

13
**Road
Tonight**

**Kevin's
Korner**



By KEVIN COFFEY, Sports Editor

Texas A&M's next seven basketball games are on the road, and by the time the Aggies return home in January, coach Shelby Metcalf will have a pretty good idea what kind of team he has.

The Aggies are the only unbeaten Southwest Conference team with a 4-0 record, but that unblemished mark will be severely challenged in one single game and three tournaments during the holiday period. A&M starts the road trip tonight in Richmond, Va., against Virginia Commonwealth a young school which returns five starters from a 19-7 team.

This weekend, A&M plays in the Marshall Memorial Invitational in Huntington, W. Va. The first round opponent is George Washington which returns four starters from a 17-9 team. The other tournament teams are Marshall (20-7 last year) and Northwestern under new coach Tex Winter.

On Dec. 28-29, A&M competes in the Pan American Classic in Edinburg, Tex. Oklahoma Christian (13-15 last year) will be the first round foe. Tulsa (18-8) and Pan American with new coach Abe Lemons are the other teams.

The Aggies drew rugged Florida State (18-8) in the first round of the Bluebonnet Classic in Houston Jan. 4-5. Houston (23-4) and Denver (17-9) round out the field.

Metcalf used the first four games as an opportunity to get a good look at all of his personnel and feels he has a 10 solid players. The Aggies have shown strong rebounding with an advantage of 12 caroms per game and have received outstanding guard play. An aggressive defense has limited opponents to 68.3 points per game and a 37.8 shooting percent from the field.

Starters for the Aggies will be 5-10 junior Mike Floyd (10.0) at the point position 6-6 senior Randy Knowles (12.8) and 6-4 sophomore Ray Roberts (9.5) at the wings, 6-8 junior Cedric Joseph (10.3) at the high post and 6-9 junior Jerry Mercer (13.3) at the low post.

Reserves are 6-0 senior Charlie Jenkins (5.5) at the point, 6-7 junior Webb Williams (3.5) and 6-4 freshman Mike Johnson (8.5) at the wings, 6-7 junior John Thornton (8.0) and 6-8 senior C. W. Guthrie (10.0) at the posts.

Joseph is the leading rebounder with a 12.0 average followed by Mercer with 9.8 Knowles 7.5, Guthrie 9.0 and Thornton 5.8.

The Aggies return home Jan. 8 against Southwestern. A&M opens SWC play at home Jan. 15 against preseason favorite SMU.

The energy crisis has struck A&M in many ways. The athletic department is no exception, but the Aggie basketball team was dealt the cruellest blow of all.

SMU, pre-season favorite of scribes throughout the state to win the Southwest Conference championship, play here on Jan. 15. A full house was guaranteed with school in session for a conference game. Now, with school starting a week late, student turnout is expected to be light for the most important game the Ags may play this year.

Coach Shelby Metcalf has said repeatedly that the home crowd is very important. He said it helps get the visitors rattled sometimes and keeps home folks sky high.

All students who are in the area or here for adds and drops should make it to this game. Also the dorms open on game day so everyone will have a place to stay.

If you want to support the Ags during the holidays, they will be in the valley on Dec. 28-29 and in Houston on Jan. 4-5. (see separate story)

Headaches of a Pro

Playing golf last week, my partner mentioned how boring it must be to be a professional athlete.

"Boring?" I asked. "We work hard and practice just to keep the ball in play and they are down the middle every time. How can that be boring?"

He went on to explain the joy on his son's face after making his first basket on a newly constructed hoop on the family garage. Pro's basketball players expect to make almost every shot so it loses its thrill. They lose the joy of bowling a 200 game, making 20 straight free shots or breaking 80 on the golf course. "It's expected for a pro," he told me.

I was sure he was crazy until last week. After 13 months of golf, I broke 80 with what I thought was the most monumental 78 ever shot on any course, anywhere. The joy can never be recaptured, until I shoot my first 69.



ON THE ROAD—A&M cagers prepare to leave for the basketball-conscious East and their first road game of the season. They meet Virginia Commonwealth tonight and then compete in the Marshall Tournament in West Virginia this weekend. (Photo by Kathy Curtis)

**Knowles Listed
On Pizza Hut
All-Star Ballot**

A&M's Randy Knowles is included among 64 top seniors listed on the West all-star ballot for the third annual Pizza Hut Basketball Classic.

Players are selected by popular vote for the NCAA and NAIA-sanctioned charity classic which will be played April 1 at the Las Vegas (Nev.) Convention Center.

Voting will begin in early January with ballots available at all the nation's 1,400 Pizza Huts and at participating universities.

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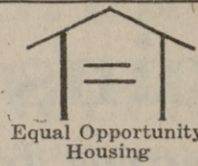
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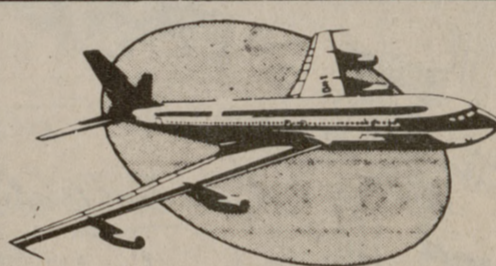
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**Wishing You A Happy
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And A Prosperous New Year

The TAMU Student Y Association and All Faiths Chapel join in thanking all individuals, church groups, social and student organizations in the unity of effort that has made all of our outreach programs an overwhelming success this year. May the most joyful portion of your holiday season be the inward glow realized only by those who know the true joy of giving themselves in service to others.

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