

Aggies ready to regroup

Team still on the hunt for quarterback, eight starters

By Brandon Schulte
Staff writer

An 8-4 mark and a top-25 finish would satisfy most Division I programs.

But most programs don't come from Texas, where, as seemingly everything else is, football is larger than life.

So Texas A&M and Coach R.C. Slocum must regroup from a disappointing season that included a trip to the Alamo Bowl.

"We have a lot to get done this spring," said Slocum, the winningest coach in Aggie history with 102 victories. "I'm excited about getting started."

Whether he is excited about his team's prospects come next September, when A&M opens at Notre Dame, could come down to how confident he is in a young quarterback. The job is up for grabs this spring with sophomores Mark Farris and Vance Smith and redshirt freshman Colby Freeman battling for the position.

Besides quarterback, the Aggies have to replace eight starters gone from a year ago (five on offense and three on defense). And punter Shane

"We have a lot to get done this spring."

R.C. Slocum
Texas A&M coach

Lechler, who is the all-time leading punter in NCAA history, also has graduated.

Slocum is confident he and his staff can find more than adequate replacements.

"The number one question will be at the quarterback position," Slocum said. "We have three scholarship players who will compete for the job. It should be very competitive as each of the three has ability."

"But I think the competition at each of our positions should be intense this spring. The tailback position should also be interesting with several players competing for that job. Filling holes along the offensive line and in the secondary are also priorities."

While many players on the field will be the same, the coaching staff has been shaken up.

Former San Francisco 49ers

T *in review*
EXAS A & M
COACH: RC Slocum
RECORD: 8-4 overall, 5-3 Big 12
OFFENSE: Multiple
DEFENSE: 3-4
OUTLOOK: A&M badly needs a quarterback, though Randy McCown didn't exactly resemble filet mignon. A speed back to complement Ja'Mar Toombs would be good as well. Toombs, as the feature back, gives A&M a power game. Maybe the defense can shore up the rest.

Coach Larry Kirksey will be the new assistant coach and wide receivers coach. Inside Linebacker Coach and Special Teams Coordinator Shawn Slocum returns to A&M from Southern California.

Running Back Coach Pete Hoener comes to the Aggies from Iowa State, where he was the Cyclones offensive coordinator. And Offensive Coordinator Steve Kragthorpe assumes the duties of Quarterback Coach Ray Dorr, who is battling Lou Gehrig's disease.

Slocum said he's been encouraged by his team through two weeks of practice.

"I was pleased with the enthusiasm," Slocum said. "We've had good off-season workouts, and it's carried over."

Childress: Huskers need win tonight

■ After Baylor upset, Huskers need offense to overcome 3-4 streak.

From staff reports

After being swept by Baylor over the weekend, the Nebraska baseball team will try to regain the winning feeling tonight.

The Cornhuskers (18-11) will face Division II Northwest Missouri State (13-19) tonight at 6 at Buck Beltzer Stadium.

NU Pitching Coach Rob Childress said the game is a must win for the Huskers.

"We've lost three of our last four games, and we really need to win," Childress said. "We need to have a good day on the mound, in the field and offensively."

Childress said most of the starters will play tonight, but if the Huskers open up a big lead, some reserves could see action.

"We'll go with our best lineup," he said. "We need to get some guys going offensively."

"We'll go with our best line-up. We need to get some guys going offensively."

Rob Childress
NU pitching coach

Pitchers who didn't get much work this weekend will throw tonight.

Sophomore Dave Schneider will be the starting pitcher. Schneider is 0-1 on the season with a 4.50 ERA in four innings of work.

Childress said Northwest Missouri State traditionally has a strong program, but he did not know any specifics about this year's team.

"I'm sure they'll be just as hungry to win as we will," he said. "But we hope we'll be able to get back the feeling of scoring some runs and winning some games."

Revelle: Pitcher sets competitive tone

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she said.

Voss said she doesn't feel as though she has peaked as an athlete, but she is a different pitcher now than she was two years ago.

As her team advanced further into the 1998 season, she began to feel the effects of being the Huskers' primary pitcher.

During the Big 12 Championship game against Texas Tech, Voss lost some of her invincibility, as her arm that had won the Huskers so many games began to falter.

In that game, Voss said she felt something pop in her shoulder during one pitch and had a funny feeling throughout her arm.

"It was really scary," she said. "I had always been able to depend on my physical well-being."

Neither Revelle nor NU Assistant Coach Lori Sippel, a former All-American pitcher herself, saw it coming.

"She was so strong," Sippel said. "She had us fooled."

Said Revelle: "Some of her pitches were better when she was fatigued."

But Voss kept pitching. She didn't see a doctor until the end of the 1998 season.

"I just took a bunch of ibuprofen before the games," she said.

Voss was flooded with awards following that year, but she also was filled with the fear of not knowing if she would be able to pitch again.

Ligaments in her shoulder were stretched out, an obvious sign of overuse, she said.

Voss went through six weeks of rehabilitation, including two weeks without any pitching, she said. Voss said she has no regrets, even though things didn't turn out as she had planned.

"When I came to college, I thought I'd be in a pitching rotation," she said. "That's a given."

Maybe it's a given, but not during Voss' freshman and sophomore years. There was no rotation - there was only Voss.

"Some days it felt like my arm weighed 80 pounds. Those days were tough."

Jenny Voss
NU softball pitcher

Sippel said two pitchers were recruited for Voss' freshman year: Voss committed, and the other didn't.

And during Voss' sophomore year, the other available pitcher was out because of academic ineligibility, Revelle said.

The wear and tear on Voss' arm was evident her junior season, as her record was 23-11.

She pitched 229 innings, which was still good enough to place her fourth in the record books. She already occupied the first and second slots.

"Some days it felt like my arm weighed 80 pounds," she said. "Those days were tough."

Voss' pitches lost velocity and accuracy, and she found herself behind in counts, Sippel said.

Her junior year was different, however, because she had more help on the mound.

Leigh Ann Walker, from Tucson, Ariz., spent her freshman year pitching alongside the recovering Voss.

Walker, now a sophomore, said she doesn't feel as though she's Voss' successor.

"I never thought of it as me against Jenny," she said. "I was just excited to play in such a good program."

Recovering from her injury was a low point in her pitching career, Voss said.

"I had to get my mind right to start recovering," she said. "Once I stopped focusing on what I didn't have, I began to pitch better."

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