

# 'How Sweet It Is,' Aggies Whip Longhorns, 68-59

By GARY SHERER

"It feels a lot better," yelled Ronnie Peret following the Aggies much-needed 68-59 victory over the Texas Longhorns at G. Rollie White Coliseum Tuesday night before 6,500 happy fans.

Peret's voice was hard to hear over the tumult and the shouting in the Aggie dressing room. It was a welcome sound as it had not been heard very much in this 66-67 season. Trainer Billy Pickard was pounding on everything in reach as he typified the happiness of this victory, as it definitely was needed. Going along with the needed win was the added pleasure of beating Texas, which all Aggies know is always gratifying.

"We could be leading the league with any luck at all," a smiling Shelby Metcalf said after the game.

The Aggie coach was right, as two of their conference losses have been by just one point (Arkansas) and three points (TCU). Their other loss was to SMU by 13 points.

The Aggies were red hot from the floor, as they hit 27 of 47 for

56.4 percent with a fantastic 12 of 19 in the second half sealing the victory. The Longhorns had trouble finding the hoop, as their 22 of 63 for 34.9 showed the toughness of the Aggie defense.

Going along with the hot shooting were the performances of Billy Bob Barnett and Jerry Payne. Barnett ended up sharing the high point honors with Sonny Benefield at 14 points. The 6-4 Barnett also shared rebounding honors with Buzzy Myatt with 8 each.

Payne was the hub of the attack, as he hit three for three from the floor. More important than this, his heads-up defensive play and top playmaking pulled the Aggies from behind in an outstanding first half surge.

Metcalf praised Payne following the game and referred to his play as his (Payne's) greatest game. But this was not an individual victory, this was a team victory. The Aggies made few mistakes after early jitters and followed through with a good team performance.

The Aggie surge started at the 11:46 mark of the first half. Tak-

ing a lead 19-9 the Longhorns were taking advantage of Aggie mistakes and starting to pull away. At this point, Payne came in the game to lead a seven point burst before a jump shot by Texas' Larry Lake stopped the string.

From that point, the Aggies outscored the Longhorns 19-10 and took a 35-31 lead to the dressing room at halftime.

With four minutes gone into the second half, Texas held their last lead, 39-38. From there the Aggies took over and led by as much as 11 points as they coasted to their final nine-point victory.

The Longhorns put on a last-minute press to try and shake the Aggies but it was handled with ease by the Maroon and White. Terry Trippet especially thrived on the Texas press as the 6-3 Odessa junior hit on three layups but had one disqualified by a traveling call. Trippet's baskets were uncontested as he broke down court in front of the pressing Texas defenders and hauled in the long passes looped

to him over the outstretched Longhorn hands.

The one time he was contested, Lake fouled him and Trippet sank the subsequent two foul shots and finished the scoring for the night.

The normally high-scoring Texas attack never materialized, as their shots were forced because of the tenacious Aggie defense.

The Longhorns' shooting statistics bear out this fact.

The Aggie defense, probably more than anything else, was the reason for the win. The young team, though lacking some of the time in offense, makes up for this with heads-up defense and hustle.

Metcalf has said all along that

nobody is going to score much against his team, but their only problem is putting the ball through the hoop at a consistent pace.

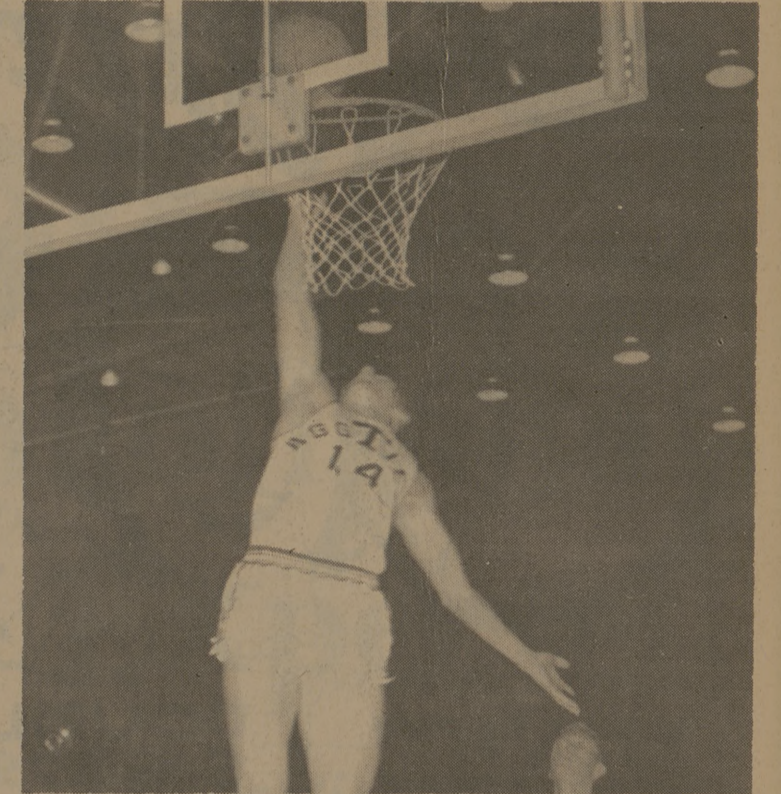
The outstanding shooting percentages by the Aggies Tuesday night may be an indication that they have finally found their shooting eyes.

The Maroon and White are now 2-3 in conference play.

Trinity University of San Antonio is the Aggies' next competition Jan. 30. After their trip to the Alamo City, the Aggies will travel to Waco to meet the Baylor Bears Feb. 4. The Aggies' next home game is Feb. 7 against Texas Tech.



**PERET SCORES**  
Aggie center Ronnie Peret (44) scores on a layup in-between Texas defenders Charley Turnbough (left), Billy Arnold (15) Scotty Brown (left) and Dale Dotson (14).



**TWO POINTS**  
Aggie sparkplug Jerry Payne (14) leaves Texas' Noel Stout behind on a "give and go" layup in Tuesday night's 68-59 Aggie win.

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