

## Annual Maroon and White game slated for Saturday

By Jordan Meserole  
THE BATTALION

The Texas A&M football team will hold its annual Maroon and White scrimmage at 3 p.m. Saturday at Kyle Field, providing Aggie football fans with a temporary football fix until the first regular season game rolls around in the fall.

The annual scrimmage marks the final spring practice for the football team and gives coaches the last chance to take notes on problem areas before practices resume in the fall.

"We've made a lot of progress in these 11 practices," A&M head coach Dennis Franchione said. "The guys have been very purposeful in practicing and are working hard to show they want to improve." Franchione said he and the other coaches have been focusing a little more on the defense in the practices. Last season, the A&M defense ranked near the bottom of most Big 12 defensive

categories and often let opponents score as many as 30, 40 and even 70 points a game.

"In every aspect, year two is easier than year one. The defensive guys are more familiar with the scheme now and are playing faster," Franchione said. "We're not where we want to be yet and we're not disappointed in what we've accomplished in this amount of time."

Fans will get their first look at freshman quarterback Stephen McGee who came to A&M a semester early after graduating from Burnet High School in three and one-half years. Despite last



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Texas A&M redshirt freshman running back Courtney Lewis scores a touchdown in A&M's 45-33 win over the University of Kansas on Nov. 3, 2003, at Kyle Field. A&M will host the annual spring Maroon and White game Saturday at 3 p.m. at Kyle Field.

season being clouded with a quarterback controversy over sophomore Reggie McNeal and junior Dustin Long (now playing at Sam Houston State University), Franchione said there is no controversy this season.

"Reggie McNeal is our starting

quarterback," Franchione said. "We believe Reggie deserves to be in that position at this point in time. Stephen and Ty (Branyon) are making great progress toward being the next in line to Reggie."

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## Aggie baseball hosts first-place Sooners

By Brad Bennett  
THE BATTALION

Parents won't be the only ones coming to Aggieland this weekend as the No. 18 University of Oklahoma baseball team has a three-game series with No. 13 Texas A&M at Olsen Field starting at 7 p.m. Friday.

Parents' Weekend has historically drawn some of the largest crowds of the season; three of the top 15 crowds at Olsen Field have been during Parents' Weekend in 1999, 2002 and 2001.

The fans should not be disappointed as the Aggies (30-9, 6-6 Big 12) fight to gain ground on the Big 12-leading Sooners (23-12, 10-2). A sweep would put the Aggies one game behind OU, but sophomore first baseman Coby Mavroulis said he is not focused on sweeping the Big 12 leader.

"We got to at least take two and try to get a sweep from

them," Mavroulis said.

A&M head coach Mark Johnson said the two teams are evenly matched.

"Oklahoma is 10-2 (Big 12) so they are sitting on top of this thing," Johnson said. "We are similar ball clubs in that they have two pitchers dominating the ball club."

Johnson said OU senior pitcher Mark Roberts is the biggest threat on the mound. Roberts is leading his team with a .172 ERA.

Johnson said he is confident in his remaining pitching staff, besides Texas A&M's two top pitchers junior Zach Jackson and freshman Jason Meyer. But he said all his pitchers need to have more confidence in themselves.

"It is just typical freshman stuff," Johnson said. "We just need to move past that."

The Aggie bats have been hot lately, with all but two

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## A&M men's tennis travels to Austin for showdown with Horns

By Kyle Davoust  
THE BATTALION

It seems as though the No. 21 Texas A&M men's tennis team is finally living up to its preseason potential as the 2004 season winds down.

The Aggies (18-7, 4-1 Big 12) struggled through much of the early season, with tough losses on the road to ranked

opponents. As of late, however, A&M has been on a tear, winning seven of the last eight matches beginning with an emotional 4-3 win over the University of Tulsa on the road and culminating in a home win over No. 11 Rice University.

"Before the match against Tulsa, we said everything that needed to be said and we got everything out, and I think that was the turning point for us," said A&M

junior Lester Cook. "It was a really tough match that came down to the last match, and I don't know, but something just happened and we came together and have been a better team ever since."

The Aggies hope to continue this recent surge as they head into an important match Saturday in Austin at the Penick-Allison Tennis Center against rival No. 30 University of Texas. With

Baylor University already clinching the Big 12 regular season title, this match has become a battle for second place as well as seeding for the conference and national tournaments.

The Longhorns (13-7, 4-1) are in desperate need of a win, after being blown out in consecutive matches by Baylor and Rice, respectively.

"Make no mistake, we've gotten

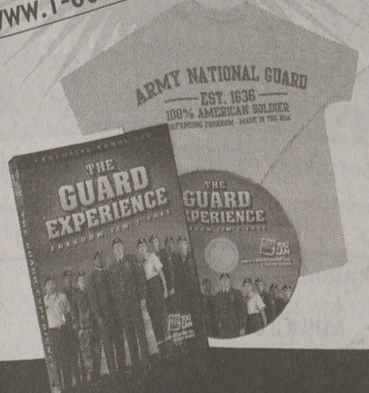
beat badly. We just haven't played well the last couple of matches," said Texas head coach Michael Center. "We had a few guys out against Rice, and we just don't have the depth that we've had in past years."

Despite its obvious importance, this match is as much about pride as anything

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