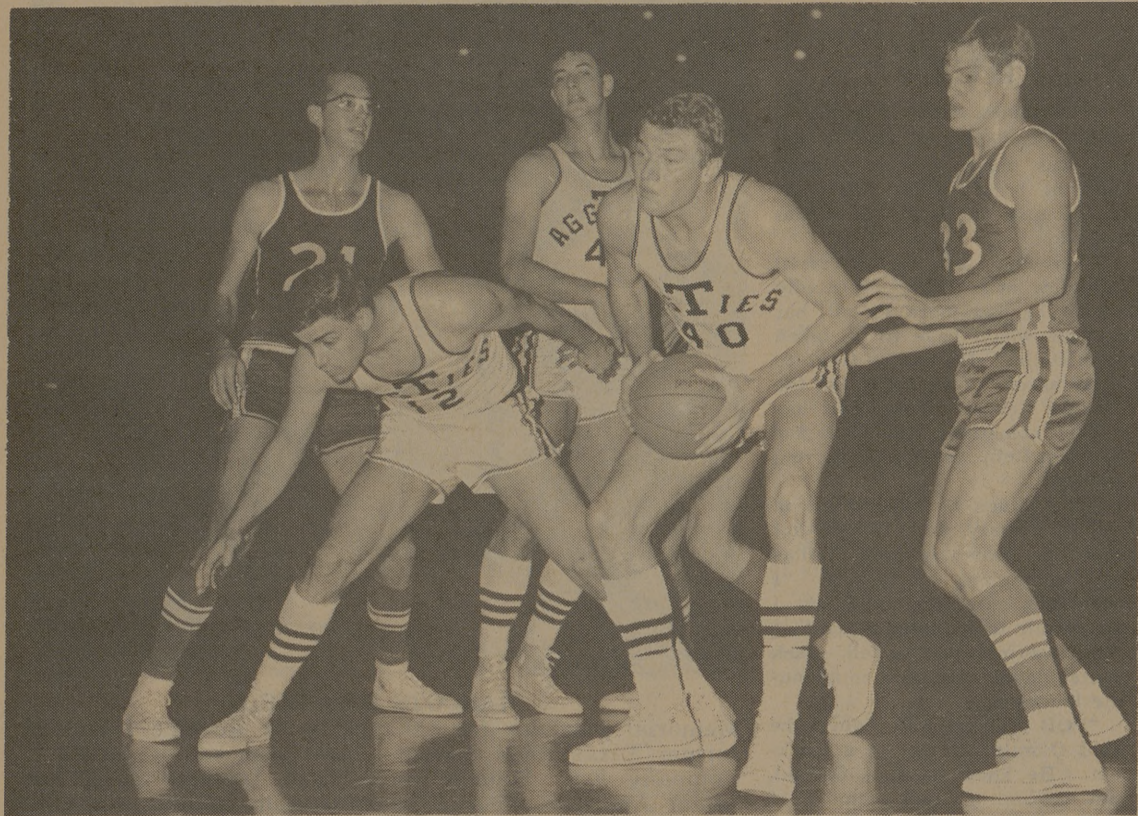


# Ags Start Year With 69-66 Win



START THE MUSIC!

A&M's Billy Bob Barnett, momentarily motionless, is surrounded by both friend and foe as he attempts to retain possession of the ball in Tuesday night's exciting win over Rice. With Barnett are Aggies Dick Rector (12) and Ronnie Peret (44) and Owls Larry Miller (33) and Farrar Stockton (21). (Photo by Russell Autrey)

By JERRY GRISHAM

What better way is there for a basketball team to start off the new year than with a win? The Texas Aggies did just that last night in G. Rollie White Coliseum as they defeated the visiting Rice Owls 69-66.

The win marked the Aggies' first Southwest Conference basketball victory in as many starts and their second win of the season against eight losses.

Rice grabbed the lead in the early minutes of the game, but the inability of the Owls to defend the Aggies without fouling and the hot hand of the Maroon and White at the free throw line pushed the Aggies to an 11-point lead with 3:19 to go in the half.

In the first half the Aggies were outshot from the floor with 12 field goals for the Owls and 11 by the Farmers. But the Aggies hit 14 of 18 charity shots to 7 of 16 for the visitors and went to the dressing room at the half with a 36-29 lead.

Johnny Underwood was the pace-setter for the Aggies in the first half as he connected on five field goals and one free throw.

The second half was devoted primarily to a game of catch-up by the Owl five. Behind the shooting of Larry Miller, who was the game's top scorer with 17

points, Rice pulled to within six points of the Aggies with 5:40 remaining.

The Owls three times whittled the Aggie lead down to one point, but crucial shots by Billy Bob Barnett and Ronnie Peret for the Aggies maintained the slim Aggie lead. With seven seconds showing on the clock, a free throw by Sonny Benefield pulled the Aggies to their final three-point margin.

Rice outshot A&M from the floor, hitting 25 of 51 for a hot 49 per cent, while the Aggies scored on 23 of 50 for 46 per cent. In the free-throw department the Aggies hit 23 of 32 and the Owls tallied 16 of 24.

The Aggies decisively controlled the boards as they pulled in 39 rebounds to 29 for Rice.

In scoring Greg Williams and

Bill Doty of Rice both scored 16 points to back up the high scorer Miller.

The Aggies had four in the double digits as Benefield led with 16. Underwood scored 14, Barnett hit 13 and Peret 12. Barnett was the game's top rebounder with 12.

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TARKENTON'S STREAK  
MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — At halfway point in the National Football League schedule, Minnesota Viking quarterback Fran Tarkenton had a three-game streak in which he completed 98 passes.  
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## Fish Stomp Owlets 77-49 In Prelims

Texas A&M's Fish turned a basketball game into a rout as they steam-rolled the Rice Owlets, 77-49 in a prelude to the varsity game in G. Rollie White Coliseum Tuesday night.

The victory evened the Fish record at two wins against two defeats for the season.

The Fish, who led 34-27 at half-time, put on an awesome display of offense in the second half, combined with a stubborn defense to outscore the Owlets 43-22.

A&M hit 32 of 68 from the floor, for 47 per cent, and held the Owlets to 20 of 66 for a cold 30 per cent. In free throws the Fish also topped the Owlets with

15 of 20 while the fledgling Rice unit hit 9 of 19.

Only on rebounds did the Owlets come close to the hot Aggie five. The Fish grabbed 51 rebounds and the Owlets pulled down 47.

Bill Brown of the Aggie Fish was the game's high scorer with 21 points. Second was John Gowdy of Rice with 18.

All five starters for the Fish hit in the double numbers. Oliver Biggers scored 17, Mike Heitman 14, Mac Hooten 11 and Mike Hazel 10.

The next game for the Fish will come Jan. 10 when they host the TCU Polliwogs.

## Bryant Says Short-Changed With Best Team Ever Seen

By WILL GRIMSLEY  
Associated Press Sports Writer  
NEW ORLEANS (AP) — Coach Paul Bear Bryant of Alabama feels short-changed that what he called the greatest football team he has ever seen is only No. 3 in the national rankings, but he's not ready to back a new formula for selecting the champion.

He said Tuesday that he could not subscribe to the proposal by Michigan State's Coach Duffy Daughterty that the title be decided by a series of eliminations among sectional winners at the end of the year.

"If it could be done within the framework of the present bowls, I might be for it," Bryant said. "But I'm strictly a bowl man and I wouldn't go for any plan that would cut down the number of Southeastern Conference teams that might play in the bowls."

Alabama, one of five Southeastern teams which figured in postseason games, was an impressive 34-7 winner over Nebraska, the Big Eight champion, in the Sugar Bowl.

Florida beat Georgia Tech in the Orange Bowl 27-12, Tennessee whipped Syracuse in the Gator Bowl 18-12, Georgia smothered Southern Methodist in the Cotton Bowl 24-9, and Texas beat Mississippi in the Bluebonnet 19-0.

Alabama has been by far the most active of the bowl participants, playing in 20, winning 12, losing 6 and tying 2. It has played in six different bowls.

Perhaps its most explosive victory was the rout here Monday

of the Cornhuskers, a team that had lost only one game during the season.

Quarterback Lenny Stabler hit All-America end Ray Perkins with a 45-yard pass on the first play of the game and the small but quick Tide proceeded to score a smashing triumph. The score might have been doubled if Bryant hadn't played second- and third-stringers.

"We could have beaten any team in the country out there yesterday. I am convinced of it," Bryant said. He didn't preclude Notre Dame, the national champion, and Michigan State, the two teams ranked ahead of his team this year.

"This is not only the greatest college team I have been associated with, it's the greatest I've ever seen," Bryant added.

He got another vote from Coach Bob Devaney of Nebraska, who admitted "This must be the best team in the country."

## Bradley's Surgery Set For Friday

AUSTIN, Tex. (AP) — Bill Bradley, outstanding Texas quarterback, will undergo surgery on his right knee Friday at an Austin hospital.

An athletic department spokesman said Tuesday that doctors will remove cartilage from the knee, injured in the game with Indiana Oct. 1.

Despite the injury, Bradley played most of the remaining games.

## Louisville In Hot Pursuit Behind UCLA For Top Spot

By The Associated Press  
Louisville, which is winning games more rapidly than UCLA but impressing people less, gets two chances to gain ground on the Bruins this week in The Associated Press major college basketball poll.

The Cardinals took their 11-0 record against Tulsa Tuesday night, and then headed for a battle with North Texas State Thursday night. But, maybe, before trying to impress the voters they had better take a look at what happened to North Carolina.

The Tar Heels, who finished third in the latest vote-counting behind top-ranked UCLA and runner-up Louisville, got the only first-place vote the Bruins didn't from the 39 sports writers and sportscasters balloting in the poll.

While second-ranked Louisville has two games scheduled, UCLA plays only one, against Washing-

ton State Saturday night. North Carolina gets two chances to get back up there, meeting Wake Forest Wednesday night and Duke Saturday night.

While the Big Three held their spots, four teams moved into the elite group — Providence, Kansas, Bradley and Mississippi State. At the same time, St. John's, N. Y., Vanderbilt and Michigan State dropped out.

The Top Ten, with first-place votes in parentheses, season records and total points on a 10-9-8 etc. basis:

1. UCLA (38) 8-0	389
2. Louisville 1-0	339
3. North Carolina (1) 9-0	309
4. New Mexico 9-1	215
5. Houston 11-1	168
6. Tex. Western 8-2	108
7. Providence 8-2	93
8. Cincinnati 8-1	92
9. Kansas 9-2	51
10. Bradley 9-2	44
Miss. State 8-0	44

### AN OPEN LETTER

Hello Aggies,

For several weeks we have been running our advertisement in the Battalion telling you about Aggeland Recreation Center located behind Betty's Fashions in the Redmond Terrace Center, College Station, Texas.

We've told you that we have two five by ten billiard tables, two five by ten snooker tables, sixteen four by eight billiard tables, seven pin ball machines and other games. That we are open 7 days each week from 8 a. m. till midnight. That no alcoholic beverages are sold or allowed. That we sell billiard supplies, jointed cue sticks, etc.

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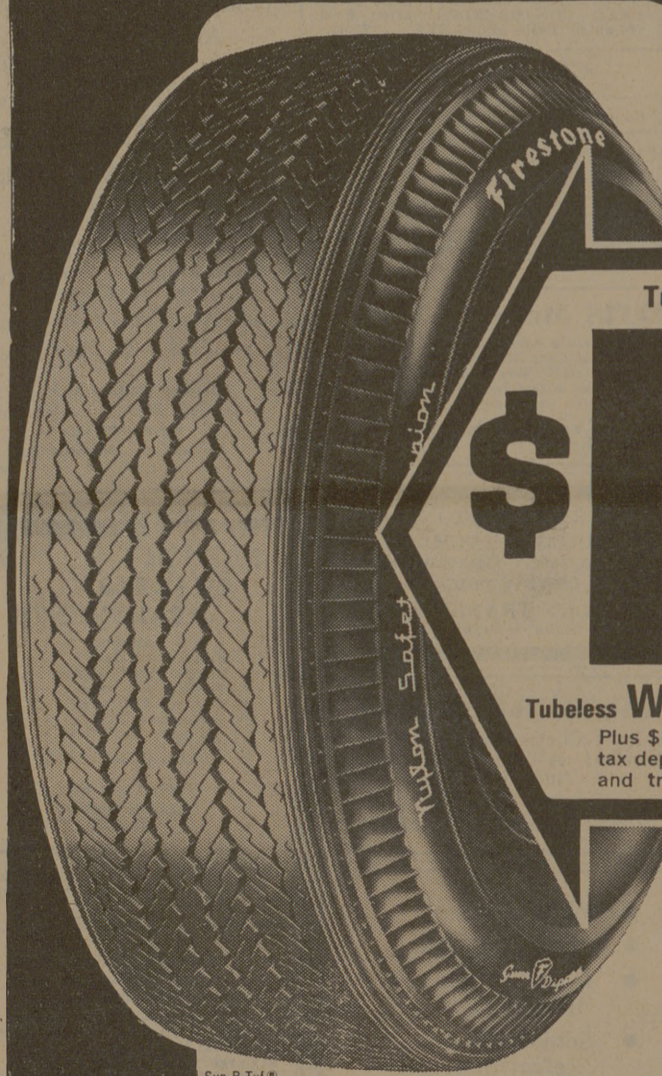
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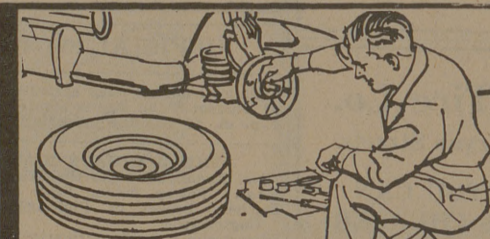
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