

SPORTS

THE BATTALION

Page 5 • Wednesday, March 31, 2004

On and off the field A day in the life of Jana James

By Ryan Irby
THE BATTALION

Texas A&M junior outfielder Jana James stands at a fearless, yet small 5 foot 5, but that doesn't stop her from being one of the most intimidating players on the A&M softball squad. Aggie opponents know not to let her freckles and strawberry-blond mane fool them; James is a terror on the softball field.

James made her mark this season as a clutch-hitter with her most recent heroics coming in the bottom of the seventh inning of last Saturday's contest with No. 9 University of Oklahoma when she got the best of OU All-American pitcher Kami Keiter. James battled through a two-out, 12-pitch at bat to single home the winning run her fifth consecutive game-winner.



Junior outfielder **Jana James** signs autographs for young fans after the softball game against OU last Saturday.

SportsCenter replay, James modestly dubbed it "probably the third best catch I have ever made."

However, there is a softer side of James that isn't terrorizing opponents with game-winning hits and highlight-reel diving catches. In addition to being a

starter on the field, James takes the time to be involved with Aggie Athletes Involved, a campus

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Countdown to Student-Athlete Day	
APRIL 6	
A day in the life of...	
MON.	• Lester Cook Tennis
TUES.	• Jennifer Jones Equestrian
WED.	• Jana James Softball
THURS.	• Jamie Riojas Track & Field
FRI.	• Justin Moore Baseball
APRIL 5	• Dylan Leal Basketball
APRIL 6	• Terrence Murphy Football

After leaping over the top of the fence to rob Texas Tech of a game-winning home run in the Big 12 Tournament last year in a grab worthy of

Softball heads to Waco to play No. 21 Baylor

By Ryan Irby
THE BATTALION

The Texas A&M softball team will continue to face the Big 12's best as it travels to Waco this Wednesday to take on No. 21 Baylor University at 6:30 p.m. for Brazos River bragging rights.

A&M (20-15, 2-0) is currently on a two-game winning streak after defeating No. 9 University of Oklahoma twice in a pair of one-run victories, 1-0 and 5-4. The Aggies had not beaten OU in over four years and had not swept the Sooners since 1984.

"There was no give up in our kids," said A&M head coach Jo Evans about the pair of wins. "It was only fight and determination, and you could see that on the field."

Baylor (31-6, 2-0) had a two-game sweep of its own over the University of Kansas in Waco, in which junior pitcher Cristin Vitek (19-3) tossed a

no-hitter for the Bears. Baylor continues an impressive 25-game run in which they have had 24 victories.

Something the Aggies will not have on Wednesday is the invaluable home-field advantage they had in the OU series. On Saturday, 822 fans passed through the gates at the Aggie Softball Complex, the sixth-largest crowd in A&M history. Sunday's contest brought 713 to witness the finishing touches on a historical weekend.

With the elation set aside and focus turning forward, Evans said A&M will look for continued improvement in a tough battle with the Bears.

"We have decided what standard we are going to play at," Evans said. "I always tell the kids that you don't turn the corner until you take a few steps forward, and we are in the process of doing that right now."

Wednesday's action at Getteman Field in Waco will be the first game in a two-game series

that returns to College Station for the finale on April 14. The road trip to Waco also marks the beginning of a four-game stint on the road for the Aggies that sends them to Ames, Iowa, for two games with Iowa State before finishing in Austin with a game against No. 23 Texas on April 7th.

"Our focus now is more on us," said A&M junior shortstop Adrian Gregory, who homered in Sunday's contest with OU. "It's more on us and our single at-bats."

A&M will use the OU stand as a spring board to carry them forward in a season anticipated to see the Aggies vying for a Big 12 title. Oklahoma is predicted to win the conference, followed by Nebraska.

A&M junior outfielder Jana James, who provided the game-winning hit in Saturday's thriller, said the only direction for the fearless Aggies to go is forward.

"We go in to Baylor on Wednesday, and we are going to keep going forward from there," James said.

SPORTS IN BRIEF

Aggie baseball posts victory over Texas State, 10-5 in 11 innings

It took 11 innings and three pitchers, but the Aggies overcame a two-run deficit to beat Texas State 10-5 Tuesday night in San Marcos.

The Aggies scored five runs in the eleventh off Wildcats pitcher Chris Jean. Jean was one of seven pitchers the Wildcats went through Tuesday. The game went back and fourth as the lead changed hands three times with the Aggies taking the early lead going up 2-1 in the second and extending that by one in the top of the fifth. The Wildcats then took over with three runs in the bottom of the third and one in the sixth. A pair of runs in the seventh and eighth took the game to extra innings where the Aggies made a comeback.

Senior second baseman Erik Schindewolf led the Aggies offense, going four for five at the plate with three runs. Left fielder junior Andrew Baldwin only got one hit Tuesday but made it count, scoring Schindewolf and center fielder junior Travis Bartek to take the lead in the eleventh. Pinch hitter sophomore John Infante put up impressive stats going two for two with two RBIs. Senior right fielder Cory Patton also had a good game with three hits, one run and one RBI.

Aggie sophomore pitcher Robert Ray started for the Aggies and threw five strike outs, but he gave up nine hits, four runs and had four errors and was pulled in the fourth. Freshman Austin Creps came in for Ray, giving up four hits and one run. Freshman Blake Rampy closed the game with three strike outs giving up no runs.

The Aggies' next game is Wednesday against University of Texas-San Antonio at Olsen Field at 7 p.m.



Sophomore **Jessica Kapchinski** pitches against Oklahoma last Saturday.

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