

## THE BATTALION

Wednesday, March 31, 2004

## James

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service group, to provide service off the field.

"When we aren't practicing, we go out and help in the community," she said. "Last week we went to Bee Creek Park and signed some autographs for little kids. It's fun to see them."

James said she realizes that being an Aggie softball player can have a huge impact on girls just learning to play the game who look up to the Aggies for guidance.

"Little kids see us and want to have that dream of going to college and playing softball. It encourages them to go to college after high school," she said.

On campus, James is just another student; her classes are just a little earlier, and she works a little harder than the average Aggie.

Practice begins around 3 p.m. at the Aggie Softball Field, which means that all the players must have classes done by around 2 p.m. James' schedule is loaded with 8 a.m. classes, weightlifting sessions and softball practice that lasts into the evening.

When the alarm clock hits 6 a.m., James rolls out of bed to begin another day.

"All of our classes are early in the morning," James said. "I usually have 8 o'clock or 9:10 classes, I sit through class, go home and get ready to go to practice, go lift, head to practice, and try to squeeze lunch in sometime between."

Although the team has Mondays off, every member is required to complete two weightlifting sessions per week in addition to normal practice.

James' dedication to her responsibilities not

only shines on the diamond, but in the classroom as well. The spring semester is filled with games and practice and when they girls aren't playing, they are studying.

"We aren't even here most of the time," James said, regarding the travel requirements of the season. "When we have free time when we are here, we have to study."

James' comments come as no surprise to people who realize that these women are more than just athletes, but students too. There is no professional softball league, so most women are forced to give up the game after school and focus on a career. James, who is majoring in agricultural development, sees no reason to rush out of school.

"I don't know what I want to do yet," she said. "I will definitely try and get a good job, maybe move back home and work there."

OU pitcher Keiter knows all too well what James can do on the field. When Keiter elected to walk Aggie sophomore Rocky Spencer in the seventh inning of Saturday's game to get James in front of the pitcher, many considered the move to be disrespectful toward James' abilities, but Jana welcomed the challenge.

"When they walked her, I said 'Bring it.' I was ready to go," she said. "They made that call, they gotta live with it."

Twelve pitches later, OU suffered its first loss to A&M in 10 consecutive meetings as James laced a two-out single off of Keiter's foot. James could do nothing but smile as the winning run crossed the plate.

Whether she's signing autographs for the youngest Aggie fans or smashing game-winning runs, one thing is certain: James is a hit.

## NFL extends life for instant replay

By Dave Goldberg  
ASSOCIATED PRESS

PALM BEACH, Fla. (AP) — The NFL once again compromised on instant replay, deciding Tuesday to keep it for five more years rather than putting it in permanently.

The owners did add an extra coaches' challenge for teams who successfully used two challenges. Since replay was reinstated in 1999, teams were limited to just two challenges, except for the last two minutes of each half, when a replay official could order a review.

Also, a federal appeals court in New York agreed to hear arguments to overturn the lower court ruling allowing Ohio State sophomore Maurice Clarett and other underclassman and high schoolers into the draft. NFL chief counsel Jeff Pash said if the court rules in the NFL's favor before the April 24-25 draft, Clarett, Southern California sophomore Mike Williams and seven others would not be included.

Should that happen and the NFL subsequently loses the appeal, a supplemental draft for those players would be held within 10 days of the court decision.

But the NFL seemed optimistic the court would uphold its longstanding rule that a player can not be drafted until he has been out of high school for three years.

"Yes, I think there is a very substantial chance he will not be in the draft," Pash said of Clarett.

Pash said the hearing will be April 19 or 20. The vote on replay was 29-3, with Kansas City, Indianapolis and Cincinnati voting against, but Arizona voting for it for the first time in the two decades it has been considered.

"Some people were still concerned about replay," commissioner Paul Tagliabue said about not instituting it permanently. "And there were many, including myself, who felt that putting it in for five years rather than permanently would provide an incentive for the officiating department and the league office to continue to find ways to improve it."

Twenty-four votes were needed from the 32 teams to keep it. That was another reason, Tagliabue said, why some teams were reluctant to put it in permanently — if that were done, it would require 24 votes to get it out.

Although it was not put in permanently, the extension was the longest ever for replay.

It was first instituted in 1986 and extended a year at a time through the 1991 season, when it was removed, largely over concerns about the time it took to review plays. In that system, a replay official in a booth would decide what to challenge and review it.

Replay came back in 1999 with the challenge system and in 2001 was extended for three years.

The additional challenge in this package was added to reward coaches who had gotten both of them right.

But that could be rare. Last season, there was only one instance when a team had two successful challenges — Carolina against Houston.

The revenue sharing agreement, which would have expired on Wednesday, was extended for another 15 years. But before that happened, there was extensive debate over its future.

While no one questioned the concept by which the bulk of league revenues are apportioned — primarily the \$80 million per team from television — owners such as Dallas' Jerry Jones and Washington's Dan Snyder want wider marketing rights for their teams' products. At the same time, owners in smaller markets, including Buffalo's Ralph Wilson, Indianapolis' Jim Irsay and Pittsburgh's Dan Rooney, expressed concern about what they consider an increasing disparity in cash flow between haves and have-nots.

"There are a lot of issues that we have to discuss," said Jeff Lurie, owner of the Philadelphia Eagles, one of three teams to abstain on the vote, along with Tampa Bay and Oakland. "We're not talking about the basics — television. But there are lots of ways of sharing other money that doesn't involve that. That's what we're going to study."

In other news Tuesday:

—The owners renewed the NFL Trust, which provides \$4 million per team in licensing revenue for shirts, hats and other products with team logos. But Tagliabue agreed to appoint a nine-member committee to look at all aspects of revenue sharing in the face of questions from several teams, led by Washington, Dallas and Miami.

—Tagliabue said he was receptive to a contract extension beyond May 2005, when his current contract expires. However, the commissioner, who will turn 64 in November, added: "I don't want to work forever."

## SPORTS IN BRIEF

## Aggie tennis takes Tulsa 4-3

The No. 25 Texas A&M men's tennis team gained even more momentum Tuesday with a quality road win over No. 49 Tulsa, 4-3. The victory was the fifth straight for A&M.

Things didn't look good for the Aggies early on, as the Golden Hurricanes were able to win the doubles point. A&M's top-ranked doubles team of juniors Lester Cook and Ante Matijevic fell for the second straight time at court No. 1, this time to Tulsa seniors Dustin Taylor and Alejandro Tejerina.

The Aggies were able to rebound by taking four of the six singles matches in route to victory. The win was sealed as Cook, ranked No. 20 in singles, defeated Taylor, 6-7, 6-3, 6-0.

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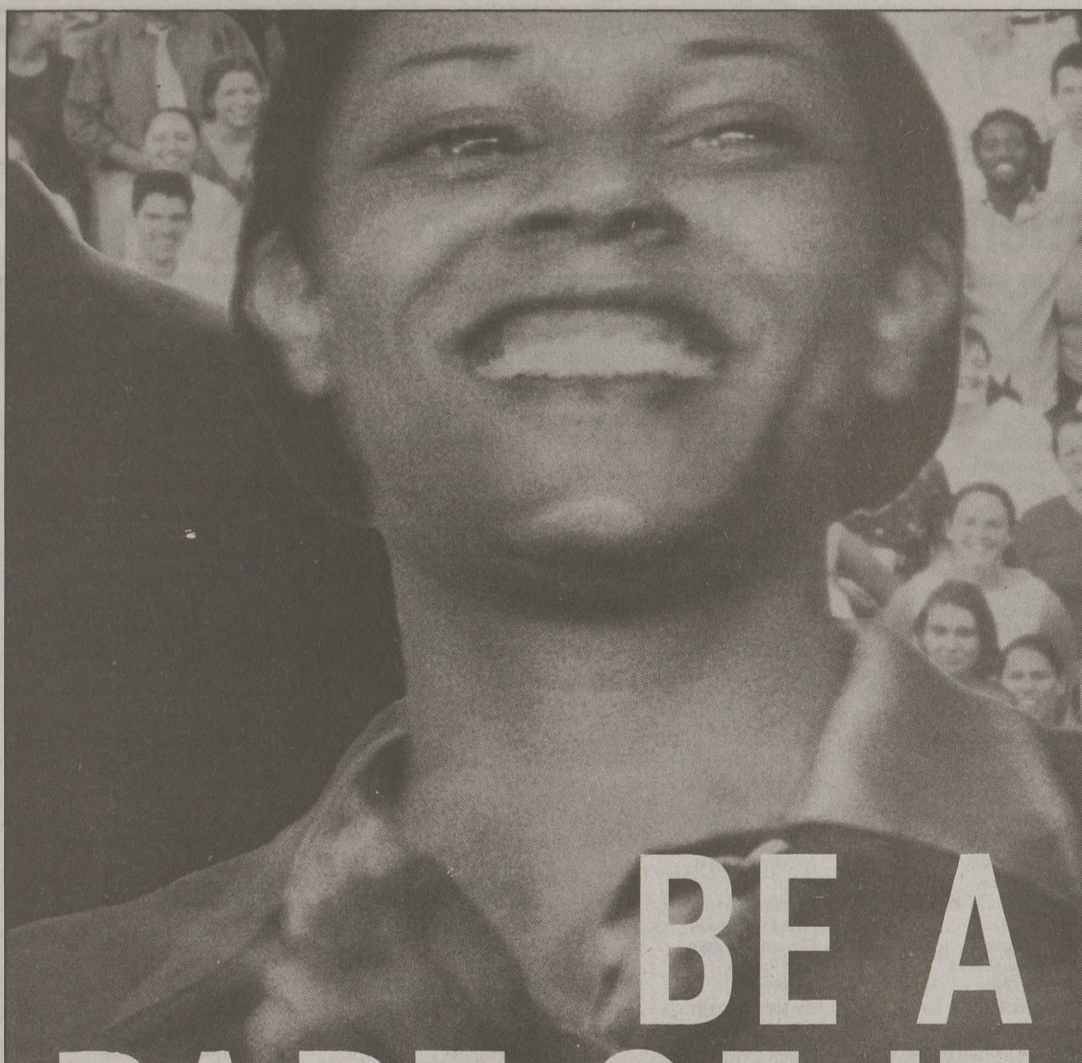
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