Ags win tourney title; three home games this week

By JOHN CURYLO
Battalion Sports Editor

Following its championship performance in the Presidential Classic in Washington, D. C., Jan. 7-8, the Aggie basketball team returns to G. Rollie White Coliseum for a trio of games.

With a season record of 6-5, Coach Shelby Metcalf's squad has a three-game win streak going into Thursday night's game with Trinity.

Saturday marks the beginning of Southwest Conference play for the much-improved Aggies, as they host Southern Methodist University. Monday's opponent is Athletes in Action, a group of former collegiate and professional players. The game is in conjunction with the Campus Crusade for Christ.

Defense has been the strong suit for A&M, with the Aggies holding their last four opponents under 70 points. In winning the title in the Presidential Classic, A&M beat George Washington 72-64 and Virginia Tech 66-62 in overtime.

The starting lineup for the Aggies include 6-2 Mario Brown, 6-4 Bobby Threadgill, 6-7 Jeff Overhouse, 6-4 Wayne Howard and 6-8 Rick Duplantis. The top reserves are 6-3 Bob Gobin and 6-6 Randy Knowles. Brown, Overhouse and Howard were named to the all-tournament team in Washington, with Overhouse being voted Most Valuable Player.

Overhouse scored 35 points and was credited with 30 rebounds in the two-day tourney. He hit on 15 of 16 free throws in the two games. Howard had 26 points and 23 rebounds, with Brown making 17 points in addition to his flashy ball handling.

Threadgill contributed 18 points and hauled in 16 rebounds, and Duplantis grabbed 12 caroms and was credited with six assists. Good performances from the bench by Gobin and Knowles were factors in the outcome of both games.

Gobin chipped in with 21 points by virtue of his fine shooting. He hit seven of 10 shots from the field and seven of nine from the free throw line. Knowles scored 13 points and got 14 rebounds.

A&M shot only a little over 37% from the field in both games, but both norms were better than the opposition's. The Aggies out-rebounded Virginia Tech 64-62 and George Washington 57-46.

In the opening round of the tournament, A&M took the lead midway in the first half on a pair of charity shots by Overhouse and a jump shot by Knowles to make it 14-13. They proceeded to increase the lead to 10 points twice in the last three minutes on jumpers by Knowles and Threadgill. The Aggies led at the half, 37-29.

A drive by Brown four minutes into the second half pushed the score to 42-31, but George Washington began cutting the margin and finally tied it up with 5:38 remaining on a jump shot by Mike Tallent.

Overhouse countered with three consecutive layups to put the Aggies out in front to stay. Brown hit both ends of a one-and-one with 11 seconds left to push the score to 70-62, the largest lead for A&M since being tied.

The scoring:

A&M — Jeff Overhouse, 18; Bobby Threadgill, 13; Wayne Howard, 11; Mario Brown, 9; Bob Gobin, 9; Randy Knowles, 8; and Rick Duplantis, 4.

George Washington — Mike Battle, 14; Mike Tallent, 13; Robbie Spagnolo, 10; Lenny Baltimore, 8; Tom Rosepnik, 7; Ronnie Nunn, 6; John Conrad, 4; and Randy Smith, 2.

Virginia Tech was a big challenge for the Aggies, since the Gobblers had lost to No. 4 ranked South Carolina by only one point in Columbia. A&M led by one point twice in the first half, but a jump shot by Bill McNeer with 6:02 to play in the opening period made it 24-17 to give Virginia Tech its biggest lead of the half.

The Gobblers stretched their six-point halftime advantage to 13 five times in the second half, the last one being 48-35 with 11:43 to go. Then, Overhouse connected on a layup, Brown made a free throw and Howard followed with a pair of charity shots and a tip-in to lower the edge to six, 48-42, with 9:27 showing.

Overhouse made both ends of a one-and-one and Howard scored on a jumper at 4:26 to make it 54-50. Overhouse cashed in on two more free throws and Howard followed with a jumper to tie it at 54 with 3:07 to play. Neither team could muster a point in the remaining time, forcing the battle into overtime.

The Aggies never trailed in the extra five minutes, with the biggest bulge being a 63-56 total four minutes into the overtime period.

The scoring:

A&M — Jeff Overhouse, 17; Wayne Howard, 15; Bob Gobin, 12; Mario Brown, 8; Bobby Threadgill, 5; Randy Knowles, 5; and Rick Duplantis, 4.

Virginia Tech — Allan Bristow, 19; Randy Minix, 14; Craig Lieder, 13; Bill McNeer, 10; Tom Trice, 3; Darwin Pippin, 2; and Charlie Lipscomb, 1.

The Fish (2-1) will also be in action all three nights after a long layoff. They play Blinn Junior College Thursday, San Antonio College Saturday and Hill Junior College Monday. Starters for the Fish will be 5-11 Mike Floyd, 6-3 Dale Donaldson, 6-7 Webb Williams, 6-8 Jerry Mercer and 6-8 Cedric Joseph.

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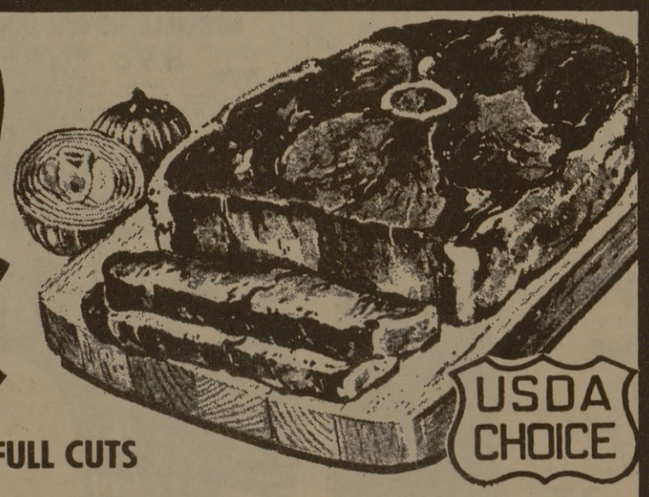

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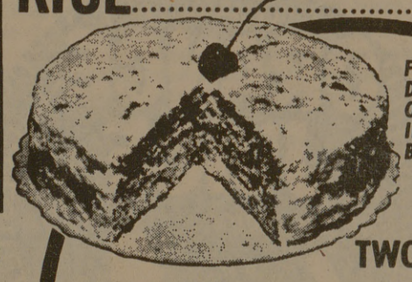

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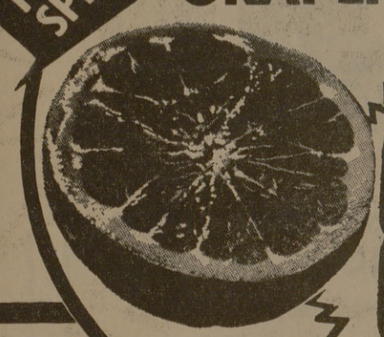

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