

SPORTS

THE BATTALION

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A&M men's tennis finishes season with win over OSU

By Kyle Davoust
THE BATTALION

The No. 23 Texas A&M men's tennis team went into Saturday's season finale against No. 29 Oklahoma State University playing the best tennis it had played all year. The Aggies, who came in winning eight of their last nine, mimicked their recent play with a dominating 6-1 victory over the Cowboys at the George P. Mitchell Tennis Center.

The win was important on many levels for the Aggies. It not only kept their momentum going, it secured second place in the Big 12 conference, which means avoiding No. 2 Baylor University (No. 1 Big 12) until the last round of the Big 12 Tournament.

On an emotional level, it gave the Aggies' lone senior, team captain Khaled El Dorry, a win on Senior Day. Depending on if the Aggies are selected to host a round of the NCAA Tournament, the match could have been the last at home for the Aggies' leader.

"What he's put into this program is what you would hope student athletes in all programs would put in," said A&M head coach Tim Cass. "He has been an emotional leader for our team for three years. He really is a proud Aggie, a great student and a hell of a tennis player."

On the way to the win, the Aggies accomplished something that had been eluding them for a while: They won the doubles point. The Aggies have struggled in doubles play recently, which is certainly not a characteristic of a team coached by Cass. The struggles have caused Cass to experiment with his lineup, even splitting up his top team of juniors Lester Cook and Ante Matijevic. Noting it as a failed experiment, Cass reunited Cook and Matijevic, resulting in the Aggies winning in doubles



Texas A&M senior **Marvin Rolle** returns a serve in his doubles match against Oklahoma State Saturday at the George P. Mitchell Tennis Center. A&M beat OSU, 6-1.

for the first time in five matches.

"I think in reality that there are seven points and that no point is more important than the other one. But that doubles point seems to have a mental side to it," Cass said. "This team has convinced me that you can win after losing doubles, but I like winning the doubles point because it puts you in the driver's seat."

After gaining the point, the Aggies quickly moved to a 2-0 advantage as freshman Bryan Wooten continued his impressive

play by defeating OSU sophomore Juan Felipe Diaz, 6-4, 6-1.

Shortly thereafter OSU brought the score to 2-1, when freshman Daniel Byrnes defeated A&M freshman Brett Joelson, 6-2, 6-4.

That, however, would be the first and last point for the Cowboys, as A&M's top two players quickly brought the match to an end. Cook had little trouble at court No. 1, easily defeating junior Mark Van Elden, 6-4, 6-2. The clincher then came

when Matijevic finished off senior Yevgen Bondarchuk, 6-2, 6-4, giving the Aggies nine wins in their last 10 matches.

"Texas A&M really came to play today," said OSU head coach James Wadley. "(Cook) I thought played very well and very solid. He didn't miss any serves or returns. He hit his forehand well, and he was passing off his backhand side. And Ante is Ante. He's tough as a boot. He just doesn't lose many sets, let alone matches."

Aggie women's tennis takes two

By Jon Gilbert
THE BATTALION

Four days after suffering its most devastating loss in recent memory to the University of Texas, the Texas A&M women's tennis team got back on the right track with a 7-0 shutout of the University of Kansas Saturday at the Bryan Tennis Center.

The Aggies (19-7, 10-1 Big 12) jumped out to a quick start by winning all six singles matches. Yet head coach Bobby Kleinecke believes his team started out slow against Kansas (6-14, 4-6) and takes the blame for it.

"We struggled at the start," Kleinecke said. "We started out flat, and I take full responsibility for that."

After what happened against Texas, I should have realized that they would come out flat. But they caught themselves and were able to play well enough to win the match."

Officials chose to move the match indoors and start the match over an hour earlier due to inclement weather and the threat of a lengthy match.

A&M junior Helga Vieira and senior Jessica Roland helped the Aggies to a quick lead with dominating performances in singles. Vieira defeated Kansas senior Emily Haylock, 6-2, 6-1, and then Roland toppled Kansas senior Courtney Steinbock, 6-3, 6-1.

"The key to my game is confidence," Vieira said. "I started out slow, both physically and mentally, but once I got

into the match I was fine. I just tried to put pressure on (Haylock) from the beginning."

A&M senior Roberta Spencer showed great determination in rallying back from losing the first set, 6-0, to win her match with victories in the second and third sets. Junior Lauren Walker, sophomore Nicki Mechem and freshman Anna Lubinsky finished off singles with wins to clinch the match and a 10-win conference season for the Aggies — the most in A&M history.

"They're on a mission right now," Kleinecke said. "I think they are emotionally tired. Give them a few days and some time to get rested up, and they'll be ready to go."

In doubles, Roland and Walker lost to Kansas' Steinbock and

her twin sister, Kristen, 8-2. Spencer and Vieira shut out their opponents while Mechem and Lubinsky just fell short of accomplishing the same feat but still won, 8-1. A&M continued to stay hot in doubles, winning its eighth consecutive doubles point.

"We just got beat," said Kansas head coach Amy Hall. "We started off on the right note, but A&M is a tough team."

After a brief rest of a little more than two-and-a-half hours, the Aggies took the court against Abilene Christian University in their final home match of the season and won the tune up for the conference tournament, 4-3.

In the match, Roland,

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SPORTS IN BRIEF

Baseball wins first two before rain out

The third game of a three-game series between the Texas A&M baseball team and the University of Missouri was cancelled due to inclement weather Sunday. The game, scheduled for 1 p.m. at Olsen Field, will not be made up.

A&M (33-12, 9-8 Big 12) won the first two games, 1-0 and 7-1, over Missouri Friday and Saturday, respectively.

In Friday's game, A&M freshman pitcher Jason Meyer pitched his first complete game shut out as he allowed just seven hits while striking out eight Missouri batters. A&M senior outfielder Cory Patton scored the lone run of the game with a home run in the second inning.

Patton would homer again in Saturday's ballgame, his fifth home run in the last six games, to help the Aggies to an early 6-0 lead over Missouri (24-16-1, 4-10) in the fourth inning. The Tigers couldn't get to A&M junior pitcher Zach Jackson until the top of the seventh inning when they scored their only run of the weekend. In 7.1 innings pitched, Jackson struck out 11 Tigers and allowed only seven hits.

A&M will host Texas State University at 7 p.m. Tuesday at Olsen Field in the final midweek game of the season.

A&M keeps Big 12 win streak alive

No. 24 Texas A&M's softball game with the University of Missouri was cancelled due to rain Sunday. The game was the second game of a two-game series and will not be rescheduled.

A&M (30-16, 12-1 Big 12)

won the first game of the series, 2-0, Saturday at the Aggie Softball Complex as senior pitcher Jessica Kapchinski continued her recent dominance from the pitcher's circle in conference play. Kapchinski allowed only two hits in a complete game shut out, running her record in the Big 12 to 11-1. Her earned run average of 0.29 is the best in the conference.

The Aggies were able to get on the board in the fourth inning when junior right fielder Jana James scored from second on junior catcher Nicole Robinson's two-out single. James would score again when she hit a solo home run in the bottom of the sixth inning.

A&M will host the University of Texas at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday at the Aggies Softball Complex.

Taylor only Aggie taken in NFL draft

Texas A&M senior wide receiver Jamaar Taylor was chosen in the sixth round of the NFL draft by the New York Giants Sunday. Taylor was picked with the 168th overall pick.

Taylor was the only Aggie taken in the draft.

It was the lowest number for Aggies in the draft since offensive lineman Maurice Moorman was selected in the first round of the draft in 1968 by the Kansas City Chiefs. Moorman was the only Aggie chosen that year.

In 2003 six Aggies were selected, including defensive tackle Ty Warren and cornerback Sammy Davis, both first round selections.

After injuring his knee during the 2003 season, Taylor recovered quickly after surgery in order to work out for NFL scouts.

Safe!



Texas A&M senior outfielder **Sherah Atkins** slides safely into second base past Missouri junior second baseman **Heather Kunkel** during A&M's 2-0

win over Missouri Saturday. The second game of the two-game series was rained out Sunday.

Evan O'Connell • THE BATTALION

Texans add to defense through NFL draft

By Mark Babinek
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

HOUSTON — The Houston Texans' dead-last ranking against the pass in 2003 didn't escape team brass, who dedicated this year's draft to making sure it doesn't happen again.

After selecting a cornerback and pass-rushing linebacker in the first round, general manager Charley Casserly kept with the

defensive theme Sunday, taking defensive players with five of the Texans' seven picks.

"I've said from Day One if players were rated even we'd take a defensive player, because in the past we took an offensive player," Casserly said.

First he drafted half the Notre Dame secondary by taking safety Glenn Earl in the fourth round and cornerback/kick returner Vontez Duff in the sixth. Then

for the second year in a row, Casserly used a sixth-round pick on a college quarterback who won't play that position for the Texans when he selected Jammal Lord from Nebraska.

Lord will learn to be a safety in Houston. He follows last season's choice of Drew Henson, the former Michigan star passer who claimed to be dedicated to minor league baseball before agreeing this winter to a trade to the Dallas

Cowboys, who sent Houston a third-round pick in 2005.

"I really debated whether to announce him as a quarterback or a safety," Casserly said jokingly. "Yes, it's a projection, but it's the kind of thing you take a shot at in the sixth round and maybe we'll hit a home run."

Lord, who had mixed results as an option quarterback, has

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