

# LAST CALL

Remarkable February performances have Aggie teams **living large** in almost every sport.

by True Brown

## Big month has Aggies smiling

**T**ake a deep breath and savor this, Aggies, because your athletic program is in the midst of something special. The buzz in the air at Texas A&M's venues has been enough to drown out the construction sounds up and down Texas Avenue, and the smiles were bright enough to burn off those dreary mid-February clouds.

Indeed, it was fitting that the sun was shining in College Station last week. When you look down the list of A&M's spring sports, the results thus far are approaching downright remarkable levels. Aggie teams combined to post a 16-0 record for the weekend of Feb. 16-18, which came on the heels of a 15-1 overall record the previous weekend. In fact, at one point last week, an amazing 13 A&M squads were ranked in the national top 30.

The full rundown:

- Women's Track & Field (outdoor): No. 1
- Softball: No. 2
- Women's Swimming & Diving: No. 5
- Women's Track & Field (indoor): No. 6
- Men's Golf: No. 7
- Men's Basketball: No. 8
- Women's Basketball: No. 16
- Men's Tennis: No. 19
- Women's Golf: No. 20
- Men's Track & Field (outdoor): No. 23
- Baseball: No. 24
- Men's Swimming & Diving: No. 25
- Women's Tennis: No. 29

When you consider that the soccer team won its third consecutive Big 12 regular season title last fall and the football team recorded its most wins since 1998, well, there's never been a better time to be an Aggie sports junkie.

A&M's fans are performing in the stands, too. A near-capacity crowd of more than 1,000 was on hand to see the women's swimming and diving team tally a stirring one-point victory over eight-time defending champion Texas on Feb. 17, and there have already been four over-capacity crowds at Reed Arena for men's basketball. A&M fans have set new basketball attendance records twice, with the largest crowd coming against Texas, when 13,196 shoe-horned themselves into Reed's seats, aisles and doorways.

"It's very exciting to be a part of Aggie athletics right now, for sure," said women's swimming and diving coach Steve Bultman. "It's kind of funny because it's happening in a lot



It was all smiles on Feb. 17 for A&M's Big 12 Champion 400-yard freestyle relay team.

PHOTO: texas a&m media relations

of sports that it hasn't happened to before, and that's very exciting. People feed off that."

Much of the credit is due to the coaches accumulated by Director of Athletics Bill Byrne. Since he arrived at A&M in late 2002, he's helped secure what is one of the top coaching staffs in the Big 12, if not the nation. Never content just to sit behind the desk and read about his teams, Byrne attends most home games and is the first one with a congratulatory phone call or pat on the back when a team adds another tally in the win column.

"We've got a lot of camaraderie," said women's basketball coach Gary Blair. "Before I got on the charter to come back (after A&M's 62-60 win at Oklahoma State), I had a phone call from Bill Byrne, and he was more excited than I was. To have people come up and say, 'Hey, great job,' that means a lot. It means even more when it comes from your AD. That is the thing that excites you."

Byrne's mantra for Aggie athletics is 'Building Champions.' He's quick to point out that "a rising tide raises all ships," meaning that it benefits every team when the public sees a mention of A&M on ESPN's BottomLine or in one of the state's many newspapers.

And, if this February was any indication, Byrne's rising tide may turn into a flash flood as the Aggies buoy themselves atop the Big 12.



# Crossing Place™

400 Southwest Parkway \* College Station \* TX \* 77840 \* Phone: 979-680-8475 \*  
[www.crossingplaceliving.com](http://www.crossingplaceliving.com)



- **FREE Premium Cable Package (5 HBO's, 4 ESPN's, 2 MTV's)**
- **FREE High Speed Internet**
- **PAID Water, Sewer, Pest, Trash and Gas**
- **Fully Furnished**
- **Berber Carpet**
- **High Quality Appliances**
- **Individual Locks on Each Bedroom**
- **Full-size Washer and Dryer**
- **Individual Leases**
- **Controlled Access Gates**



- **On-site Fitness Facility**
- **Large Pool w/ Hot Tub**
  - **Covered Parking**
  - **Available**
- **Rec Room with Pool Table**
  - **Tanning Bed**
- **FREE Roommate Matching Service**
- **Sand Volleyball and Basketball Courts**
- **24 Hour Emergency Maintenance**
- **On A&M Shuttle Route**

# ENTER INTO A DRAWING TO WIN A FREE 2 BEDROOM CONDO FOR A YEAR!

A VALUE WORTH OVER \$13,800



## THE WOODLANDS OF COLLEGE STATION



Visit The Woodlands of College Station  
to enter the drawing TODAY!

A LUXURY STUDENT COMMUNITY characterized by tree-lined streets and beautiful courtyards, The Woodlands marries neighborhood streetscape with all the luxury amenities of an upscale condominium community.

Sales Center: **979-693-7812** or Visit us at [www.woodlandsofcollegestation.com](http://www.woodlandsofcollegestation.com)

\*Not affiliated with The Woodlands Land Development Company, L.P. in Montgomery and Harris County, Texas. Regular application screenings still apply.



**Pre-sales Are Starting Now • Open For The 2007-2008 School Year.**