

# Ags stage comeback to defeat Owls

## Record crowd watches Knowles, Floyd guide A&M victory

By KEVIN COFFEY  
Sports Editor

Everything necessary for a classic Southwest Conference basketball game was present in G. Rollie White Coliseum Saturday night. A record crowd of 8,140, mixed with a late stage A&M

comeback, spelled a hardfought 80-79 Aggie victory over the Rice Owls.

The Ags didn't get a piece of the lead until just 2:24 remained with Rice leading by as many as nine midway through the final period.

In the end it was Randy Knowles and Mike Floyd that put the finishing blows to the fiery Owls of Coach Don Knodel.

Knowles, with another big second half effort, hit a three point play with 27 seconds remaining to give the Ags an 80-76 lead.

Floyd showed signs of breaking a mid-season slump that has hounded the 5-10 junior for the last two weeks. He hit 11 of his 17 points in the second half while doling out three assists.

Knowles, on the other hand, kept the Ags in the ball game.

The Geneva, Ohio native has made a habit of rallying the Ags in the second half as he pushed over the 20 point barrier for the fourth straight game with late surges. Scoring just six points in the first half, Knowles added 18 in the stretch for 24 tallies.

The score was knotted six times in the second half but Rice opened a five point bulge with four minutes remaining.

Knowles and Floyd then matched buckets as the lead continued to see-saw.

"Floyd hurt us with his penetra-

tions and Knowles' three-pointer was the final blow," said Knodel. "We did everything but win."

The often controversial Aggie crowd drew nothing but praise from the Rice mentor.

"The crowd was great and very enthusiastic," Knodel said. "I am glad they thought enough about Rice University to come out."

Floyd was effervescent after the contest. "I just had to break out of this slump and get a few breaks," the Aggie guard said. "I don't know what I did any different but it sure felt good."

Jerry Mercer battled Rice's Danny Carroll on the boards all night in a physical game that saw 52 personal fouls whistled. Mercer grabbed 15 carroms to Carroll's 12 leading A&M to a 49-38 rebound advantage. Mercer tallied 14 points.

John Thornton added 10 points and nine rebounds to the balanced Aggie attack. Cedric Joseph hit seven points, Charlie Jenkins four along with a game high five assists, C. W. Guthrie three and Mike Johnson two.

Carroll led the Rice scoring with 20 points. Scott Fisher added 18, Charles Daniels 14, John Kabbes 12 and Tim Moriarty 11 as nine players hit double figures.

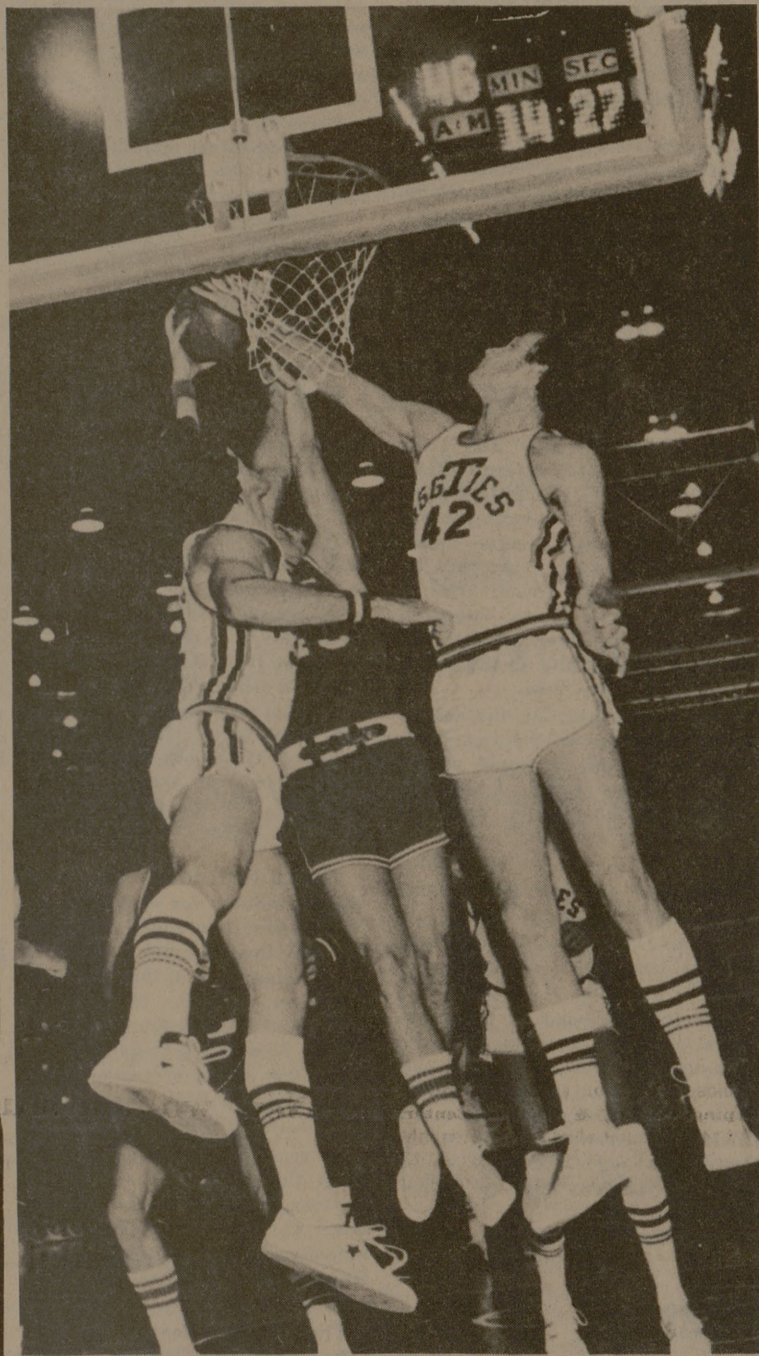
Tonight the Ags are back on the road, visiting Texas in Austin.

The Longhorns are the surprise team of the conference. After posting a 1-11 in pre-conference action, Texas rolled to three straight SWC victories before falling to loop leader Texas Tech Saturday.

While the Ags have not lost a home game this season, the road has been less than kind. A&M is 3-6 away from home, 0-2 in conference play.

Texas is led by super senior Larry Robinson. Robinson sat out conference action last year because of a knee injury. He proved he is healthy again as he hit 38 against the tough Red Raider defense.

Game time is 7:35 p. m.



JERRY MERCER (42) AND RANDY KNOWLES go up to block a shot in Saturday's 80-79 victory over Rice. However good his intentions may have been, Knowles drew a foul on the play as he missed the ball and struck the Rice player's wrist instead. (Photo by Rodger Mallison)

### PEANUTS

By Charles M. Schulz



### SWC standings

Team	Conf.		All Games	
	W	L	W	L
Texas Tech	4	0	1,000	11 5 .688
Texas	3	1	750	4 12 .250
Texas A&M	2	2	500	10 6 .625
Baylor	2	2	500	9 6 .600
Arkansas	2	2	500	6 10 .375
TCU	1	3	250	7 8 .467
Rice	1	3	250	7 10 .412
SMU	1	3	250	6 10 .375
x-Houston	0	0	000	11 6 .647
x-Not competing for SWC title.				

### Last Week's Results

Sunday—Rice 77, Arkansas 69.  
Tuesday—Arkansas 89, SMU 88; Baylor 75, TCU 56; Texas 82, Rice 71; Texas Tech 63, Texas A&M 62.

Saturday—Arkansas 86, TCU 74; SMU 79, Baylor 74; Texas A&M 80, Rice 79; Texas Tech 85, Texas 81; Houston 75, Nevada-Las Vegas 72.

### This Week's Schedule

Tuesday—Arkansas at Baylor, 7:35 p.m.; Texas Tech at Rice, 7:35 p.m.; SMU at TCU, 7:35 p.m.; A&M at Texas, 7:35 p.m.  
Saturday: Texas at Arkansas, 3:35 p.m.; A&M at Baylor, 2:10 p.m. (TV); SMU at Rice, 7:35 p.m.; TCU at Texas Tech, 7:35 p.m.; Lamar at Houston 8 p.m.

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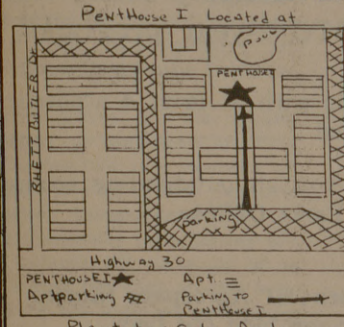
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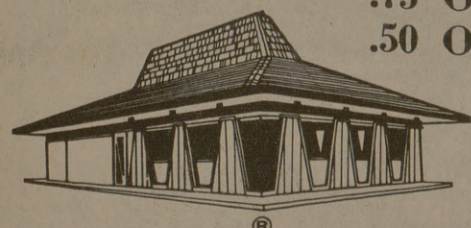
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