Sports

Friday | October 18, 2013

Bears control Big 12 destiny

By Shehan Ieyaraiah SPORTS WRITER

With Oklahoma losing last week in the Red River Rivalry, Baylor moved up to 12th in the country in both the Associated Press and USA Today Coaches Polls, which is the highest the Bears have been since 1991. For the first time in the 16-year history of the Big 12, Baylor is the highest ranked team in the conference.

The Baylor Bears will look to prove they belong at the front of the pack as they play Iowa State in the final homecoming game at Floyd Casey Stadium.

Looking in the context of previous homecomings, Baylor is clearly at a special place in its history. In homecoming games, Baylor is 42-43-4. Yes, there have been more Homecoming football losses than there have been wins. In the Art Briles era, Baylor has started a winning homecoming tradition.

"Anytime you get in conference play, anything can happen," head football coach Art Briles said. "Everybody's got history with each other. Iowa State is a good, tough football team that plays extremely well."

Despite playing a challenging game against Kansas State last Saturday, Baylor still leads all of college football with 714.4 yards per game and 63.4 points per game. The passing and rushing attacks each are top four in the country with 412.2 yards passing per game and 302.2 yards rushing per game.

Junior quarterback Bryce Petty has stepped right in line to become the next stellar Baylor quarterback. He is ninth in college football both in passing yards per game and completion percentage. Petty also leads the NCAA in yards per attempt at 14.9. The next highest player averages only 11.7 yards per attempt. To top things off, Petty has rushed for a touchdown in each of the last four games. Despite coming in as an unknown, there is no doubt that Petty is establishing himself as a Heisman contender.

Junior running back Lache Seastrunk's statistics are among the best running backs in college football. He is averaging 129.6 yards per game, despite having less than 10 second half rushing attempts on the season. Seastrunk leads all running backs in yards per attempt with a 10.0 yards per carry.

The wide receiver tandem of junior Antwan Goodley and senior Tevin Reese are statistically among the NCAA's best. Goodley is second in receiving yards per game with 133.8 yards per game. Reese is right behind at seventh, averaging 121.8 yards per game. They are the only teammates in all of football to both average 100 yards per game of receiving

Goodley and Reese also rank first and second respectively on the vards per reception list. Goodley leads the nation with 26.8 yards per reception. Reese averages 26.5 yards per catch. Reese also has the fifth-longest reception of the season in the NCAA: a 93-yard touchdown grab against West Virginia. Goodley isn't far off; his 83-yard grab ties him for 14th on the season.

"At the end of the day, it's about Baylor for us," Petty said. "From an offensive standpoint, it's always about us going out to execute, us going out to produce the way we know how. It starts with practice the week before. It starts with game planning and watching film."

The defensive side of the ball has been much improved this season after the horrendous defense played for most of last season. The Bears rank 24th overall in total defense, holding teams to only 346.0 yards of offense per game.

While Baylor's defense under third-year defensive coordinator Phil Bennett has not been an elite containment defense, the Bears have been opportunistic. The defense averages 2.5 takeaways per game during the last 22 games, and in that span are 18-4. In games in which the Bears record two or more takeaways, Baylor is 19-2.

The front seven have impressed early for Baylor. The Bears defense is fourth in the nation in tackles for loss with 9.0 per game.

Sophomore defensive end Shawn Oakman is individually per contest. The Iowa State offense has not been strong enough to make up for its poor defense.

Baylor offense against West Virginia on Oct. 5 at Floyd Casey Stadium. The No. 12 Bears are 5-0 and host Iowa State on Saturday.

The Cyclones rank 81st in total offense per game with 387.4 yards and rank 74 in football in points per game with only 28.8 points per game.

Sophomore quarterback Sam Richardson has been relatively effective as the starting quarterback for Iowa State despite not having many weapons around him to work with. Other than a bad day at Texas Tech last week, he is averaging 254.8 yards per game, 2.3 touchdowns and an interception per game on 62.3 percent completion percentage. He is currently struggling with injury woes, but

plans to play on Saturday.

Despite Richardson at quarterback, Iowa State ranks 84 in rushing yards with only 150.0 rushing yards per game, and are 74 in scoring with 28.8 yards per game. The rushing game can be described as inconsistent at best.

"Iowa State is willing to take chances," senior safety Ahmad Dixon said. "They play like they have nothing to lose. We know they're going to test our secondary. Last year when we went up to Ames, Iowa, we didn't do a good job controlling the secondary. We have to come back out and show them that this is not the same secondary we had last year."

Iowa State is a team hungry for

As junior quarterback Bryce Petty hands the ball off to running back Lache Seastrunk, All-American senior guard Cyril Richardson clears a path for the

a win after losing two close games to Texas (by one point) and No. 20 Texas Tech (by one touchdown). Unfortunately for the Cyclones, Baylor is not going to give them that opportunity. The Bears average 70.5 points per game at home, and Iowa State has one of the worst

defenses in the Big 12. Even a Herculean effort from Richardson will not be enough to even stay competitive with a Baylor team looking to prove a point on its home turf for homecoming.

Baylor football will play Iowa State at 6 p.m. Saturday in the final homecoming football game at Floyd Casey Stadium.

The game will be broadcast nationally on ESPNU.

MATT HELLMAN | LARIAT MULTIMEDIA EDITO

BIG 12 FOOTBALL WEEKEND PREVI

By Shehan Jeyarajah SPORTS WRITER

No. 21 Oklahoma State vs. TCU

Despite the perception of Oklahoma State as an offensive oriented team, the defense has stepped up and has been integral to the Cowboys' success. OSU is currently 38th in the country and fifth in the Big 12 in total defense, holding teams to 361.2 yards per game.

The passing offense has been solid, averaging 300.4 yards per game, but the rushing offense has been virtually nonexistent. Sophomore quarterback J.W Walsh has been the leading rusher for the Cowboys this season, and they rank 87th in the country in rushing yards.

TCU has a lot to prove after nearly letting Kansas steal a game from them in Fort Worth. The game was tied 10-10 at half and only a 75-yard touchdown pass could separate the Horned Frogs from the lowly Jayhawks. TCU ranks 109th in the nation in total offense, and second to last in the Big 12. The Horned Frogs defense has generally been great, ranking 16 in the country and second in the Big 12, but it hasn't been enough to make up for the lack of offense.

TCU will improve greatly when senior quarterback Casey Pachall returns from injury, but that will not be this week. An Oklahoma State team desperate for a convincing win should be able to get it at home in Stillwater.

West Virginia vs. No. 16 Texas Tech

West Virginia was torched at the hands of the Baylor Bears for 73 points and a Big 12 record 860

yards at Floyd Casey Stadium. The WVU offense has been decidedly average, but quarterback but three Clint Trickett should be relatively healthy after battling injury woes for the last few weeks. Senior running back Charles Sims has turned some heads in his quest to the

NFL. O u t s i d e of the Baylor game, WVU is holding teams

t o 347.0 yards p e r game and 19.6 points per game which both express that West Virginia has a sound

defense. Texas Tech has the second highest rated passing offense in the Big 12 behind Baylor, and fourth overall in the nation. dif-The Red Raiders have struggled ferent run-

to establish a running game consis- ning backs went off for 80 yards or tently this season,

eighth in the country with 1.8

tackles for loss per game. The Bears

also have 16 sacks, which ranks

10th in the nation and second in

searching for its first win in Big 12

play after losing the first two in

heartbreaking fashion to Texas and

No. 20 Texas Tech. The Cyclones

also had a bad loss to Iowa and a

terrible loss in their opener to FCS

this season mightily on the de-

fensive end. They rank 101 out of

123 in total defense, allowing op-

ponents to average 447.6 yards per

game. The Cyclones also rank 87 in

points against, allowing 29.8 points

The Cyclones have struggled

opponent Northern Iowa.

Iowa State comes into this game

the Big 12.

more and a touch-

d o w n

State.

It remains to be seen if any of the can repeat that feat, but the talent is there. The defense has been surprisingly good against a weak schedule, ranking 21st in

total defense. The Red Raiders are one of hottest teams in football right now.

anticipated in the unpredictable Big 12.

Kansas (2-3) vs. No. 18 Oklahoma

Kansas has been woeful this season, especially against the Big 12. So far the Jayhawks are 0-2, with a blowout against Texas Tech and a convincing loss against TCU.

Kansas also has a bad loss against Rice as a blemish on its schedule. The offense has been incredibly bad, averaging only 305.0 yards per game. That ranks 115th out of 123 teams in the FBS.

The Jayhawks rank outside the top 100 in every major offensive metric despite having a supposed offensive guru in Charlie Weis at the helm.

The defense has been decent outside of allowing a big performance from Texas Tech, but you can't ask a defense to win you games if you only average 18.2 points per contest in the Big 12.

Oklahoma is coming off of an embarrassing loss at the hands of an unranked Texas team in the Red River Rivalry. Junior quarterback Blake Bell showed the sort of offensive ineptitude that allowed freshman Travis Knight to earn the starting job over him during the offseason, throwing for 133 yards, two interceptions and a total QBR of 4.2 out of 100. The Sooners' rushing attack was virtually nonexistent. No player finished with over 34 yards rushing. The Sooners are not this bad in either the passing or rushing game, and will look to prove that once again this week. Win or lose, Oklahoma coach Bob Stoops is undefeated in games coming out of the Red River Rivalry during his time at OU. Against a terrible Kansas team, the Sooners should run away with the game.

TRAVIS TAYLOR | LARIAT PHOTO EDITOR

CONFERENCE

12

Morgantown is one of the most difficult places to play in the Big 12. Kliff Kingsbury has not yet been challenged as a head coach. Tech should be good enough

to win, but the Mountaineers may against Iowa make things more interesting than

B2 Baylor Lariat

Odyssey Sims ready to step up as team leader

By RAYNE BROWN Reporter

Baylor senior guard Odyssey Sims was 2013 World University Games MVP, three-time Wade Watch list candidate and participant in the USA Women's National Team mini-camp.

The World University Games are equivalent to the Olympics for collegiate athletes and Sims had the opportunity to play for Team USA at this summer's games in Russia.

"The team that I was on, I was surrounded by, it was great," Sims said. "If I could go back, I would. It was a great experience. Anytime I could go and play for USA, it's always a great opportunity."

Sims didn't just play, she helped lead the team to the semi-finals, doing enough during that time to win most valuable player.

"I didn't know it had MVP," Sims said. "That wasn't my main goal to go out there and try to get it. I was just happy more than anything to win the gold medal. That meant more than anything to me. More than getting MVP, but I was very honored."

Coming back to the States with experience, an MVP title and a gold medal, Sims was invited to the USA Women's National Team mini-camp Oct. 3-6 in Las Vegas.

According to an article on baylorbears.com, "the camp [was] used to identify players for the USA National Team pool from which the 2013 USA World Championship Team will be selected." Sims attended the camp along with former Lady Bears Brittney Griner and Sophia Young.

"I was kind of nervous being around all of these WNBA players that I actually look up to," Sims said. "Tamika Catchings, she really helped me. She guided me every day I was there. She told me what to do. Looking up to them, seeing what they were doing and then trying to incorporate it. I kind of took leading a lot better than I had been doing since I've been here."

Most recently, Sims was named one of 25 players to the "Wade Watch" list for the award. This is Sims' third season on the preseason watch list. The Irving native was a finalist for the award in 2013, but lost to teammate Brittney Griner.

"Let me say this about Odyssey, Odyssey Sims has always been a talented player, and she's won many, many awards," head coach Kim Mulkey said.

"She's now won a championship. Probably one of the greatest moments in my coaching, even though it was one of the worst moments, was the Louisville game and watching Odyssey Sims basically almost win that thing by herself," head coach Kim Mulkey said.

"She gave everything she had and when the game was over. You always tell them, if you've given it everything you have you don't even have energy to walk off that floor and she didn't. When she walked off that floor, finished crying and the locker room was settling down a little bit, she just walked straight up to me put her arms out and said, 'Coach I gave you everything I had—and she did," head coach Kim Mulkey said.

As the Lady Bears move into their third week of practice, Sims is preparing to take on a leadership role as one of the few players left with her level of experience.

The Lady Bears lost some seniors after last year's season, but this season they're back with fresh talent.

"I'm just very excited just to go into this year," Sims said. "No one knows what to expect as far as from us, and we are very young, but our talent is still there. We did lose a lot, but we also gained a lot with the five freshmen that came in.

This season, Sims has a lot on her shoulders. Only time will tell how the Lady Bears adjust with some of their key players gone and freshmen talent still learning the ropes.

The outlook is positive and



MATT HELLMAN | LARIAT PHOTO EDITOR

Senior guard Odyssey Sims drives to the hoop against Texas at the Ferrell Center on Feb. 23. With All-American Brittney Griner now in the WNBA, Sims is the clear leader of the Lady Bears on and off the court. Sims hopes to keep Baylor's winning tradition alive this season as a senior.

Sims' experience in all that she's accomplished and participated in can help lead the team.

the top 10 and you lose as much as we did, I think people outside of Waco will talk about Baylor, "When you're still ranked in the program," Mulkey said. "The

fun thing for me, though, is when people outside of Waco talk about Baylor now, they're not just talking about women's basketball and I was a sleeping giant."

have loved every minute of it. I just think that winning is contagious and I've always thought that Baylor





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Soccer faces crunch time as Big 12 season winds down

By Parmida Schahhosseini Sports Writer

With only four more Big 12 games left for Baylor, the matchups occurring around the league will be important for the Big 12 Tournament seeding. The Bears will have to take care of business, but also keep an eye out for other teams.

"There's no team you can take lightly," sophomore forward Bri Campos said. Every game you go into, any team can really beat any team. We have to go into each game with the same mentality like you would against the Texas or the Tech or the Iowa State. They have to have the same mentality and you have to play just as hard for each game."

Anybody can beat anybody in the Big 12 because no matter the sport, records are always thrown out the window. No. 11 West Virginia leads the way and is riding a seven-game winning streak on its way to a 5-0-0 Big 12 record. Kansas will have a tough task ahead as it tries to knock off the top team in the conference.

"I've seen everybody in the conference play, and I honestly don't think there's anybody we cannot beat, but we are not going to beat anybody if we don't score some goals," Kansas head coach Mark Francis said. "The way we are playing and competing is good, but right now that's not enough."

The Kansas Jayhawks (0-2-1) have struggled offensively and have not scored a goal in the last three matches. Senior forward Caroline Kastor leads the team with four goals and three assists while junior midfielder Jamie Fletcher puts pressure on defenses with her 43 shots. Prior to the three game goalless streak, the pressure put on by Fletcher was effective as it averaged two goals a game for the three games before the streak.

Kansas has a solid defense, but West Virginia's potent offense can match up well because of how the disruptive forwards. The Mountaineers have scored 38 goals this season, eighth most in the NCAA. Senior forwards Kate Schwindel, who was honored offensive player of the week, and Frances Silva lead the team with 10 goals apiece. Silva also is third in NCAA with her 11 assists. West Virginia can win the regular season for the second year in a row if it takes care of business.

"There's nothing like waiting to see what other teams do in conference play, so at this point, our plan is to control our own destiny and take care of what we can take care of," Mountaineer coach Nikki Izzo-Brown said. "If we execute our plan, we should be good. We're really taking this season game by game right now. What we have to do is take care of 90 minutes on Friday - that's what is really important.

It will be emotional for West Virginia because of Senior Night, honoring Kara Blosser, Sarah Keane, Frances Silva and Caroline Szwed.

"Of course, we want to win for our seniors, too," Izzo-Brown said. "There's a lot Mountaineer pride that will hopefully come out and support what these four seniors have done for this program, this state and this university. These girls are pretty special."

Another Big 12 matchup Baylor needs to look out for is Texas at Oklahoma State. Texas is second in the conference with a 4-1 record, with its lone loss coming against West Virginia. Texas has a stout backline and also has a height advantage, meaning that Oklahoma State must strengthen its game in the air.

Texas is playing well in all aspects of the game, with its defense leading the way. Junior midfielder Sharis Lachappelle's two goals against Baylor led a three-way tie between sophomore forward Kelsey Shimmick and junior defender Brooke Gilbert. Texas has scored 26 goals this season, but its stout defense has kept the Longhorns in the game to pull out wins.

Gilbert, the Big 12 defensive player of the week, is coming off of a game where she led her defense to shutdown a solid Baylor offense for 86 minutes before junior forward Natalie Huggins scored a goal. Texas has given up 12 goals, but is still third in the Big 12 with an .80 goals against average and a .79 goals against average.

Oklahoma State does have an advantage playing at home, where the Longhorns carry a 3-4-2 record in Stillwater. The Cowgirls hold a 35-3-6 record at Cowgirl Soccer Complex since 2010, but are 2-2-2 at home this year, unable to capitalize on home turf.

Ranking second to last in shots taken, Oklahoma State needs to apply pressure on the Texas team in order to stay in the game. The team's ability to generate goals has been affected because of the lack of opportunity. OSU ranks sixth in goals with 19, but it has given up 17 goals, making it harder to consistently win games.

The Cowgirls are going to need production from the team to continue generating offense. The underclassmen have come up big for Oklahoma State with freshman forward Courtney Dike leading the way with eight goals and two assists and sophomore forward Allie Stephenson's five goals and three assists. Only three other players have scored for the Cowgirls, two freshmen and three sophomores. The senior class will need to step up its game offensively to give the team the chance to win.

Oklahoma State has led the Big 12 in shutouts in five of the last seven seasons, but ranks last this year tied with Oklahoma for three

TRAVIS TAYLOR | LARIAT PHOTO EDITOR Freshman defender Emory Cason controls the ball and looks to pass against Northwestern State in a match at Betty Lou Mays Soccer Field on Aug. 25. The Bears only have four matches remaining before the Big 12 tournament.

shutouts. The defense has allowed more shots on goal than it has taken. The defense has been susceptible to pressure, so the Longhorns can take advantage and pull away with a win.

The Cowgirls' in-state rival Oklahoma has struggled in the Big 12 with a 0-4 conference record and 3-10-1 overall. The Sooners will travel to Fort Worth to take on TCU, which is coming off its first Big 12 win of the season after a 1-0 victory against Kansas.

Both teams have struggled offensively, but Oklahoma isn't doing itself any favors by giving up almost double the number of goals scored. The offense has only been able to generate 15 goals this season and ranks last in every major Big 12 category. TCU has had problems offensively, but by applying enough pressure it can score.

The Sooners offensive ineptitude combined with defense leaves a lot to be desired, but junior forward Daisy Cardona is doing her best to get a win by leading her team with four goals. Freshman defender Madison Saliba is the only other player to score more than two goals. The team has only scored four goals in its last five games, but TCU given up seven goals in its last five games, and only scored two goals in its last five games.

If Oklahoma can put enough pressure on the defense it can come away with a win, but it needs to shore up its defense to prevent TCU from getting goals to the back of the net.

TCU gets most of its production from its two main goal scorers, freshman forward Michelle Prokof, who leads the team with seven goals, and Makenzie Koch, who is second with four goals. The five remaining scorers have only scored a combined six goals.

No. 18 Texas Tech (3-0-2) has a bye, but it has also made noise in the Big 12 as the second unbeaten left. The Red Raiders have a po-

tent offense, scoring 38 goals to go along with the best defense in the Big 12.

Texas Tech posts a .36 goals against average .38 goals allowed, allowing only six goals this season.

It ranks first in the Big 12 in shutouts with 12, but ranks last in saves because of the stout backline. Offensively the Red Raiders have had success because of effective committee scoring.

Sophomore forward Janine Beckie leads the team with six goals and four assists and sophomore midfielder Alli Murphy following with five goals and three assists.

Nine other players on the team have contributed with two or more goals.

The competition is stiff in the Big 12, but Baylor can't worry about other teams. All it can do is take care of business and the rest will take care of itself.





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Bottom left and middle photos by Travis Taylor | Lariat Photo Editor









Top photo by Travis Taylor | Lariat Photo Editor Right photo by Matt Hellman | Lariat Multimedia Producer I Jordan Najvar dives over a Buffalo defender on Sept. 7. Baylor won the game 70-13. (Right) The Baylor defense makes a play on the ball against







Larissa Campos leads by example



Senior midfielder Larissa Campos dribbles past a McNeese State defender on Sept. 15 at Betty Lou Mays Soccer Field. After tearing her ACL as a freshman, Campos is among the leaders on this years team looking to defend its Big 12 title.

By Parmida Schahhosseini Sports Writer

Courageous. Determined. Passionate. Those are the words many use to describe senior midfielder Larissa Campos, who has overcome many obstacles to pursue her dream of playing soccer.

As a talented basketball and soccer player in high school, Campos has never shied away from success and has continuously pushed herself to be the best.

When Campos arrived to Baylor, she had her whole future in front of her, but one moment changed everything. With 14 games under her belt, Campos sustained a season ending knee injury, affecting her soccer career onwards.

"That rocked my world a bit," Campos said. "I've heard of people tearing their ACL's, but I didn't really know how serious of an injury it was."

Soccer was her life. Ever since she received training from her youth coaches, Tito and Zico, her identity had been tied to soccer. Despite the circumstances, the way she handled her situation has inspired her sister, sophomore forward Bri Campos.

"What she's been through as an athlete with her knee and everything she's had to overcome, is very honorable," Bri Campos said. "I respect that about her and how she handled those situations throughout her career."

During her sophomore year, Larissa Campos took a medical redshirt. The adjustment was difficult because she didn't want to be on the bench. Her dream to play soccer was halted, but she wouldn't trade her experience for the world. It has not only taught her how to be a good teammate, but also strengthened her faith in God.

Campos grew up in a religious household, with both her parents being devout Catholics, but neither of them forced Catholicism on her. All they hoped their daughters was for them to have a relationship with God.

"It sparked my passion in my faith and to trust in God," Larissa Campos said. "That injury gave me time to figure out what I really wanted to pursue in my faith."

It took Campos longer than most people to overcome the ACL injury. Whenever she would try to get back on the field there was always a setback, leading to two more surgeries. "Every single time that I was almost back to where I wanted to be, God was like, 'no, you're not ready yet," Larissa Campos said. "He [God] kept pulling me away from what I wanted so much to make me realize that your insight shouldn't be soccer, your insight should be me."

It has been a long journey for Campos, but she attributes it to making her stronger. She hopes to use her testimony to encourage others. She continues to push her teammates to be better on and off the field. It's these experiences that have made her into a mature player that her teammates look up to.

"She's a very hard worker," Baylor co-head coach Marci Jobson said. "She's a leader off the field. She's a leader at practice."

Campos cherishes her time as a Baylor soccer player because it has taught her not to be selfish and to play for the team.

While there are times where she wishes she didn't sustain that knee injury, she realizes what a humbling experience it was. Her experiences have helped her appreciate the game more because it was almost taken away.

"Being able to put my cleats on every day is a blessing," Larissa Campos said. "It changes the way I play. I always play like it's my last time."

Her competitive nature adds another element to the team. Growing up, her parents always pushed her and Bri to be competitive and fueled that fire in them. As they grew up they began to emulate each other.

"It's a lot of fun playing with her," Bri Campos said. "I think it's good for both of us because we both have competitive natures. It pushes us to be better and one up each other, but it's in a healthy way, pushing us to improve on and off the field."

During her time at Baylor, Campos has learned to play with heart.

Campos wants to leave a legacy, so Baylor's soccer teams in the future can continue playing with edge, because talent isn't everything. Her goal is to be an inspiration to others.

This season, Campos has been effective off the bench, giving Baylor the extra offense it's looking for with two goals and an assist in its transition to committee scoring.

Campos' love of soccer will always remain a part of her. The injury spurred her passion even more to continue following God's plan for her and to continue to be an inspiration to others.

After she graduates, Campos hopes to continue to inspire others by coaching soccer.





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Rosenbaum steps up for Baylor volleyball

By Shehan Jeyarajah Sports Writer

"Setters are basically the quarterback of the volleyball team," junior middle hitter Nicole Bardaji said. "They tell us what to do and they talk to the defense and tell what kind of passes she needs. They have a big impact on the game."

Sophomore setter Amy Rosenbaum has been relied on this season to be the starting setter for the first time in her collegiate career, and she has delivered big results. In Big 12 play, Rosenbaum is third in the conference with 10.82 assists per set and second among underclassmen.

"It's a new role for me," Rosenbaum said of her performance. "Last year, I was really relied on to encourage people. I was on the team, but I wasn't really relied on to be a leader. Now I have to adjust to being the lead person. It's a challenge I love because I know I can

"Young players like Rosenbaum have had to step up on this team. She has a big role as a setter and has had to learn how to play a new position right on the court. She is a tremendously talented setter."

Jim Barnes | Head coach

do it. I think I've played well." Rosenbaum played in four matches in 2012, but only major minutes in two. This season, she has been thrust into a starting role and has started at setter in all of Baylor's 21 matches this season. She is one of only three players on the team to have played in every Baylor set this season.

"Moving to being a starting setter is a lot about confidence," Rosenbaum said. "It's not really about how to set the ball. It's about how to run the offense and learning what each hitter needs. I'm not going to say it's easy, but it makes it easier that I love my teammates."

Rosenbaum's teammates have loved her right back.

"My relationship with Amy is great; we're teammates, roommates and best friends," sophomore middle hitter Adrien Richburg said. "I think our relationship off the court helps. We have a good connection."

Bardaji was quick to compliment Rosenbaum on her performance for Baylor.

"Every setter has a different type of play and different styles," Bardaji said. "Our old setter, Kate Harris, was really, really quick with her sets. Amy's are a little slower which I love. She is very mischievous as a setter. When it comes to who she's going to set, she really tricks the blockers on the other side. She forces me to always be ready because I never know if she's going to set me which is awesome." Rosenbaum has set a variety of

career-highs this season for Baylor. Against UT-San Antonio, Rosenbaum played the best match of her collegiate career. She finished with a career-high 50 kills and 19 digs in her first career double-double. She added another double-double on Oct. 9 against West Virginia with 35 assists and 12 digs.

This season has been a rough one for Baylor volleyball. In the second match of the season, the Bears lost freshman phenom outside hitter Katie Staiger to a season- ending knee injury. The Bears have fallen to 9-12 on the season and 1-4 in the Big 12. Despite the trouble, it has been essential in building for the future.

"Young players like Rosenbaum have had to step up on this team," head volleyball coach Jim Barnes said. "She has a big role as a setter and has had to learn how to play the position right on the court. She

"It's a new role for me. Last year, I was really relied on to encourage people. I was on the team, but wasn't really relied on to be a leader. Now I have to adjust to being the lead person."

Nicole Bardaji | junior middle hitter

is a tremendously talented setter." Baylor has three sophomores

who have started 14 or more matches this season: outside hitters Thea Munch-Soegaard and Laura Jones and middle hitter Adrien Richburg. Those three will have a chance to grow together with Rosenbaum.

"We have a young group that's constantly improving," Barnes said. "We have two girls who aren't even playing right now, freshman Staiger and sophomore Andie Malloy, who are two of the best outside hitters in the country. You have to feel really good about our future with Amy leading the way."

Amy Rosenbaum and Baylor volleyball return at 1 p.m. on Saturday against Oklahoma at the Ferrell Center in Waco.



Baylor Lariat B7

Robby Hirst | Lariat Photographer

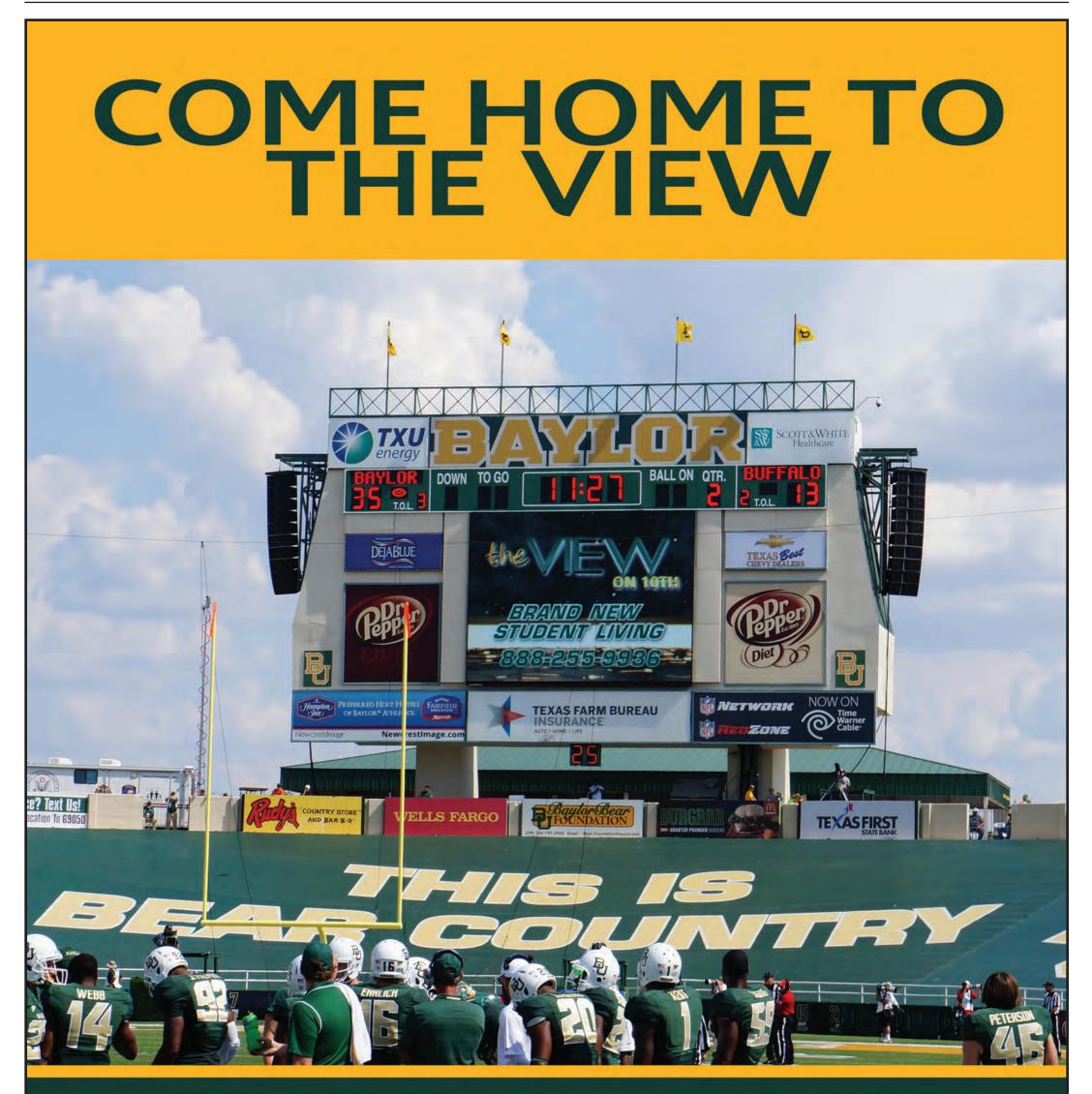
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Sophomore setter Amy Rosenbaum prepares to set the ball to a teammate on Wednesday night against TCU at the Ferrell Center. The Bears host Oklahoma at 1 p.m. Saturday at the Ferrell Center.

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B8 Baylor Lariat



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