

Aggie Five Trims Rice, 78-58

By GARY SHERER
Four minutes were gone before the Aggies scored Tuesday night. When they did, the Rice Owls

didn't have a chance, as the Aggies coasted to a 78-58 victory at G. Rollie White Coliseum. The small (3,000) turnout saw

a close game in the first half. The Aggies led 33-30 at intermission. But, when the final buzzer sounded, the Aggies finally

owned a winning Southwest Conference record at 5-4. With Baylor losing to Texas 79-65, at Austin, the SWC race is starting to get close. Baylor still leads with a 7-2 mark. Then, a four-way tie exists for second place between the Aggies, Texas, Arkansas and Texas Christian. There is also a good battle going on to stay out of the cellar between Rice, Texas Tech and Southern Methodist, all at 3-6.

Once again, it was aggressive play by the Aggies that paved the way to their eleventh win of the year. Rice, as they did last week at Houston, suffered another poor shooting night against the Aggies. Both teams fell off from their first half shooting in the second half. The Aggies hit at 50 percent in the first twenty minutes while the Owls had a 48.1 mark. The Aggies dropped to 40.5 percent in the second half while Rice, slipped to a dismal 25.0.

But, a good reason for the Owls poor shooting was the aggressiveness of the Aggie defense. Rice's leading scorer, Larry Miller, was high for the Owls but he had to take 19 shots to get that much as he missed 13. The other half of the Owls' scoring tandem, Greg Williams, managed 10 points on 4 for 10 from the field.

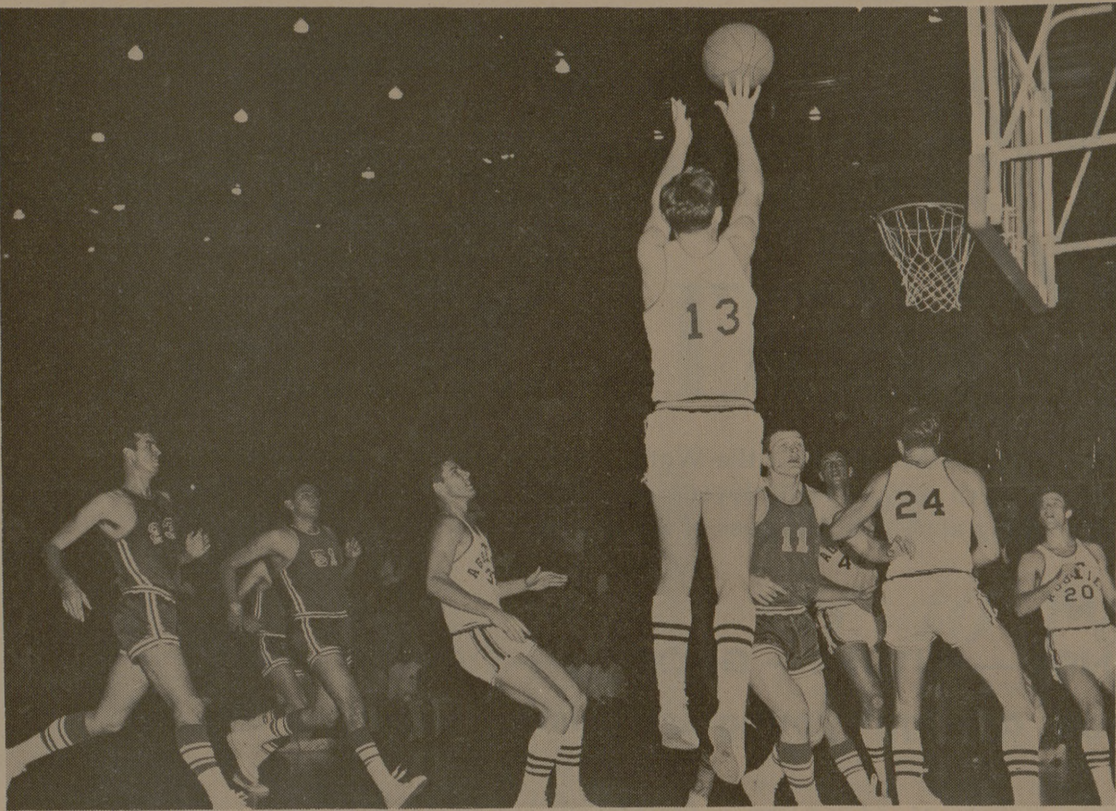
Billy Bob Barnett paced the Aggie attack with 17 points which paced all scorers as did his 14 rebounds top everybody (Ronnie Peret was close behind with 13). Rebounds were the real story in the Aggies' second half pull away. They out-rebounded the Owls 36-21 which kept Rice from getting a second shot in the second half. As it turned out, Rice needed that second shot as they only made 8 field goals after half-time.

The Aggies got balanced scoring as four men hit double figures. Behind Barnett's 17 was Sonny Benefield, Mike Heitmann and Johnny Underwood with 12, 11 and 10, respectively.

Saturday afternoon, the Aggies will face a stern test at Waco. The SWC race is turning into a tighter affair now with Baylor losing to Texas. The Bears are tough at home, and the Aggies will need a top effort to beat Baylor.

The Aggies cannot afford to lose any more games as another loss would definitely stamp out what slim chances they have left. The Bears, on the other hand, must not slip either so the regional audience should see a thrilling game Saturday afternoon.

The Aggies will have four games left after the Baylor game with half of them on the road. They host the Arkansas Razorbacks next week and then two straight road games at TCU and Tech follow, with the season finale at home against SMU.



BENEFIELD HITS JUMPER
Sonny Benefield (13) sails a successful jump shot at the basket in this second half action of Tuesday night's 78-58 Aggie victory over Rice.

Fish Thump Owlets, 89-68 For Season's Sixth Win

By JOHN PLATZER
Chuck Smith and Danny Berry supplied the offensive firepower last night in leading the Aggie Fish to a measure of revenge with an 89-68 victory over the Rice Owlets.

The win came exactly one week after the Fish had dropped a 63-58 contest to Rice in Houston. Coach Jim Culpepper's cagers are now 6-3 for the year and 4-2 in conference while Rice dropped to a 3-6 season mark and 1-3 in conference.

A&M will be out to revenge their other conference defeat Saturday when they take on the Baylor Cubs in Waco. Baylor defeated the Fish on February 3 in College Station 81-67.

The score changed hands four times and was tied five times in the first eight minutes of the Rice game when a short jumper by Steve Niles gave the Fish a lead they never relinquished.

A five point spree by Smith helped the Fish stretch their lead to 25-15 with 8:21 left in the half before a Rice rally cut the margin back to two.

The Fish then took control once again to go into the halftime dressing room with a 35-28 lead. Niles paced the Fish's first half effort with 12 points while Smith contributed 11.

In the second half Smith and Berry took charge as the A&M freshmen breezed home. They steadily increased their advantage to their largest margin of 73-50 with 5:56 remaining. The Owlets and Fish traded points for the rest of the contest with little change in the margin.

Smith popped in 29 points to take high point honors in the contest while Berry had 17, Bill Cooksey contributed 15 and Niles finished with 14. Gary Reist and Marty Tendler, a couple of out-of-state cagers paced the Owlets with 15 and 14 points, respectively.

The Fish hit on a fantastic 18 of 26 shots in the second half for 69.2 per cent to put the game away. They finished with 31 of 55 for a 56.4 mark while Rice had 27 of 65 for a 41.5 mark.

Smith and Niles also helped the Fish win the battle of the



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Pre-Veterinary medicine students who expect to qualify as applicants for admission to the professional curriculum of the College of Veterinary Medicine in September 1968 may secure application forms in the Registrar's Office beginning Monday, February 26, 1968. May 1, 1968 is the deadline for filing applications and transcripts with the Registrar. 53211f

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