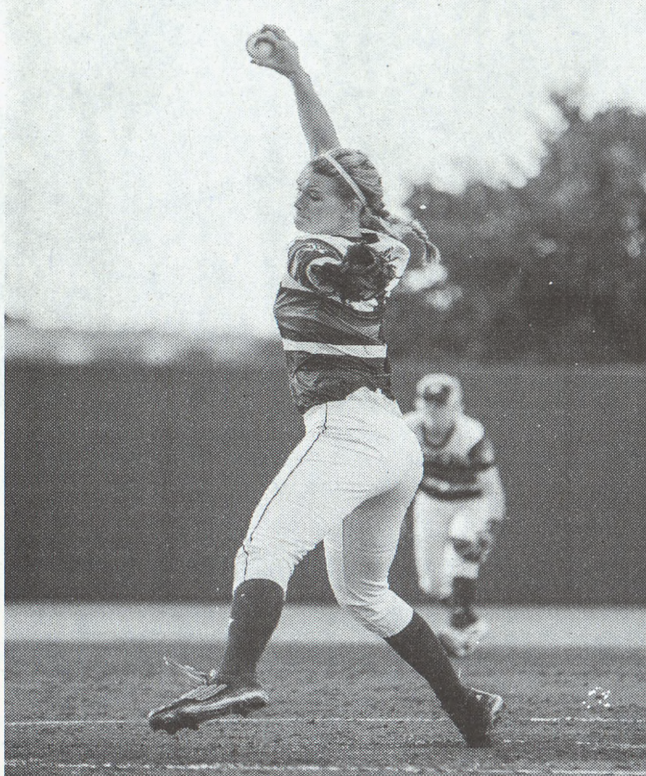


A&M to challenge LSU's perfect home record



Mary Reyes — THE BATTALION

Senior **Lauren Ainsley** winds up for a pitch against Lamar Wednesday.

Three-game SEC road series on the way for No. 23 Aggies

By **Milkyas Gashaw**

▷ The Texas A&M softball team will look to take the momentum from its midweek victory into Baton Rouge this weekend to face No. 3 LSU in an important three-game series. If they win, the Aggies will be the first to blemish LSU's 28-0 home record.

The No. 23 Aggies (33-12, 8-7 SEC) are coming off a 13-run offensive explosion against Lamar Wednesday and will put their hot hitting to test against a talented LSU pitching staff. Head coach Jo Evans said it will be important to carry that confidence into Tiger Park this weekend.

"It's good for us to get our confidence back and good to be swinging the bat well throughout the lineup," Evans said. "We're in a good frame of mind going into this series knowing that we're going to face great pitching. I feel good about what we did against Lamar and I feel good about how that makes our team feel in terms of confidence and where we're at at this point in time."

The Tigers (39-5, 11-4 SEC) have run roughshod over their competition this season, with their only series loss to

No. 16 Kentucky in late March. LSU starters Bianca Bell and Bailey Landry each hit above .400, with Bell being second on the team in homers with 13 and RBIs with 56. The clubhouse leader is Savannah Jaquish, who paces the Tigers with 16 home runs and 62 RBIs.

The Aggies are led by freshman Tori Vidales, who has been a model of consistency for Evans. Vidales leads the club with 15 home runs and 45 RBIs. She said she enjoys the challenge of beating LSU on its home field.

"We always feel like we're always the underdog," Vidales said. "It's a nice feeling to know that we're not supposed to win so that if we do, we can open up some eyes."

The Tigers are spearheaded by an excellent pitching staff, all of which hold ERAs below two. Carly Hoover and Allie Walljasper are tied for the lead in wins with 11.

A&M senior pitcher Rachel Fox said she understands the depth of their pitching staff and said it will be important to string together quality innings.

"All we have to do is to pay attention to detail," Fox said. "As pitchers, all we have to do is control what we can control and not worry about the LSU pitchers."

First pitch on Saturday is scheduled for 6 p.m.

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Newsday Crossword

ACROSS
1 Two Years Before the Mast author
5 Mexican's locale
9 Becomes more friendly
14 Biography ID
15 Almond-shaped
16 Literally, "in another place"
17 BANGLADESH/SENEGAL/MOROCCO
20 Wore away
21 Off-kilter
22 Start getting paid
25 Redolence
26 Baltimore Ravens mascot
29 Saalab dweller
31 Beaus of old
33 NHL East team
34 She, in Venice
35 Trellis piece
36 IRAQ
38 UGANDA
41 First Genesis grandson
42 Caesar opponent
43 Modern design of a sort
44 Gauchos' gear
47 Complete
49 Retired flier
50 Allotment
52 Jobs to do
53 City on the Ene Canal
54 www.usa.
55 GUAM (old-style)/GHANA/YEMEN
62 Ride invitation
63 Slackless
64 Single-minded expert

DOWN
1 Perpetrated
2 Shade of gray
3 Jazz players' org.
4 TURKEY
5 Be an omen of
6 #5 baby girl name in 2013
7 INDONESIA
8 Replica built for Texas' first film set
9 POLAND
10 Useful word
11 Umbrella part
12 George W. degree
13 Host's invitation
18 Mepded fences
19 Lens holders
22 Movie-counter snack
23 Pump postings
24 37 Down kept one at the White House
25 Word often heard on 1/1
26 Fitness system
27 Just for kicks
28 Big properties
30 Following
32 Symbol of ancient Egypt
37 '40s president, for short
38 Good source of vitamin K
39 GA's largest airport
40 Pithy principles
42 VENEZUELA
45 KAZAKHSTAN
46 Branch of Islam
48 CUBA
51 Nos. on statements
53 Module
54 Hoods
55 Sound of surprise
56 Sentimental excess
57 National Poetry Mo.
58 Winning streak
59 Lacrosse stick part
60 Rest or wrestle precursor
61 Staples of today's cinemas

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