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The football team gets its news from the Batt.

sports

Aggies gain needed experience

By PAUL ARNETT
Battalion Sports Editor

The Christmas Holidays have been busy ones for the Texas A&M basketball team. In just 14 days the Aggies participated in six tournament games. A&M won three and lost three, raising its overall record to 7-3.

The most consistent player in the tournament tour was freshman Vernon Smith. Smith is averaging more than 17 points and nine rebounds a game. Willie Foreman also played well, but the most pleasing sign for coach Shelby Metcalf is the im-

provement of Karl Godine and Jarvis Williams.

"Karl and Jarvis played well," Metcalf said. "It's hard to get adjusted after sitting out a year. Jarvis was tough on the boards and he is our best defensive player."

The tournament play helped the rest of the team as well. The competition was tough, with A&M doing well in all but one game.

"I think we accomplished what we wanted," Metcalf said. "There is no doubt in my mind who our players are and who to substitute."

"It may be the end of the first round of conference play before we're the club we want to be. But if we can keep the attitude we have now and get in some real hard work, we may come on faster."

The Ags will need to come on as fast as they can. A&M opens its Southwest Conference season

against the surprising Baylor Bears. Led by junior college all-American Vinnie Johnson, the Bears have a 6-3 record. Two of those losses were by five points and the other by one.

Johnson is averaging 25 points a game, including 45 against San Francisco.

"He is a great little guard," Metcalf said. "I know a lot of people tried to recruit him. In a case like this one we just have to concentrate on the other four on the court. Johnson is going to score his 25. Our job is to stop everyone else."

After the Baylor game, A&M comes home to play the Houston Cougars. The game is scheduled for Jan. 12, and will be seen on regional television. The Aggies play host to SMU on Jan. 14, and then play Arkansas and Texas Tech the following week.

The Aggies could very well be 2-4

in SWC play after the first two weeks. But they are a team that should play better as the season progresses. Foreman is the only senior of the starting five.

"We have a young team that I think is still learning from game to game," Metcalf said. "The second

half of the season may be the best time of the year for us.

"The only thing I'm worried about is the guys' attitude. If they maintain the attitude they have now, then the season will be a good one."

A&M may still be one year away

from really competing, but should give every team in the conference a good game. And by the end of the season Metcalf may surprise some of the big

That's when the surprise very much needed.



Bennett

Woodard

Dennard

Aggie notes...

With a semi-successful non-conference slate behind them, the Texas Aggies begin Southwest Conference play against Baylor Monday in what shapes up as a wild and woolly championship race.

Under coach Jim Haller, the Bears have been the surprise team of the league thus far. Baylor is 6-3 with losses to Notre Dame, San Francisco (by five points) and Long Beach State (by one at the buzzer). Baylor beat North Texas 104-74, Oklahoma 75-69, Memphis State 106-87 and Drake 87-77. Junior transfer Vinnie Johnson had 43 points against San Francisco and is averaging 25 points per game.

Following Baylor, the Aggies make their first home appearance in a month against Houston Jan. 12 at 8 p.m. on regional TV. A&M hosts SMU Jan. 14 then goes to No. 3 ranked Arkansas Jan. 17 and Texas Tech Jan. 21.

The Aggies are 7-3 for the season after splitting six road games which included appearances in two tournaments. The wins came over Oral Roberts, Samford and Oklahoma City with the losses to Florida State, Miami (0.) and Austin Peay.

A&M beat Oklahoma City 84-79 in the final game of the All-College Tournament and put coach Shelby Metcalf in a more positive frame of mind.

"I think we accomplished what we wanted," Metcalf said. "There is no doubt in my mind who our players are and who to substitute. It may be the end of the first round of conference play before we're the club we want to be. But if we can keep the attitude we have now and get in some real hard work, we may come on faster."

The most pleasing thing to Metcalf was the playing of Karl Godine and Jarvis Williams against OCU. "Karl and Jarvis played well. It's hard to get adjusted after sitting out a year. Jarvis was tough on

the boards and he's our best inside defensive player." Godine had 21 points while Williams had 14 points and 13 rebounds.

Freshman Vernon Smith continues to be A&M's most consistent player. The 6-7 Dallas product is leading the team in scoring with a 17.6 average and rebounding with 9.0 per game.

Texas A&M's 47-25 loss to USC in the Bluebonnet Bowl was a disappointment as the Aggies lost 1 of 7 fumbles but the offensive display left A&M rooters with high hopes for the 1978 campaign.

The Aggies set Bluebonnet Bowl records with 22 total first downs, 24 first downs rushing and 486 net yards rushing. And, only two seniors - center Mark Dennard and tackle Frank Myers - were in the starting offensive lineup. The group's third senior quarterback David Walker - saw limited duty late in the contest.

Junior fullback George Woodard rushed for 18 yards and freshman quarterback Mike Mosley ran for 180 yards. Halfback Curtis Dickey gained 100 yards and Darrell Smith had 38 yards on an end around and halfback Adger Armstrong ran for 20 yards.

The replacement for Dennard at center will be the big offensive chore in spring training. Curtis Jennings played well behind Myers at tackle the season while Mosley proved himself at quarterback. Another freshman - David Beal also is a fine quarterback.

The Aggies lose only four defensive starters - tackle Steve Spitzberger, end Phil Bennett, cornerback Mike Williams and linebacker Kevin Monk. The returning defensive hands should show great improvement after spring training and two-day drills next fall.

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*The Financial Need Analysis Report is provided to this office by the College Scholarship Service and is based on information contained in the Financial Aid Form. Normal processing time for a Financial Aid Form at College Scholarship Service (including mail time) is about two (2) weeks. Therefore, you should mail your Financial Aid form to College Scholarship Service to allow sufficient time for proper processing and mail time.

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