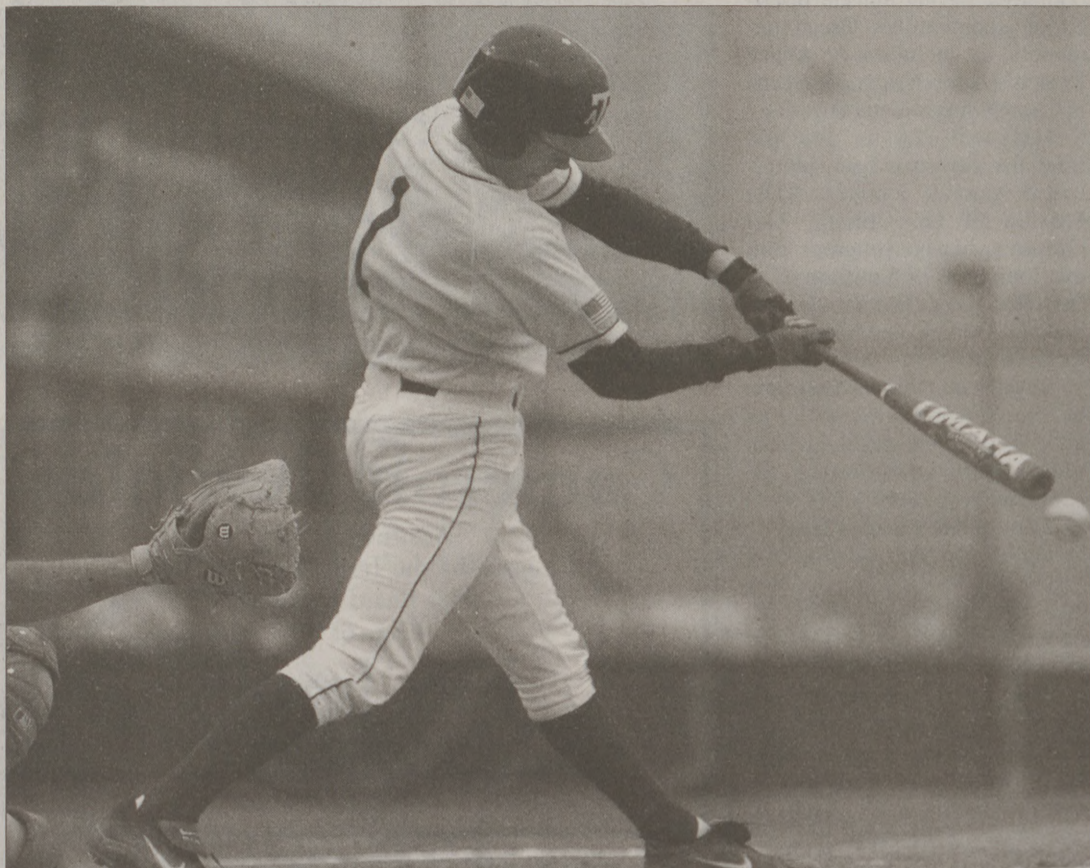
Butler started off the inning by walking the first two batters and then giving up an infield single to A&M sophomore shortstop Cliff Pennington, which loaded the bases with no outs.

A&M senior right fielder Cory Patton hit a fielder's choice to second, which scored sophomore first baseman Coby Mavroulis from third and left runners on the corners with one out.

Then came the Arkansas mistakes. The next batter, A&M sophomore centerfielder John Infante, hit a chopper down the third base line to Arkansas senior Brett Hagedorn, whose errant throw allowed Infante to reach safely while scoring A&M senior second baseman Eric Schindewolf from third.

After battling through a 13-pitch at bat, A&M senior first baseman Eric Scheidt hit a double in the left field gap, which scored Patton and Infante, giving the Aggies an 8-7 lead.

"With each pitch you gain a little more confidence," Scheidt said. "The more you foul off, the



SHARON AESCHBACH • THE BATTALION

A&M sophomore second baseman Parker Dalton hits a single to shortstop in the Aggie's 6-4 loss to Arkansas Saturday in the Domino's Pizza Aggie Baseball Classic. A&M avenged its loss by beating Arkansas 9-7 Sunday.

more pitches you see, so that allows you as a hitter to have a little bit. But you have to give it to the pitcher, he didn't back down either."

Another error, an infield single, and a hit batter gave the Aggies their final 9-7 cushion.

The ninth was not the first inning in which the Aggies benefited from Razorback mistakes.

Trailing 3-0 in the top of the second, A&M sophomore designated hitter Parker Dalton stepped to the plate with two

outs and the bases loaded.

Dalton hit a chopper to Hagedorn that should have ended the inning. While it looked as if Hagedorn could have easily tagged the runner or simply stepped on third to end the inning, he made an errant throw to first base, allowing all three Aggie base runners to score, while advancing Dalton to third.

"It's just a routine play," said Razorback head coach Dave Van Horn. "You just have to run over and tag the bag; that's it."

Yet another error on the ensuing play, this time a booted ball by Arkansas junior shortstop Scott Hode, brought Dalton home from third and gave the Aggies a 4-3 lead.

The gifts from Arkansas had the Aggies, including A&M head coach Mark Johnson, talking about 'Olsen Magic.'

"We talk about Olsen Magic because it does happen," Johnson said. "We got some help from Arkansas today, and we helped them a bunch too."

Softball goes 3-1 at Aggie Invitational II

By Brad Bennett
THE BATTALION

The price of errors for the No. 23 Texas A&M softball team was three runs on Saturday during its loss to the No. 17 University of Oregon, 4-1, at the Aggie Softball Complex.

The first of the two costly mistakes by the Aggies (11-9) came in the fourth inning when A&M junior catcher Nicole Robinson couldn't hold on to a long throw from freshman center fielder Sharonda McDonald. Oregon freshman center fielder Kayleen Hudson slid under the failed tag to score the second run for the Ducks (13-4).

The second costly error came in the top of the fifth when Aggie junior second baseman Sherah Atkins couldn't come up with a ground ball. The error resulted in Atkins missing the force out at second and Oregon sophomore shortstop Breanne Sabol scoring.

Atkins had a second error in the seventh that resulted in an Oregon run.

A&M head coach Jo Evans said Atkins' errors were close, and she shouldn't be blamed.

"It is tough. Sherah is an outfielder playing the infield," Evans said. "I feel bad for her. That is a tough spot to be in."

Oregon head coach Kathy Arendsen said the Aggies' errors are what cost them the game.

"Tonight they made more mistakes than we did," Arendsen said. "In these kind of games between top-ranked teams, that is usually the difference."

Arendsen said the victory was proof of the effectiveness of a defensive strategy.

"Our defense was outstanding tonight," Arendsen said. "We definitely won with our defense tonight."

Evans said Oregon's defense was the difference, especially the play of Oregon junior third baseman Ashley Richards.

"I thought they did a nice job defensively," Evans said. "The third baseman did a nice job."

Arendsen said Richards is a major defensive force.

"She's a feisty kid," Arendsen said. "She is always looking for a way (to win). She doesn't take anything for granted."

Evans said Arendsen's decision to pull Oregon starting pitcher Anissa Meashintubby (5-1) in the bottom of the fourth for junior Ani Nyhus, after four hits that inning, was a decision that helped win the game.

"They did a good job of getting Meashintubby out in a hurry," Evans said. "(Nyhus) came in and gave us a completely different look."

Arendsen said she doesn't have a closer, but instead likes to use her bullpen to throw off the rhythm of the game.

"I like to change pitchers. I am not one who goes for all complete games (for pitchers)," Arendsen said. "When hitters have seen the pitchers for the third time it is a great advantage to the hitter."

A&M senior pitcher Lindsey Wilhelmsen (2-3) threw for all seven innings with

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Homestand starts with two wins

By Kyle Davoust
THE BATTALION

The No. 11 Texas A&M men's tennis team did a little experimenting with its doubles lineup Saturday as it cruised to 7-0 victories against the University of Texas-San Antonio and Southeastern Louisiana.

The most obvious change to the lineup was the absence of the nation's No. 1 doubles team of juniors Ante Matijevic and Lester Cook. Each played with different partners, as Cook paired with junior Zack Malmgren against UTSA, and Matijevic teamed with redshirt freshman Alex Strom against Southeastern Louisiana.

"We were trying to play our depth, so that's why you saw the different combinations in doubles was to give some guys a chance that don't get a chance to play all the time," said A&M head coach Tim Cass. "All in all, I was pleased with how they played. We had a slow start on a couple of courts, but then we were able to settle down and get into the matches pretty good."

Also notable was the pairing of seniors Khaled El Dorry and Mohamed Dakki against UTSA. It was only the second time the two had played together.

"I thought Khaled and Mohamed played well down there at (court No. 3)," Cass said. "So we could see that team again."

The wins maintained A&M's perfection at

home, bringing its overall home record to 6-0.

Against UTSA, the Aggies (11-4, 2-0 Big 12) barely broke a sweat as they dominated the match. After sweeping the doubles point, the Aggies were able to win all of their singles matches in straight sets.

El Dorry set the tone at court No. 5 with a perfect 6-0, 6-0 victory over UTSA sophomore Joe Olfindo. "I struggled earlier in the season, so I had to kind of take a step back and get back to basics in practice," El Dorry said. "I played really well, and I'm happy with the way I played, so hopefully I can help the team out one way or another."

The loss was the fourth straight overall for UTSA. Winning was harder against Southeastern Louisiana.

Things looked bad for the Aggies early on in doubles, as they were losing to the Lions at two of the three courts. Freshman Brett Joelson and Marvin Rolle overcame a 4-1 deficit, rallying to an 8-4 win. Malmgren and sophomore John Nallon also had to fight hard, coming back from 4-2 to win, 8-6.

In singles, however, the Aggies reverted back to form, winning all of the matches in straight sets.

Lions head coach Jason Hayes said he was still impressed by the way his team held up.

"I was real proud of how our guys played," Hayes said. "This is such a great environment to play tennis in. We told our guys before they went out that this is one of those special places to play and to go out and have fun, and I think they played well."

Ags finish winless at Reed



JP BEATO III • THE BATTALION

A&M head coach Melvin Watkins gets on his hands and knees to see a play during A&M's 76-70 loss to Colorado Saturday at Reed Arena. The loss assured the Aggies of having a winless home conference record.

By Troy Miller
THE BATTALION

On a day that was supposed to be reserved for Texas A&M men's basketball's six seniors, the buzz in the air at Saturday's 76-70 loss to Colorado at Reed Arena was all about head coach Melvin Watkins and if the loss would be his final home game as head coach.

Even Watkins asked the media after Saturday's game, "Everybody got a tape recorder for my last speech?"

The loss assured A&M a winless conference record for the first time since the Big 12 formed in 1996. The last time A&M went winless in conference was in the 1990-91 season when the Aggies went 0-8 in the Southwestern Conference.

Colorado head coach Ricardo Patton said he knows what Watkins is going through. Patton took over at Colorado nine seasons ago when the Buffaloes were the cellar dwellers of the Big 8 Conference and faced similar talk during his tenure in Boulder, Colo.

But Colorado (17-8, 9-5) stuck with Patton, and last season Patton led the Buffaloes to its second NCAA tournament appearance of his tenure. Barring any major collapses, Patton's 2003-04

Buffalo version will make it two consecutive trips. "I don't think you can give a five- or six-year stamp on turning a (program) around," Patton said. "I hope Coach Watkins gets a little more time."

The Aggies began their last home game of the season by jumping out to a 42-36 halftime lead on the shoulder of senior guard Kevin Turner's 14 first-half points.

Turner would finish the game with a career-high 21 points, shooting five-for-eight from beyond the three-point arc.

"At halftime I wanted to stop the game," Watkins said. "They have some rule that you have to play 20 more minutes."

In the second half, Colorado came out with a stronger offensive presence. Buffalo junior center David Harrison owned the paint as he scored 21 points and collected eight rebounds in the game. "(Harrison) is a load wherever they play him," Watkins said. "He's an NBA player in a college uniform."

Colorado senior guard Blair Wilson contributed 15 second-half points after scoring just four in the first.

"Blair really sparked our offense," Patton said.

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Aggie netters beat Missouri, 6-1

By Jon Gilbert
THE BATTALION

Attitude and fight are two competitive traits that Texas A&M head women's tennis coach Bobby Kleinecke said he constantly tries to instill in his players. Those two mentalities helped the No. 17 Aggies to a hard-fought 6-1 win over Missouri Sunday at the Bryan Tennis Center.

A&M (7-5, 2-0 Big 12) ground out a methodical win against the Tigers (6-4, 0-4) to win its fourth consecutive match.

"Our attitude is that no matter who we play, we're going to come out and compete," Kleinecke said. "We stress this, and they responded."

The Aggies came out and set the tone early as they dominated Missouri in doubles to

win the point.

A&M senior Jessica Roland and sophomore Nicki Mechem teamed up to defeat the Tigers' freshmen Erika Joshena and Yelena Olshanskaya, 9-2. Roland and Mechem dominated from the start as they overpowered and outwitted their opponents with every shot.

"Doubles helped get us going," Mechem said. "We've improved so much. Our attitude is, we're going to win. All of us are tired of losing."

That desire to win carried over to singles as A&M junior Helga Viera and Roland notched relatively easy wins.

Then, junior Lauren Walker clobbered Olshanskaya 6-0, 6-1. Walker took control early and never gave Olshanskaya a chance to establish her game.

The most competitive singles match was Mechem against Missouri's junior Mary Barry. Mechem lost the first game 7-6, then dominated the second game 6-0 and won the tiebreaker 1-0(8). It was Mechem's fight and determination, as well as the support from the crowd that helped her get the win.

"One of my strengths is mental toughness," Mechem said. "I'm just going to fight. I used the energy from the crowd, and that helped me."

The win was the third for the weekend.

"We competed in all nine matches," said Missouri head coach Blake Starkey. "We didn't lose, we just got beat."

A&M will next face Houston at 1:30 p.m. Saturday at the George P. Mitchell Tennis Center.