

sports

Good-bye Dallas, hello Houston

By PAUL ARNETT
Battalion Sports Editor

Fifty weeks ago the Texas A&M basketball team defeated the Rice Owls in Houston. Unfortunately for coach Shelby Metcalf, it was the last time the Aggies won a conference game on the road.

Metcalf's men will once again visit the Bayou City, but the opponent is the Houston Cougars not the Rice Owls.

"The Cougars are always tough at home," Metcalf said. "Our toughest road games are SMU and Houston. Last year they killed us in Hotheinz."

The final score of that game was 116-83. Otis Birdsong hit everything he attempted and Mike Schultz grabbed every rebound. It was a long night for Texas A&M.

"Even without Otis, Houston is still a good ball club," Metcalf said. "Schultz is still there and he is one of the best rebounders in the conference. Charles Thompson and Cecil Rose are two more men who know how to play the game."

Houston's game was tough on the Ags earlier in the season. The Cougars defeated the Aggies at College Station 80-73. The final score is not a good indicator in this instance.

With 15 minutes remaining in the game, Houston led by 26.

"We made a great comeback in that one," Metcalf said. "A lot of teams would have given up, but we hung in there and made a game out of it."

The Aggies made a game out of it in Dallas last Wednesday night. But they needn't have. A&M led by seven points with three minutes left in the game. They lost in overtime 71-70.

"I think this game will boost our morale," Metcalf said. "The guys played a great game and have nothing to be ashamed of. I think that we have finally found our game. And

we can beat Houston if we keep playing like we have."

A&M has won two of its last three games. Since a team meeting held after the TCU loss, the Aggies have played as a unit. Until that point there was only individual play.

"The guys are aware of each other now," Metcalf said. "Before all they would do is come down and shoot. Now they look for the open man and the easy hoop. You can connect on lay-ups more often than 30-foot jump shots."

A&M will need to connect on everything this Saturday night. Houston is an outstanding offensive team

that can blow an opponent out on a moment's notice.

The Aggies have faced that fact many times before. Only time will tell if they have learned their lessons.

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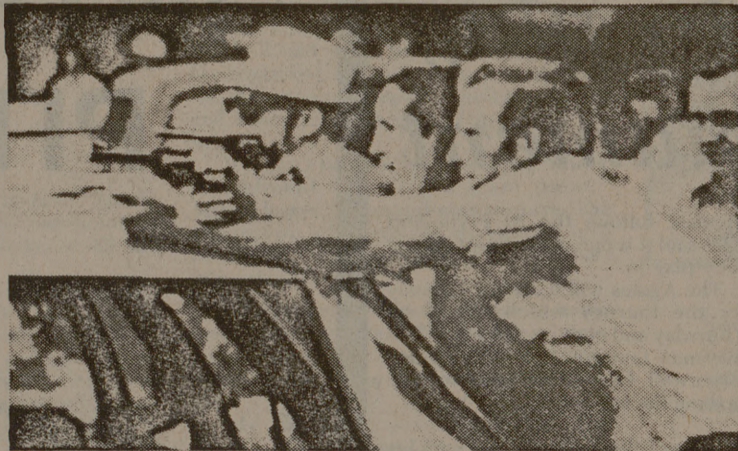
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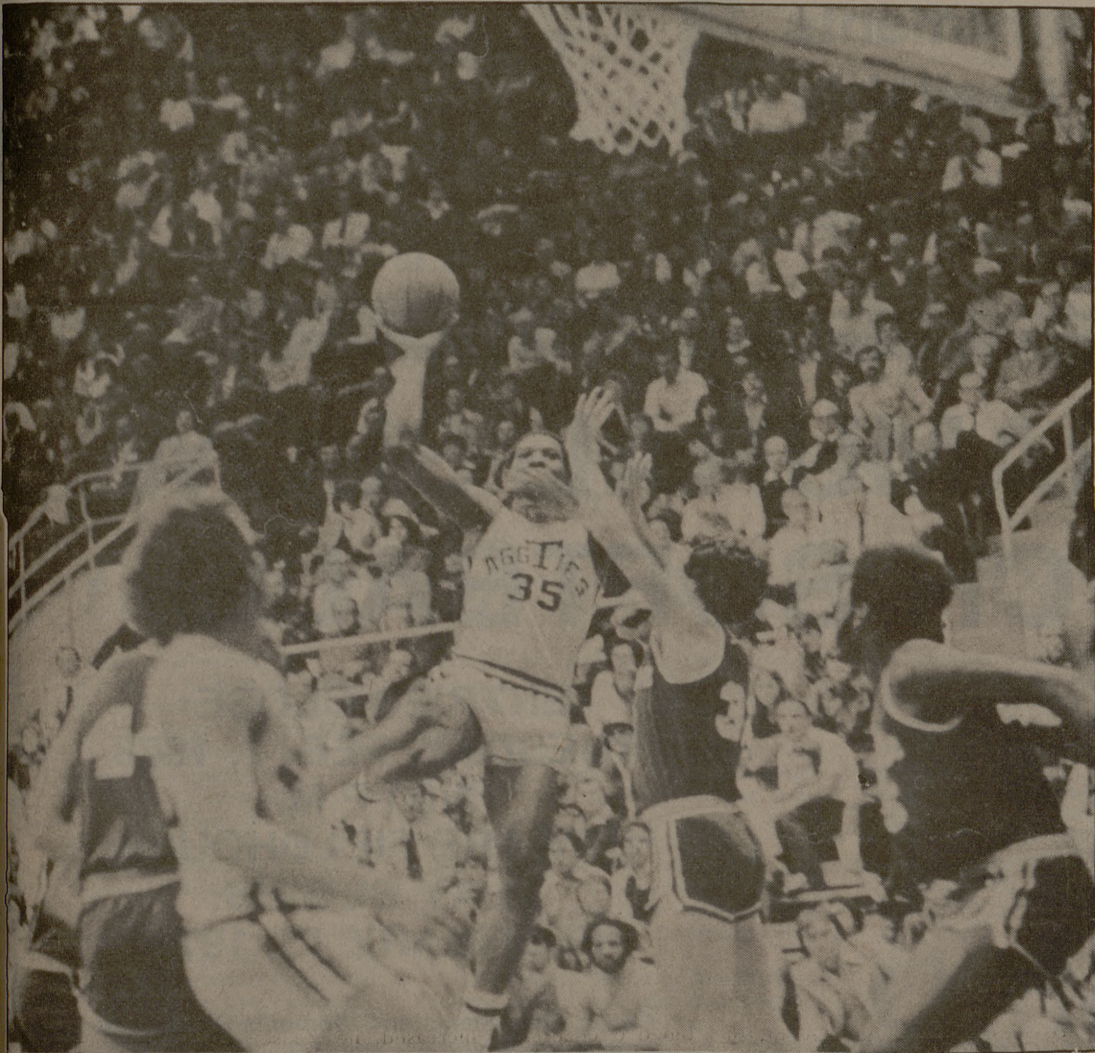
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A&M forward Willie Foreman (No. 35) moves towards the basket for his patented slam-dunk. Foreman is the team's leading scorer.

The Aggies travel to Houston this Saturday night at 8 to play the Houston Cougars.
Battalion photo by Ken Herrera

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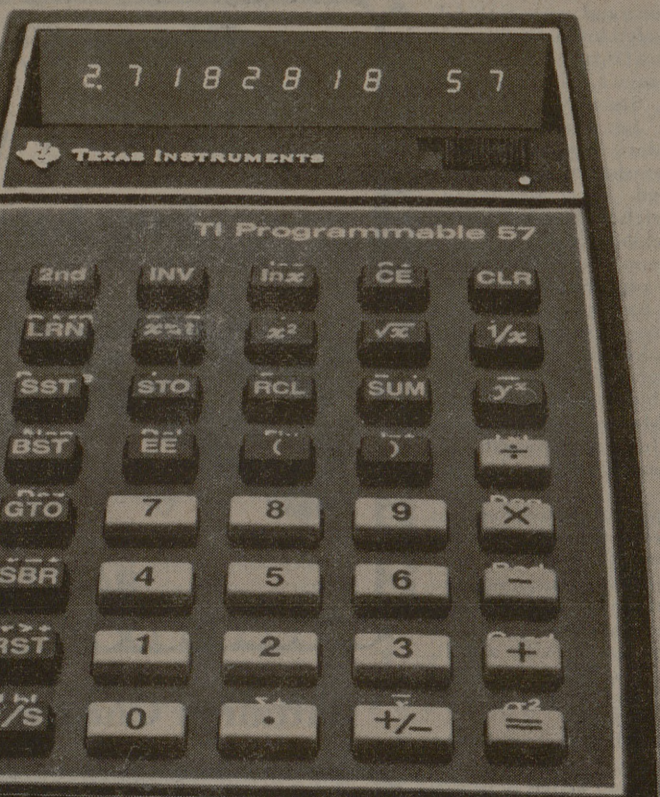
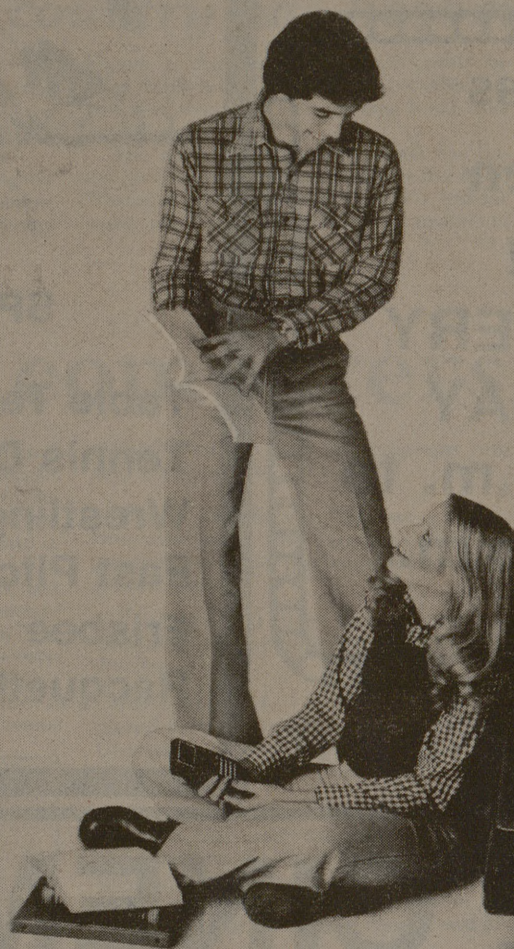
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