

sports

Baylor and Johnson almost head home winners

MARK PATTERSON
Battalion Staff

The Baylor Bear's Road Show rolled into town last night and with guard Vinnie Johnson at the wheel the Bears almost took a victory back home with them.

Almost. But for the fourth time this year the Bears were beaten at the buzzer 55-56. Add the Aggies to the list of Arkansas, Texas, and Long Beach State of the teams that have narrowly nipped the Bears.

"We got the ball with 21 seconds left and we had our chance to win," said Baylor head coach Jim Haller after the disappointing loss. The Bears ran the clock down to six seconds and then began to make their move towards the basket.

"We wanted the last shot and we wanted Vinnie to take it," Haller said. "He kept us in the game all night with his outside shooting and I wanted him to take it. But he didn't get the chance. And I have to give Wright credit for his steal."

Though Wright ended up the hero in the game with his last second foul and two foul shots to win the game, Johnson played as well as anyone on the court for the Bears.

Johnson hit 9 of 15 shots from the field and 3 of 6 free throws for 21 points on the high scorer in the game. He had six assists for the Bears.

"Vinnie was just great in the second half for us," said Haller. Johnson was 5 for 5 from the field in the second half for Baylor. "He was nothing from the outside better than he has been all season. But our free throw percentage is what did us in tonight."

Baylor hit fifty percent from the line. They connected on eight of 16 free throws.

But I felt confident through out the game that we were going to win," said Haller. "It's not too often that a team can come from ten behind playing here in College Station. But we pulled even with them about nine minutes left in the game. I thought we could beat them."

But the spark plug for the Baylor

machine never had the chance to put up the final shot for the Bears.

"We were just going to let the clock run down and try for one last shot," said Johnson after the game. "The play was to get me the ball and go with it."

"I was going to act like I wasn't going to even get the ball and try to get my man off balance. If I did get the pass, I was going to try and drive to the basket and hope to draw two or three men to me and then pass off for an easy lay up. But I never got the chance."

Being a first year transfer student from Brooklyn, New York, this was

Johnson's first visit to G. Rollie White Coliseum. But the Baylor guard was prepared.

"I had a lot of people tell me what it was like to play down here," said Johnson. "But it's just like playing in front of some of the crowds back home. People in the stands are always yelling things at you and trying to get you off your game. But I felt ready down here."

The Bears have a little time off to try and pick up the pieces after last night's loss. Baylor has an open date Wednesday and will return to action at Tech Saturday night.

But Baylor will be interested in

the A&M-SMU game tomorrow night. The three teams are all vying for fifth place in the conference race and the important home court advantage in the opening round of the post-season tournament.

"I feel as if we're in a great position for a fifth place finish," said coach Haller after last night's game. "Only because we have a great home schedule (Baylor plays Houston, SMU, Texas and Rice at home while traveling to Tech, Arkansas and TCU.) But we have to keep winning from now on in. And we especially have to win the close ones."

All students appearing in the 1977-78 edition of Who's Who please go by Barker Photography January 23-31 to sign up for your Aggieland picture. If you have any questions call Priscilla 845-2611.

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Southwest Conference Standings
By United Press International

CONFERENCE	W	L	Pct.	PF	PA
Baylor	9	0	1.000	759	654
SMU	7	1	.875	531	472
Tech	6	3	.667	505	575
Houston	5	4	.556	640	703
Arkansas	4	5	.444	632	633
TCU	3	6	.333	646	644
Long Beach	3	6	.333	616	654
A&M	2	7	.222	619	686
Rice	1	8	.111	492	609

MONDAY NIGHT'S RESULTS

Texas 73, Houston 72; Texas Tech 55, SMU 76; Rice 73; Texas A&M 58, Baylor 56.

WEDNESDAY NIGHT SCHEDULE

Texas at Arkansas 7:30; Rice at Texas Tech 7:30; Texas A&M at MU 7:30; TCU at Houston 8:00.

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