

Ags Meet Rice Owls Tonight

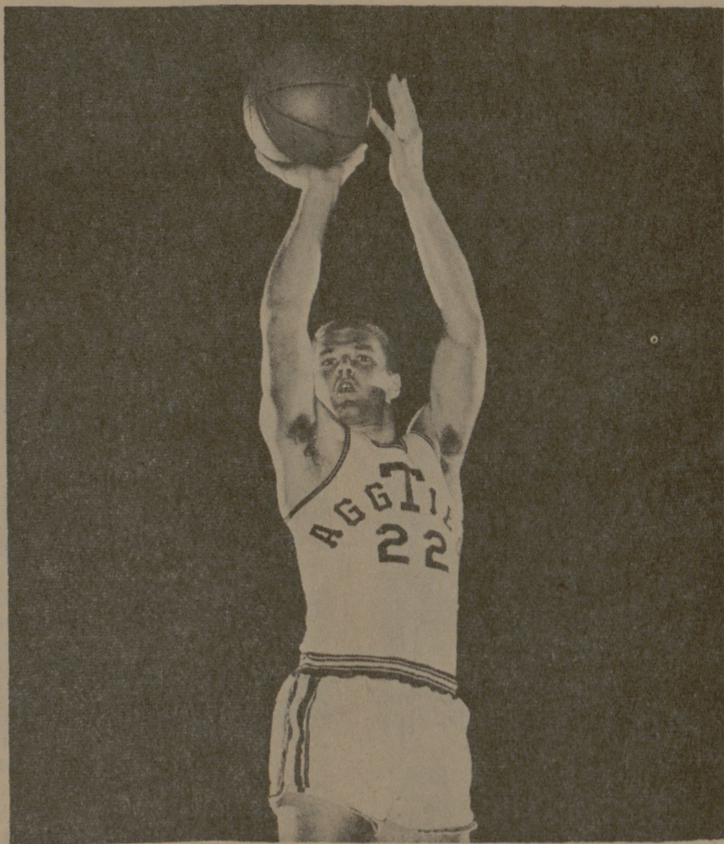
By GARY SHERER
 Coach Shelby Metcalf and his Aggie basketballers invade Rice's Astry Gym tonight in the role of spoilers.
 The Maroon and White took on this new face as a result of their 77-67 loss to Baylor Saturday night at G. Rollie White Coliseum.
 THE LOSS makes the Aggies 2-4 in the Southwest Conference race while Baylor upped its league mark to 5-1. With four losses, the Aggies would have to win all of their remaining games, and in the crazy SWC, winning streaks are not very abundant.
 Coach Don Knodel's Owls also lost Saturday. Rice dropped a 68-64 afternoon TV decision to Texas at Austin's Gregory Gym. The

Owls now have a 3-3 conference record while the Longhorns are tied with Arkansas for second place at 4-2.
 Rice is now in the same position that the Aggies were before Saturday night's games. They cannot afford to lose.
 THUS FAR this season, Baylor has been the only team to show any consistency. The Bears' only loss has been to Texas Christian. Only last week, TCU had been considered the team to beat. The schedule-makers put an end to that, as the Frogs ran into the two toughest road trips in the conference. The result — two straight losses at the hands of Arkansas and Texas Tech.
 Rice's attack is led by Larry Miller and Greg Williams. Miller,

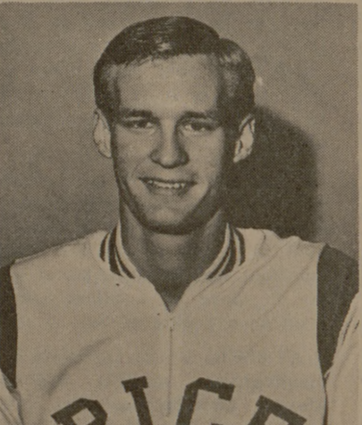
6-3 forward from San Antonio leads the Owl SWC scoring with an 18.8 mark. Williams, a pint-sized guard from Portland, Ind. is runner-up with an even 16 per game.
 KNODEL LOST his first-string center when Jim Hubenak, a 6-7 junior from Wharton was a victim of the scholastic woes. Sophomore Steve Wendel has stepped into Hubenak's spot. Houston product Bob Rule, a 6-4 guard continues to be the number one reserve for the Owls.
 The Aggies will have their

hands full for this 8 p.m. game, as the Owls feature a varied attack. The task of guarding Miller will go to sophomore Mike Heitmann who returned to his early season form in the Baylor loss. Heitmann came off the bench and paced the Aggie attack with 18 points.
 The Houston Sam Houston grad had run into mid-season sluggishness and Metcalf hopes the 6-4 forward has regained his confidence. Joining Heitmann in the starting lineup will be Ronnie Peret, Billy Bob Barnett, John Underwood and Sonny Benefield.
 SATURDAY night's loss was in keeping with the Aggies' recent misfortunes. Baylor was consistent and A&M wasn't. The final statistics prove this statement true. The Bears were 24 for 44 from the field for 54.5 while the Aggies managed 19 of 52 for 36.5.

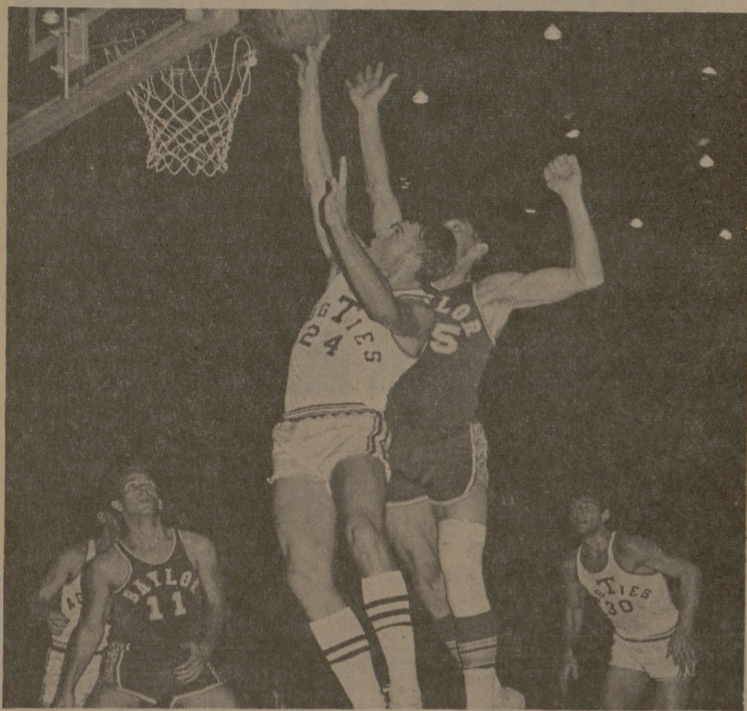
The Aggies definitely need consistency in their attack. The loss to Baylor proved this but there is a lot of talent on this Aggie aggregation and they can still make some noise in the SWC race.
 One improvement was noticeable by the noise it made Saturday night. The biggest crowd of the season entered G. Rollie White as 7,300 observed the game.



MIKE HEITMANN
 Returned to form Saturday night.



BOB RULE
 Rice's top reserve this season.



BARNETT FOR TWO

Billy Bob Barnett (24) scores on a layup in this first-half action of Saturday night's 77-67 loss to Baylor. Defending for Baylor is Randy Thompson (11) and Ed Thorpe (behind Barnett). Mike Hazel (30) sets for a possible rebound.

Fish Ripped 81-67 By Baylor Cubs

By JOHN PLATZER
 A poor shooting first half proved disastrous for the Aggie Fish Saturday as they dropped an 81-67 decision to the Baylor Cubs.
 The loss was the Fish's second against four wins for the season while Baylor is now 4-3. It was the first SWC loss for the Fish.
 BAYLOR jumped off to a 4-0 lead in the contest and was never threatened. They had their biggest lead of the half at 36-18 with five minutes remaining.
 The half ended with the Cubs on top 43-28.
 Outside shooting, which had been one of the Fish top weapons in the season, all but deserted them in the half as they hit on only 11 of 28 from the field for 39.3 per cent while the Cubs hit at a 53.3 mark on 16 of 30.
 The first portion of the second half produced more of the same as the Cubs pulled away to a 62-38 margin with 12:20 remaining.
 THE FISH then began to reverse the trend and started chipping away at the lead but it was too late as Baylor protected their win.
 A&M hit on 22 of 49 from the floor for the game for a 44.9 mark while Baylor hit on 30 of 58 for 51.7.
 Steve Niles led the Fish in scoring with 18 points and rebounding with 9 while Chuck Smith added 16 points and Bill Cooksey had 15. Tom Friedman and Bob Griffiths led the Cub's attack with 21 and 20 points respectively.

FOUR OF the Fish players continue to keep their averages in double figures for the season scoring. Cooksey leads with a 21 point average while Smith is at 19.9, Niles is at 15.4 and Roddy McAlpine is averaging 10.8.
 Cooksey has hit on 56 of 124 from the field for a 45.1 mark which is exceptionally good considering the length of the shot it is his job to take.
 Smith, who forms a strong duo under the boards with Niles, has made good on 40 of 63 attempts for 63.5 per cent while Niles has hit on 35 of 75 for a 46.2 mark.
 THE TEAM'S rebounding has been one of its main strengths and Niles and Smith are two of the reasons. Niles has grabbed 83 rebounds for a 13.8 average while Smith has 68 for an 11.3 mark.
 The Fish play the Rice Owlets in Houston tonight before returning home this Saturday to take on the Texas Shorthorns in a preliminary to the varsity game.

FINAL MAKE-UP
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 Thru Feb. 17.
 University Studio

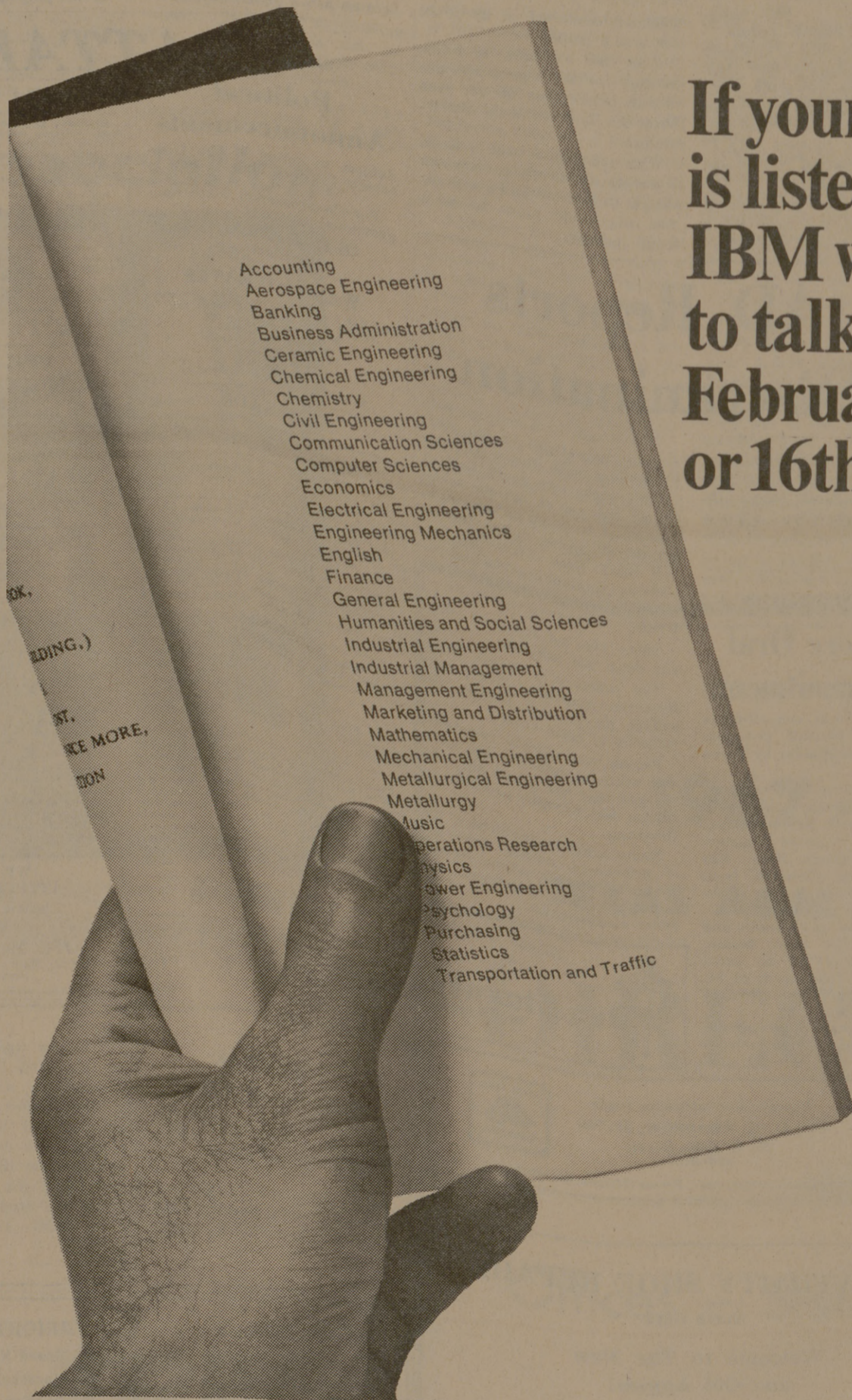
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