

the sports



David Boggan
Sports Editor

Aggies put on traveling shoes

Shelby Metcalf once commented that, if nothing else, his 1978-79 Texas A&M basketball team would look impressive standing in airports during lay-overs.

After watching several of the team's pre-season workouts, I think a few people might be impressed with the Texas Aggies on the basketball court as well.

But Metcalf, starting in his 16th season as head coach for Texas A&M, has a point. Why shouldn't he be proud to have the likes of 6-foot-11 Rudy Woods and 6-foot-10 Doug Pederson and 6-foot-7 (and growing) Vernon Smith hanging around the baggage-claim area holding maroon and white travel bags? Impressive sight.

And with this year's schedule, Metcalf will have plenty of opportunities to strut his troops through the nation's air terminals.

THE AGGIES have planned holiday tournament trips to San Francisco, Kentucky and Vermont. And they leave Monday for Anchorage, Alaska and the Seawolf Classic.

Just as impressive as the lofty heights of some of the Aggies is the lofty competition they will face in these tournaments. Texas A&M meets North Carolina State in the opening round of the Seawolf Classic, a game that will be televised on KTBC-TV in Austin on Nov. 24.

"That's a hell of a way to start a season," said 5-foot-11 point guard Dave Goff. "Those guys are already established."

Goff was referring to the fact that the Wolfpack returns four starters from last year's NIT finalist team.

"They're a real good ball club," Metcalf agreed. "I believe they're rated fifth in the nation."

"They're bigger than we are at all positions. They're going to have a 7-foot-2 man going against Rudy. And we thought we were big."

OTHER TOP competition in Anchorage will include Indiana and Louisville.

"Indiana won 20 games last season and I think they have all their starters back," Metcalf said. "And Louisville is a power every year."

"We've got tough competition in our other tournaments, too. We play Nevada-Las Vegas in the first round in Frisco (Dec. 15-16) and we play (defending NCAA champion) Kentucky in the first round of their tournament (Dec. 22-23). But when you have a bad season that's one of the penalties you have to pay."

Metcalf said that the tough competition will be looked on as a learning experience for his young Aggie team.

"As long as we go up there and don't get shell shocked, I think this can really help us get ready for the conference," the Aggie coach said.

METCALF PLANS to start Woods at low post, Smith at wing, Rynn Wright at high post and Goff and Tyron Ladson at guards. Woods is a freshman, Smith, Wright and Ladson are sophomores and Goff is a junior, making this one of the youngest starting lineups that Metcalf has used in his 16 years at Texas A&M. His second five will consist of Pederson, Jarvis Williams, Joey Robinson, David Britton and Steve Sylestine.

"This is not necessarily the same lineup we will have for Southwest Texas State (Texas A&M's home opener on Dec. 2)," Metcalf said. "We know we are going to be a good team. It just depends on how quickly we jell."

Anything Metcalf's men can do to speed the jelling process will be to their advantage, considering the competition they will face in the next month. Stand back, O.J. Here come the Texas Aggies and they're fast breaking through airports.

Basketball team hosts scrimmage

Fans of Texas A&M basketball will get a chance to see their team in action tonight at Howdy Night in G. Rollie White Coliseum. A Maroon and White intrasquad game will tip off at 7:30 p.m.

Aggie basketball fans will be able to welcome back Texas A&M's lettermen and greet the newcomers on Coach Shelby Metcalf's squad. The Aggies new uniforms will also be on display.

"We're going to have an exciting team," the Aggie coach said. "I think the fans will really enjoy watching this bunch play. I hope everyone takes this opportunity to come out and get acquainted with our squad."

Returning lettermen for the Aggies include seniors Joey Robinson, Jarvis Williams and Wally Swanson; juniors Dave Goff, Steve Sylestine and John Schlicher and sophomores Vernon Smith, Rynn Wright, Albert Culton and Doug Pederson.

Newcomers include juniors David Britton and Tyrone Emerson, sophomore Tyrone Ladson and freshmen Rudy Woods and Roy Jones.

Metcalf indicated that the White

team would consist of Woods, Wright, Smith, Ladson, Goff, Williams, Sylestine and Britton. Other members of the squad will make up the Maroon team.

"We are not dividing them up exactly even," Metcalf said. "The White team should win. But if the Maroon team gets fired up, they could win. I want to create as much of a game situation as possible."

"We are real encouraged by our progress so far. Our new people have a flair about them that the people will enjoy watching. And we've put in some things on offense and defense. We've put in so much so fast that I know we got it in but I don't know if we've got it down."

Tonight's scrimmage is an effort to iron out any wrinkles the Aggies' game plan might have before the team departs for Anchorage, Alaska Monday to participate in the Seawolf Classic. The Aggies will play highly-rated North Carolina State in the opening round of that tournament which will also feature Alaska, Lamar, Louisville, Penn State, Pepperdine and Indiana.

There will be no admission charge for tonight's scrimmage.

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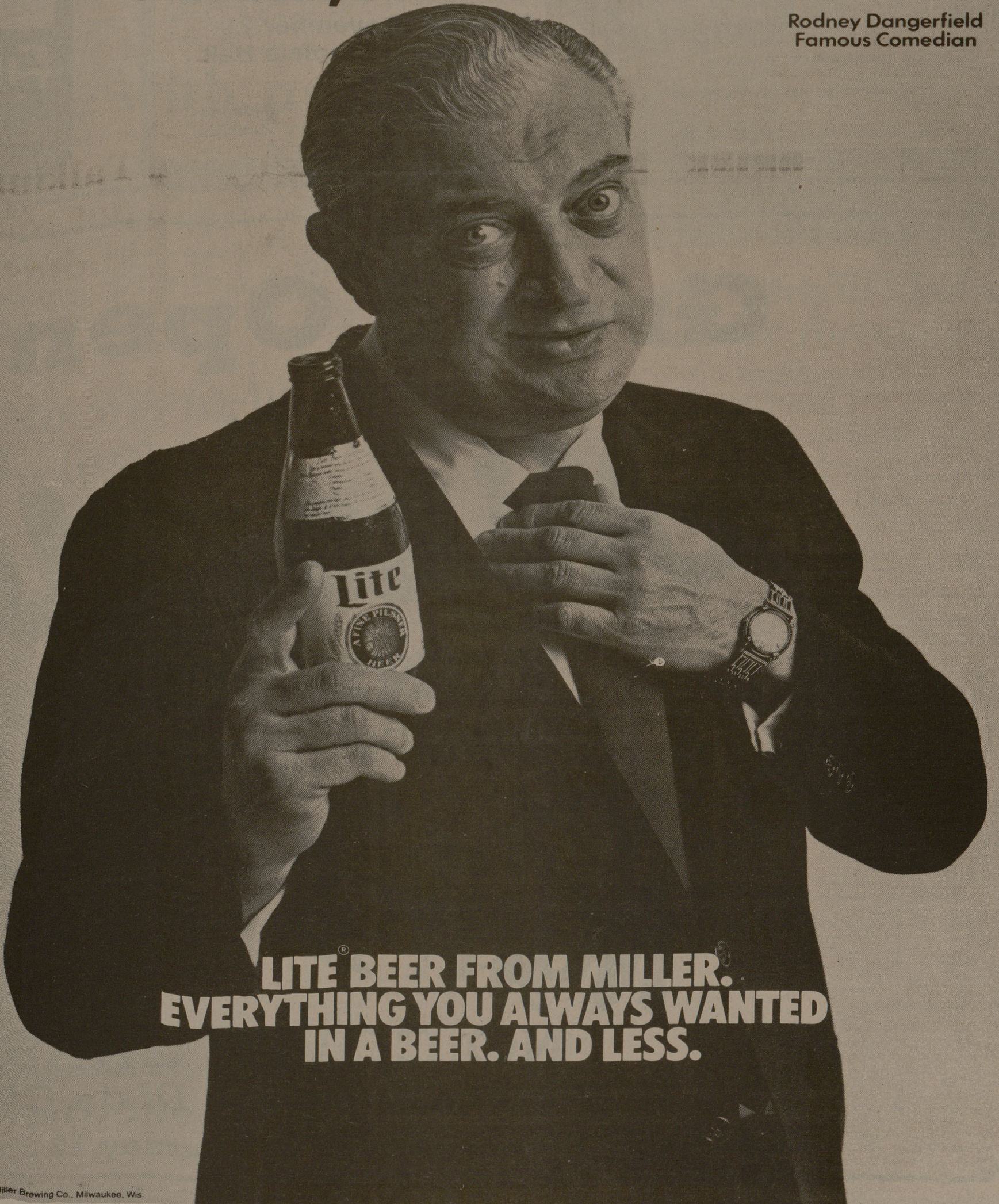
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