

SMU off to fast start

Two weeks of the basketball season have been completed, and a team picked for the lower depths of the Southwest Conference is off and running while at least one of the contenders has faltered in the early going.

The Mustangs have a 4-1 record, and their lone loss was to a good Georgia Tech team. They've beaten such formidable competition as Wichita State, Nebraska and Oklahoma City as well as a season rout of Austin College.

The key to the Mustang charge has been Bobby Rollings, who's averaging 21 points a game after scoring at a 5-point clip last year. He's given added help to the conference's leading scorer of the last two years, Gene Phillips, who is netting 24.8 points a game.

Another surprise team has been the Texas Aggies, who are off to a slow start, winning only two of their first six. But coach Shelby Metcalf's teams usually start slow and get stronger as the season progresses.

But very few of the people expected them to lose to the University of Texas at Arlington or get bombed twice in the Houston

Classic. The University of Texas at Austin also has pulled some surprises and after losing three at the start of the season have won three games in a row.

The Longhorns have had two surprises in guard Billy Black and forward Lynn Howden. Howden was expected to be a top gun last year but fizzled out.

Black has scored 134 point in six outings and Howden has chunked in 121 tallies and has been outstanding at rebounding.

Texas Tech, led by All-SWC performers Gene Knolle and Greg Lowery, have split six games against probably the toughest schedule faced thus far by a conference team.

Knolle has popped in 158 points in six games and has twice broken the 30 point mark.

Baylor is also even in six starts and the outstanding play of Tyler Junior College exs Willie Chatman and Bobby Thompson is a main reason.

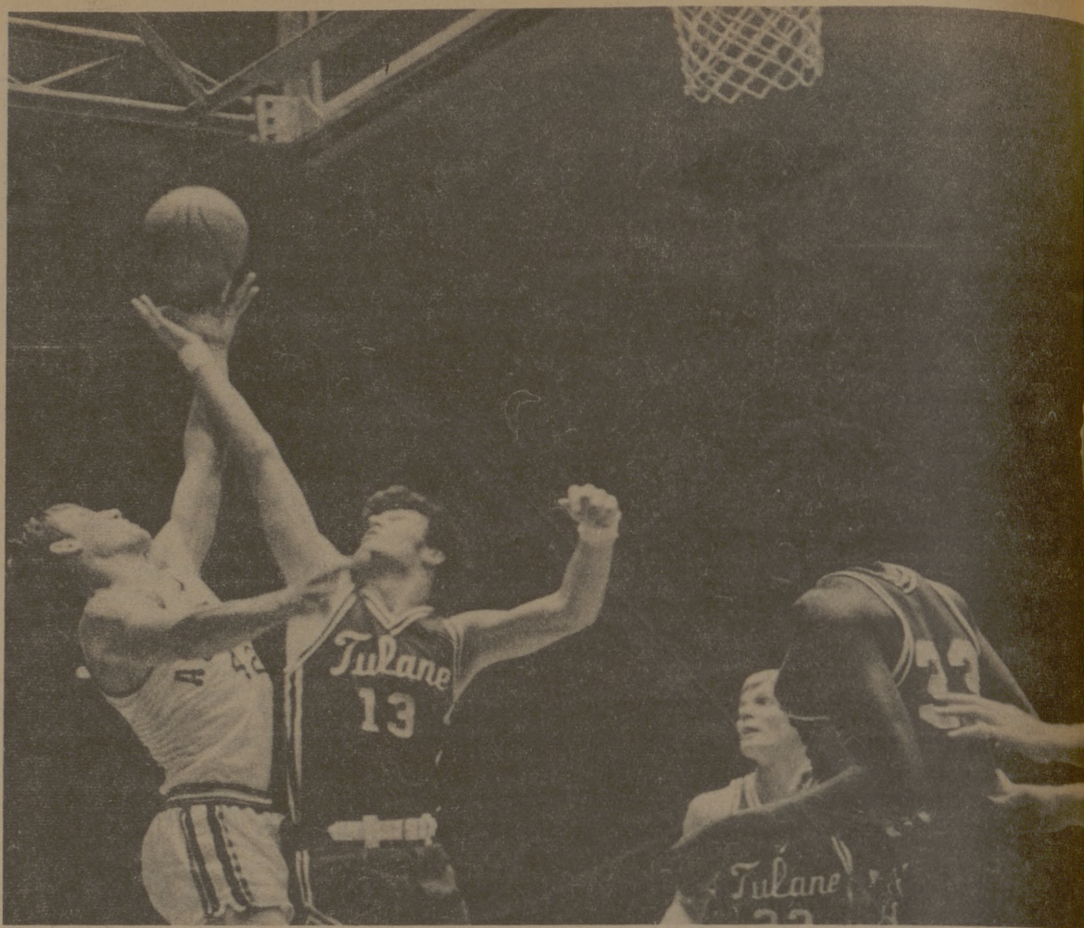
Chatman, a senior and returning all conference veteran, has scored 23 point a game and Thompson, in his first year with the Bears, is scoring at a 20-point

clip. Defending champion Rice has won two of its first four games and one of the losses was a learning session at UCLA, which they lost 124-78 but played the Bruins well in the opening half.

TCU has found the early going tough winning only one of five, but junior college transfers Eugene Kennedy and Simpson Degrate have played well in leading the Frogs, who must replace four of five starters.

Kennedy, 6-6, has tallied 19 points a game including 30 against Purdue and 26 against Loyola of New Orleans. Degrate, from McClennan Community College, has hit in double figures in each of the Frogs' games, although not with the velocity of Kennedy.

Arkansas is also off to a slow start, dropping their fifth game in six starts Monday night to Iowa State. Almer Lee, the Hogs' leading scorer is averaging 20 points a game early this season, including scoring 25 points twice. Vernon Murphy, forward, has averaged about 12 points a contest for the Hogs after being ineligible last season.



CHUCK SMITH (42) and Tulane's Ricky Miller (13) fight for rebound during Saturday night's game in the Bluebonnet Classic in Houston. Harold Sylvester (33) was the only player of the two teams that was named to the All-Tournament team. Tulane won the game 89-69. (Photo by Steve Bryant)

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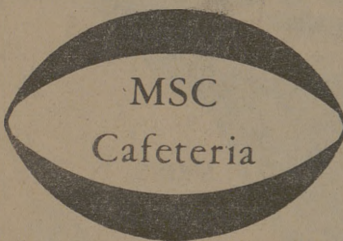
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