

Five cage sophs man Ag controls

By CLIFFORD BROYLES

The hours are fading fast on the 1970-71 basketball season—a disappointing one for the Texas Aggies, who were one of the pre-season favorites to claim the Southwest Conference championship.

Now with only three games left on the calendar, the Aggies have suffered through a 8-15 record and are 4-7 in SWC play.

It's been one of these years for the Aggies. They went 4-8 in nonleague play and then, after winning their last two nonconference efforts, were really hoping for a good start in conference action and a 2-7 record has proved that didn't come about.

The Aggies started the season with predictions of title hopes because of four returning seniors. But an injury cost A&M the services of Pat Kavanagh just before conference play.

"We spent the first month finding out the kids we were playing weren't going to win for us, then we spent January in a transition and we've come around and played some good ball in February," Coach Shelby Metcalf said.

That transition came when Metcalf made his five sophomores a more integral part of the game, despite the fact that they did not have the experience they needed to compete head-on in SWC competition. Now the Aggies have won their last two, including an important road victory at Tech.

Jeff Overhouse, the leagues top candidate for sophomore of the year, has started since the opening game and, since mid season, Charlie Jenkins and Bob Gobin have manned the point position for A&M. Wayne Howard has started the last six games and Bill O'Brien has also seen action as a guard.

They've done a lot of the playing in the second half of the season, and now its beginning to pay off with a crisper and sounder brand of basketball.

Overhouse had his best day as a varsity starter when he pumped in 27 points against Tech Saturday and has a good chance to pass such heralded Aggie sophomores of the past as Bennie Lennox and John Beasley in first-year scoring.

Howard, a high school All American, started the season seeing very little action but since gaining a starting spot against Arkansas three weeks ago has averaged 15 points a game. It was an early season misunderstanding that slowed Howard.

"The coaches and I had an early season misunderstanding. We couldn't get together on what we expect out of each other but that's been straightened out now," Howard said.

Overhouse said that he had felt the pressure early in the season. "I'd moved into the lineup to take Cooksey's place. And I guess I was pressurized because I knew I had some big shoes to fill."

He talked the situation over with the coaches and told them that it really didn't matter whether he started or not just as long as we won. He explains the improvement of the team as a matter of maturity.

"It was just a matter of time until we got everything going. We were learning with each other. We were learning the moves of the seniors and they were learning ours."

Gobin was a high school All-American also, in both football and basketball.

He is pleased with the way things have come along. "The coaches could have really got down on us (the sophomores) when we started losing but they stuck with us and we've come along."

"The big thing now is we're playing together. We have learned each other and we're more confident to try the bullet pass inside or just working the ball in general," the Perryton High graduate said.

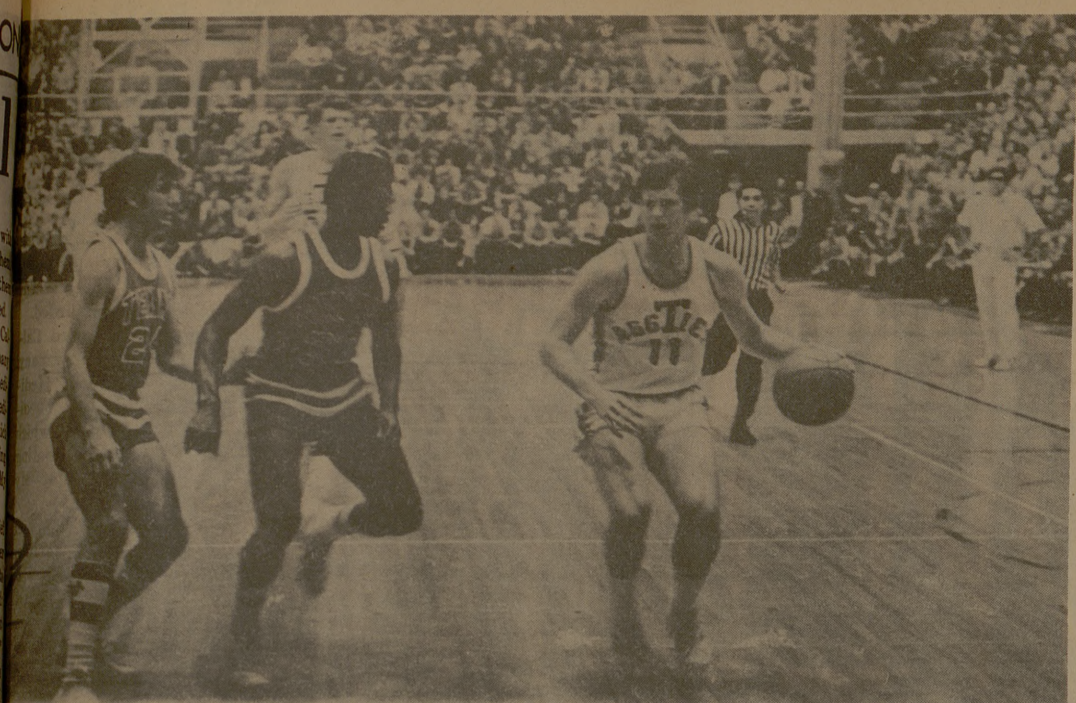
Jenkins is a two-sport athlete also, and will change uniforms soon when he joins the Aggie baseball season. There he will be an integral part in a young pitching staff.

The sophomores also mentioned the leadership of the squad from the veteran players.

"All our seniors have shown leadership at one time or another when we needed it," Gobin said.

Overhouse added that he had received a lot of help from his fellow big men, especially Rick Duplantis.

"Rick and I are about the same size and so we have a lot of same moves and fakes and he'll tell me who I can do what to rather than what an individual performer had done."



AGGIE PLAYMAKER Charlie Jenkins (11) dribbles against Texas defense of Scooter Lennox (24) and Jimmy Blacklock (30) in Tuesday night's game at G. Rollie White Coliseum. The Aggies moved into a sixth place tie with the Longhorns following their 65-44 win. (Photo by Mike Rice)

SMU and UT-Arlington

Ag tankers face top teams

by MICHAEL RICE
Battalion Sports Writer

The Texas Aggie swim team is working out hard as ever this week as it prepares to swim its final two dual meets of the season. The first will be Friday in Dallas against SMU and the second will be against the University of Texas at Arlington, in Arlington, Saturday.

The task of winning will be a formidable one indeed, as both teams are ranked in the top 20 in the nation, while A&M stands unranked. SMU is sixth, while UT-A was ranked 13th last year. It would take nothing short of a miracle for the Aggies to emerge victorious in one of the two meets. The Aggie swimmers presently are boasting a 4-2 won-loss record and will probably finish at the 500 mark for the season.

The feature race of the week-end will be for Steve Prentice, who has qualified for the nation-

als in the 200-yard backstroke. Prentice, swimming his lifetime best of 2:00:4 in the event against Arkansas, will be pitting his efforts against Ronnie Mills of SMU, who holds the conference record and will be defending his 1:55:8 best effort.

"We're not going to taper at all for these meets," Coach Dennis Fosdick said. "We're just going to be swimming for the experience we need for the conference meet in March. There will be no pressure to win just for the sake of winning."

Mike Hicks, the team captain, added, "We've got to go on swimming tired because these two teams are about the best in the Southwest area. But we'll still be looking for some good times in these meets. I think when we rest, everyone is going to go a lot faster than they have ever swum. I'm predicting a lot of surprises in the conference meet."

These two meets also will be the last dual meets for graduating senior Tom Sparks, who is the only senior on the swim team this year. Sparks, a sprinter for the Aggies, swam in the nationals for A&M last year and is also a two-year member of the T-Association.

"We're starting to work on the small things, like on stroke imperfections and starts," commented Fosdick. "These are quality workouts now, not quantity workouts. On the whole, we're doing fairly well."

Jean Henry, who is trying to initiate a movement for women's swimming at A&M, will be swimming at Rice this Friday, to qualify in more events for the NCAA nationals in April. Miss Henry, a good all-around athlete, has already qualified for nationals in the 100-yard backstroke, 100-yard freestyle, 200-yard freestyle and the 200-yard individual medley.

Netters play in UCC meet

The Texas Aggie tennis team opens play today in the University of Corpus Christi Invitational tennis tournament at the Howard Butt Tennis Center in that Gulf Coast city.

The tournament will be a team affair with the 16 teams in the meet playing team matches to decide the team champion, rather than individual play, which was the style used at the Pan American invitational two weeks ago.

Coach Omar Smith said each team will play three or four matches at the tournament with all first round losers dropping into the losers bracket and continuing play.

The meet will have five of the top seven teams in the nation including host Corpus Christi, Trinity, Rice, Brigham Young and Utah. Also expected to be on hand will be Pan American singles champion Jon Gardner of Southern Methodist and his teammates, and also teams from the University of Texas at Austin and Baylor of the Southwest Conference.

Match play will consist of five singles and two doubles matches. Drawings of the first round have not been announced.

Playing for the Aggies at the tournament will be Jon Ragland, Dickie Fikes, Mike Hickey, Tommy Connell, Lawton Park and Dan Courson.

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