

SPORTS

THE BATTALION

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Living a dream

By Troy Miller
THE BATTALION

Texas A&M men's basketball head coach Billy Gillispie described a dream of making a power in the Big 12 at the press conference announcing his hire on March 10 at Reed Arena.

Since then, Gillispie has been working at making the dream come true just as he at every other stop of his coaching career. "It's been hectic," Gillispie said. "It's been hard and furious, but that's the way I like it." But to Gillispie, coaching basketball is a dream unto itself.

"I love working," he said. "I've never really considered being a basketball coach work — it's more like a dream."

Growing up in Graford, Texas, a town of little less than 600 people and 90 miles west of Dallas near Possum Kingdom Lake, Gillispie said he always wanted to be a coach. After graduating with a class of 20 high school seniors, Gillispie went to near-Ranger Junior College where he played basketball and basketball.

After two years at Ranger, Gillispie traveled to Southwest Texas State University where his coaching career began.

After serving as a graduate assistant at TSSU for three years, Gillispie moved into Texas high school ranks, first coaching Killeen High School. Eight years and four schools later, Gillispie took Killeen to the Texas Class 5A Final Four where his team lost in the semifinals.

In 1993-94, Gillispie served one season as assistant coach and recruiting coordinator at South Plains Junior College before getting the same job for the next three seasons at Baylor University.

Gillispie's high school coaching days and four years in the college ranks created ties that University of Tulsa head coach Bill Self, now head coach at the University of Kansas, wanted in an assistant coach and recruiter when he took over at Tulsa before the 1997-98 season.

Coach Self needed someone at Tulsa



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY JOHN C. LIVAS • THE BATTALION

Texas A&M men's basketball head coach Billy Gillispie is taking over as Aggie coach after two seasons as head coach at the University of Texas-El Paso.

A&M softball blanks Baylor

By Troy Miller
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The Texas A&M softball team avenged its only loss of the Big 12 conference season Wednesday as it defeated No. 20 Baylor University, 2-0, at the Aggie Softball Complex.

Senior pitcher Jessica Kapchinski improved her streak without allowing an earned run to 48 innings as she threw a four-hit complete game shutout of the Bears (37-10, 7-3 Big 12) to improve her record to 11-5.

"You can't pay attention to the streak as you approach every game as trying to keep your team in the game," Kapchinski said. "The biggest thing is our team is on a good streak in the Big 12."

The win marks the sixth straight conference victory for the Aggies (26-16, 8-1) since losing to Baylor March 31 in Waco, Texas.

"This win was huge," said A&M junior shortstop Adrian Gregory. "We have a goal, and that's to win the Big 12 Championship. This is a big, big win for us."

Kapchinski held Baylor at bay for most of the game until the bottom of the sixth inning when she hit Baylor sophomore left fielder Kelly Osburn with the Aggies leading 2-0. Bear sophomore right fielder Harmony Schwethelm followed with a single to left field. A fielder's choice and another hit batter loaded the bases for Baylor with only one out.

"The game was in our hands at that time," Gregory said. "The pressure was on them — it wasn't on us."

After the Aggies had a conference with head coach Jo Evans in the pitcher's circle, Kapchinski struck out Baylor clean-up hitter Danelle Arnold. Kapchinski followed by getting Baylor senior center fielder Kelly Levesque to ground out to Aggie senior second baseman Sherah Atkins to end the inning with the clean slate intact.

"Any young pitcher would've been rattled in that situation," said Baylor head coach Glenn Moore. "She got her composure and faced the meat of our order. That's the one thing we've lacked all year is big hits in situations from our three, four and five hitters. They'll hit whenever it's not crucial. That scenario we need to improve on."

A&M capitalized on its chances as it left only one runner on base in the game. The Aggies started quickly out of the gate as freshman center fielder Sharonda McDonald led off the bottom of the first inning with a triple to right field.

A&M junior right fielder Jana James walked two batters later to put runners on the corners with one out. After Gregory struck out, Evans gave James the green light to steal.

James got into a rundown between first and second, allowing McDonald to score before being tagged out.

"(Baylor's) got to make the

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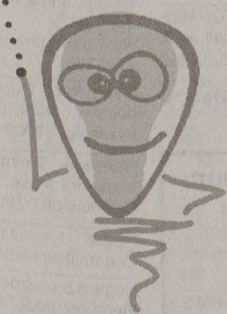
TAMU Energy Conservation Committee Announces Winners!

Slogan Design is awarded to Francisco J. Bolado.

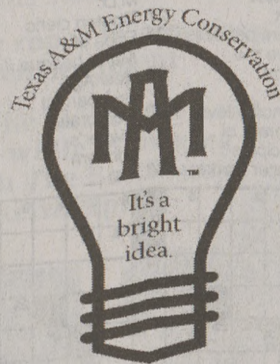
Conserving Energy:

The New Aggie Tradition

Mascot Design is awarded to Norma Morales.



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