

SPORTS

THE BATTALION

Page 3 • Wednesday, July 7, 2004

Top 10 Aggie Moments

From the home office in College Station...here's the best of 2003-04 sports



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The 2003-04 Texas A&M sports season is officially over, and Aggie sports fans are salivating just thinking of the return of football weekends. But before the new season kicks off, stop and take a moment to reflect back on the top 10 moments from the previous sports season.

was dismal at best, and he was coming to a school that could care less if there even was a women's basketball team.

And then Blair pulled out his basketball voodoo dolls and worked some magic. Attendance records were set, the team almost beat top 10 ranked teams and fans were actually excited about the women's team for once in a long time.

6. Football recruiting class nationally ranked

For a team that finished 4-8 and lost all its away games, it seems that the Aggies would be scraping the bottom of the barrel to find recruits. A&M pulled in 29 however, including the highly touted quarterback Stephen McGee and running back Jay Lucas. The Aggies also filled the need for experienced immediate help, inking six junior college players.

The annual Maroon and White game this spring gave hope to many that this recruiting class will help the Aggies get back in the hunt for bowls and compete in the Big 12 in the near future, if not this upcoming season.

5. Billy Gillispie hired as basketball head coach

Former A&M head coach Melvin Watkins was an enjoyable man and decent coach. But enjoyable and decent didn't win many games, and they didn't win any Big 12 games.

Enter Billy Gillispie. In only two seasons at the University of Texas-El Paso, Gillispie transformed a team that celebrated every win as if it was the last and made the NCAA tournament the next year. Only time will tell if Gillispie can turn this Aggie basketball team around.

4. Mary Zorn

Who? The world's best archer, that's who. And she wears maroon and white when she's in competition.

Zorn finished her collegiate career with four consecutive national titles, the first collegiate archer to do so. Zorn has set or broken numerous collegiate, American and world records in her time at A&M. Keep all eyes open for her at the Olympics in the near future.

3. Equestrian team wins national title

Who knew A&M had the best equestrian team in the nation. Many didn't three years ago, but more people are beginning to realize how good this team is.

The women riders captured their third consecutive national championship, only the second equestrian team in collegiate history to accomplish the feat.

And the last two years in a row, the Aggies have won the trophy in dramatic fashion, winning on the last ride of the day.

2. Aggies finish 16th in Director's Cup

This is exactly what Athletics Director Bill Byrne is striving for: high finishes in the Director's Cup, and eventually winning the Cup.

The Director's Cup is awarded to the school that earns the most points by doing well in sports. For example, the Aggie baseball team earned A&M 64 points toward the Cup.

The 16th place finish is the highest ever by A&M, and is only the second time in 10 years that the Aggies have broken the top 20.

And finally, the number one moment from this past season is...

1. A&M beats Rice

It's still fresh on all Aggie baseball fans' minds. Bottom of the eighth, A&M down 5-3 and facing elimination from the hunt for the College World Series. Justin Ruggiano comes up with the bases loaded and drives a hard ball to right field that doesn't look like it's going out, but somehow finds its way over the fence. We all know the rest.

A&M head coach Mark Johnson said he doesn't

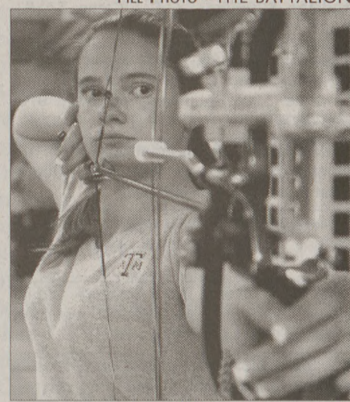
want the win over Rice to be the only thing the team and fans remember, but let's be realistic - A&M didn't beat LSU and didn't make it to Omaha.

A&M did however beat the former national champion Rice University. How could anyone not want to only remember that part of the baseball season?

All Aggie sports fans may now resume their nervous twitches until the next sports season rolls around in August.



BRIAN WILLS • THE BATTALION



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Where do they rank? Top: Men's basketball head coach **Billy Gillispie** speaks at a press conference. Left: **Gary Blair** stands watch at a game at Reed Arena. Right: **Mary Zorn** takes aim at a target.

10. Women's Tennis

The women Aggie netters were the first to win a Big 12 title in A&M tennis history. And if a team makes history, it deserves to be in a top 10 list. The Aggie women came from behind to defeat then nationally-ranked No. 10 University of Texas in the finals of the Big 12 tournament. The team advanced to the round of 16 in the NCAA tournament before being ousted by No. 7 Clemson.

9. Toccare Williams

Toccare Williams had an impressive senior season by any standard. Williams became only the third player in NCAA history to gather up 1,000 points, 500 rebounds, 700 assists and 450 steals in a college career.

And to top off her career and start another, Williams was drafted 34th overall by the San Antonio Silver Stars of the WNBA.

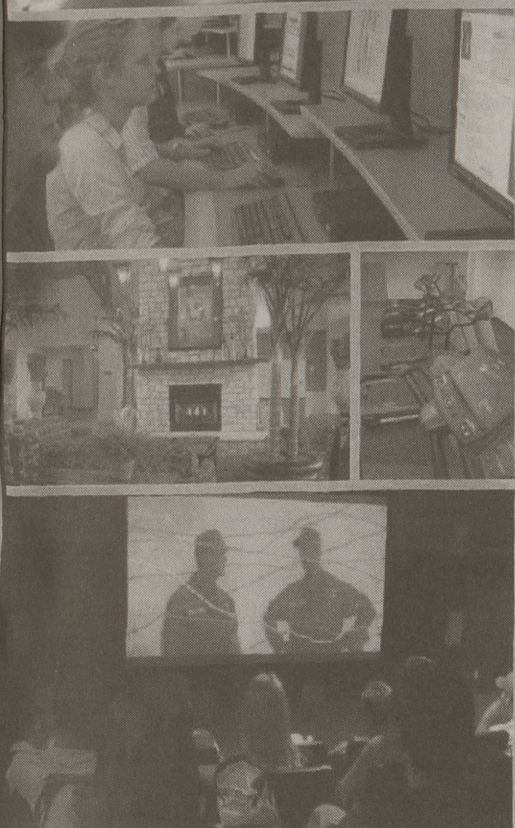
8. Zach Jackson throws no-hitter

Before the start of the A&M baseball season, many didn't know Zach Jackson was even on the A&M roster. By Feb. 14, the first regular season game, Jackson would be the hottest name in College Station.

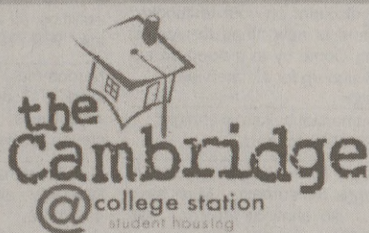
Jackson lasted seven innings against Texas A&M Corpus Christi, run ruling the Islanders in the 15-0 win. He struck out eight batters, six looking and allowed only one walk.

7. Gary Blair rocks Reed

Gary Blair came into a bleak situation. Attendance was scarce, the women's basketball team



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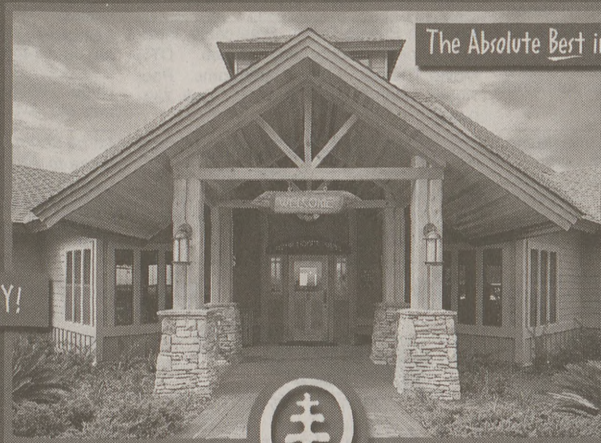
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