

Aggie Five To Invade Kansas, Oklahoma Over Holidays

By JOHN PLATZER
Some of the top basketball powerhouses in the country will provide the competition for Coach Shelby Metcalf's Aggies over the holidays as A&M makes its first road trip of the season.

Wichita, Kansas is the first stop of the Aggies' schedule where they will play always tough Wichita State Monday and then its on to Oklahoma City and the All-College Tournament Dec. 25-30. Among the teams in the All-College this season are St. Bonaventure, University of the Pacific, Oklahoma City, Tulane, LSU, Wyoming and the Aggies' first round opponent, Duquesne.

The Aggies, who got Thursday and Friday off since they'll be on the road at Christmas, leave by charter plane Sunday afternoon for their 8 p.m. date with the Shockers Monday.

COACH METCALF says that the level of competition that the Aggies will face on the trip should help in determining the team's prospects for the year.

"I think we are real close to putting it together and we have high hopes of putting it together on this road trip," Coach Metcalf said.

"We played 36 minutes of good

ball the other night but you need 40 minutes to win. Our streaks of good basketball are getting longer with each game, however."

THE AGGIES will enter the Wichita State game with a record of 3-2 after wins over Southern Mississippi, Centenary and Louisiana Tech and losses to Lamar Tech and Stephen F. Austin.

Wichita State has a strong rebounding team that is paced by 6-6 Ron Washington and 6-7 sophomore Kevin O'Riordan. In their last outing, the Shockers lost by 10 points to the University of St. Louis but among their victories is a 93-88 triumph over Iowa, the nation's 19th ranked team. In their win over Iowa, the Shockers pulled down 25 offensive rebounds.

THE OKLAHOMA CITY tournament is the oldest one in the United States and Coach Metcalf claims that there is a "lot of prestige attached to being in it."

Duquesne, A&M's opening foe in the tournament Thursday night at 7, has four starters back from

last season's 18-7 team that competed in the NIT. Added to the four returning starters are three top players up from last year's Duquesne freshman team which was rated among the top five in the nation.

Jerrit Durham came within one point of breaking his school's freshman scoring record while connecting on 87% of his free throws. Gary Majors, a 6-9 senior and Moe Barr provide much of the experience on the squad.

METCALF SAYS that possibly the best player on the team "is a kid named Zopf who they claim is their most exciting player since Willie Somerset (currently a star with Houston of the ABA)."

Zopf was player-of-year in his NCAA District last season and was selected to the Associated Press All-East second team.

Other teams in the Aggies' bracket at the tournament are St. Bonaventure, who went through the regular season undefeated last year, and the University of the Pacific. The Bonnies, led by 6-11 All-American center Bob Lanier, has currently lost only

one game that to Detroit and Olympic hero Spencer Haywood.

THE OTHER bracket of the All-College consists of Oklahoma City, Tulane, LSU and Wyoming. LSU, with All-American and the nation's scoring leader Pete Maravich; and Tulane, who defeated LSU in Baton Rouge earlier, are regarded as two of the finest teams in the South. Wyoming is currently undefeated and ranked in the nation's top 20.

The Aggies go on the road with four players averaging in double figures for the year. Billy Bob Barnett, a senior from Brenham, has been the team's most proficient scorer with a 20.0 average while Ronnie Peret is scoring 19.8 per contest, Sonny Benefield 13.6 and Mike Heitmann 11.0.

BILL COOKSEY, a sophomore from Houston Sam Houston, is hitting for 6.4 average, Steve Niles 3.6, Bill Brown 3.0 and Chuck Smith 2.0. In the first five games Barnett, Peret, Benefield, Heitmann, Cooksey, Niles and Bostic have held starting jobs at least once.

A&M has hit on 161 of 312 shots as a team for a 51.6 percentage with Peret leading the way with a 67.3 mark while Barnett is at 54.1, Heitmann 50.0, Benefield 48.3, Niles 46.2, Bostic

42.4 and Cooksey 41.7. The Aggies have out rebounded their opponents 235-182 with Peret leading the way with 11.0 average. Barnett has pulled down 7.8 per contest while Bostic has a 6.8

average.

Coach Metcalf's cagers return home on Jan. 6 for their first Southwest Conference game of the year against the Texas Tech Red Raiders.



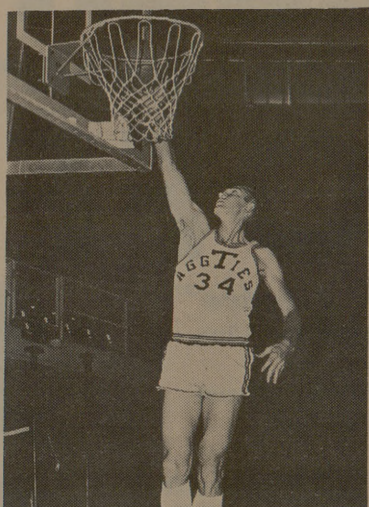
MIKE HEITMANN



BILL COOKSEY



STEVE NILES



HARRY BOSTIC

Aggie Cage Stats

Player	G	FG-FGA	Pct.	FT-FTA	Pct.	Reb-Avg.	PF-D	Pts.	Avg.	High Game		
Billy Bob Barnett	5	33-61	54.1	30-38	78.9	39-7.8	18.0	100	20.0	27—So. Mo.		
Ronnie Peret	5	37-55	67.3	25-43	58.1	55-11.0	17-1	99	19.8	27—Lamar T		
Sonny Benefield	5	29-60	48.3	10-14	71.4	14-2.8	10.0	68	13.6	18—So. Mo. & Lamar T		
Mike Heitmann	5	17-34	50.0	21-31	67.7	18-3.6	15-0	55	11.0	16—Lamar T		
Bill Cooksey	5	15-36	41.7	5-5	100.0	12-2.4	3-0	35	7.0	17—Centen.		
Harry Bostic	5	14-33	42.4	4-4	100.0	34-6.8	9-0	32	6.4	12—So. Mo.		
Steve Niles	5	6-13	46.2	6-7	85.7	17-3.4	13-1	18	3.6	7—S.F.A.		
Bill Brown	3	3-4	75.0	3-5	60.0	2-0.7	1-0	9	3.0	9—Lamar T		
Chuck Smith	4	3-11	27.3	2-5	40.0	10-2.5	5-0	8	2.0	3—So. Mo.		
Roddy McAlpine	3	1-2	50.0	2-2	100.0	1-0.3	2-0	4	1.3	4—Lamar T		
Ross Brupbacher	2	1-2	50.0	0-0	0.0	1-0.5	1-0	2	1.0	2—So. Mo.		
Oliver Biggers	1	0-1	0.0	0-0	0.0	3-1.5	1-0	0	—	—		
Team Rebounds.....29-5.8												
Totals	A&M	5	161-312	51.6	108-154	70.1	199	235-47.0	95-2	430	86.0	102—Lamar
	Foes	5	148-328	45.1	107-145	73.8	218	182-36.4	114-5	403	80.6	98—Lamar

Three Aggies Selected By Pro Scouts

Even if the Texas Aggies did not repeat their Southwest Conference heroics of a year ago, according to the pro football scouts, a lot of prime football material was there.

The Sporting News, typically the sportman's bible, and Time Magazine, both of which elect their All-American teams on the say-so of the pro scouts, evaluated the players from around the country and picked an All-Star squad composed of the men they feel have the best chance to make it in professional football.

Oddly enough, the 3-7 Aggies placed three players on the 24-man Sporting News roster and captured two spots on the 22-man Time squad.

Rolf Krueger, the Aggies' veteran defensive trenchman, a 6'4", 240 pound brute, made both teams and as Sporting News says "is a bruiser on the gridiron, with tremendous strength to go along with football quickness and savvy". He was described by Time as "rugged, durable, covers the outside very well, and has lots of desire."

Safety Tommy Maxwell, a 6'2", 192 pound speedster, also made both teams and was described by Sporting News as "a well-coordinated athlete who excels in almost all sports, with tremendous hands and quick reactions." Time said that Maxwell, in the terse, tight lingo of the scouting report is: "Fast, with good hands. Covers a lot of ground. Likes to play it tight. Tough."

The other Aggie picked by Sporting News was punter Steve O'Neal, a 6'3", 185 pounder from Hearne, who was characterized by the scouts as having "tremendous leg thrust, able to hang his kicks in the air so that his teammates can get downfield to cover on punt returns." In 1967 he finished as the leading punter in the Southwest Conference, was second this year and finished among the nation's leaders both seasons.

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