

sports

Aggies try style on TCU Frogs

By KATHLEEN McELROY
Sports Staff

The Texas A&M basketball team will play Texas Christian University tonight in G. Rollie White Coliseum at 8 p.m., and if TCU plays as they have been, Texas A&M players might need to wear maroon tuxedos again before the televised game to psyche themselves up.

The sharp-looking Aggies will take on a shabby TCU team which has a 2-12 record in the Southwest Conference and has won only seven games during the whole season, the last victory coming in mid-January.

Texas A&M is fresh from whipping the Texas Longhorns 84-61 Saturday in G. Rollie in front of a regional television audience. To pick up emotionally, senior guard David Britton and junior forward Vernon Smith wore the tuxedos to the locker room before the game.

Smith scored 21 points and Britton got 20. Casually dressed Rudy Woods pumped in 15 and Rynn Wright had 12.

TCU has a lock on the SWC cellar.

But Coach Jim Killingsworth makes no excuses for the Frogs.

"We're not good enough," he said before he started the Horned Frog practice session Monday night. "The other teams are just better."

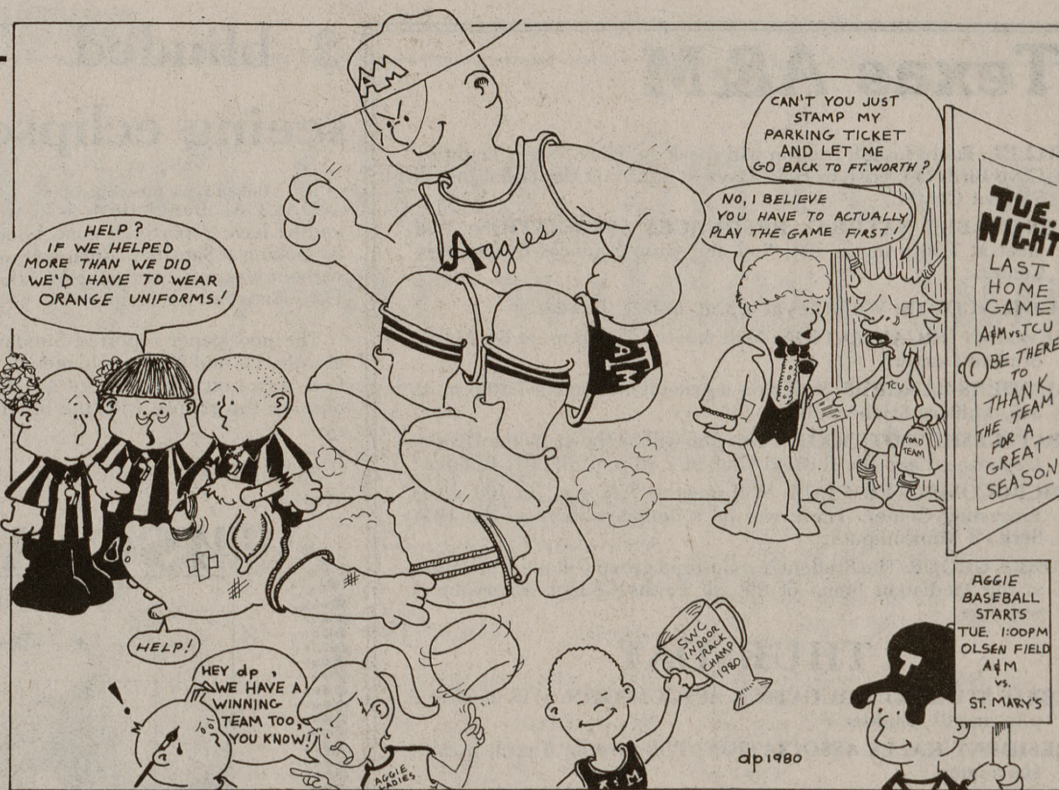
Is his team going to try anything fancy — work a full-court press the whole game, play a stall the whole time, or wear purple tuxedos?

"No, we're just going to play," Killingsworth said. "We haven't got any tricky stuff."

This is the last home game for the Aggies, who close the season against the University of Houston in Hofheinz Pavilion Friday.

The Aggies, by virtue of Arkansas' Monday night loss to SMU, are now in sole possession of first place in the SWC. Victories against TCU and at Houston Friday would give the Aggies the crown.

Four seniors, Dave Goff, David Britton, Steve Sylestine and John Schlicher, will be playing their last game in G. Rollie White Coliseum tonight. The game will be regionally televised.



Jackson St. takes NAIA track crown

United Press International

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — It didn't really surprise Jackson (Miss.) State University coach Martin Epps that his team won its sixth straight NAIA Indoor Track and Field Championship during the weekend.

What surprised Epps was that his team is still alive.

A week ago, a van the Jackson State team was taking out of Louisville, Ky., skidded off an interstate, flipped over once and then smashed into a tree.

"It was the kind (of wreck) that you don't survive," Epps said. "And there's no way we couldn't have survived if it weren't for the good Lord above."

Epps remembers catching two athletes as the van careened down the steep hill off the interstate.

Epps, a big burly man, recalls that after the van flipped — and as the roof began collapsing — he jumped up from his seat and hit the roof with both hands.

"I put everything into it — every ounce of strength I possess," Epps said. "I think that helped keep the roof from collapsing and crushing us."

As it turned out, the only person in the van injured was Epps, who suffered serious gashes in his legs and arms from flying glass.

The rest of the team escaped completely unscathed, although a little shaken.

"But everything that happens, happens for a reason," Epps said. "It taught some people a lesson about life. Living through an experience like that helps your attitude."

Epps, whose team has won seven NAIA indoor titles in the past eight years, credited the championship to his team's attitude during the three days of the competition.

Jackson State out-distanced the field by a whopping 27.5 points, scoring 81 points to second-place

Prairie View's 53.5. Abilene Christian was third with 50, Adams State (Colo.) fourth with 34, Oklahoma Christian fifth with 23 and Spring Arbor (Mich.) sixth with 16 points.

Jackson State won four events, including the 440 yard dash, the triple jump, the distance medley and the 1,000 meters. Prairie View also won four events, including the 600 yard run, the two-mile relay, the mile relay and the 880-yard run.

Prairie View's Evans White, who won the 880 yard run and anchored an NAIA record-breaking mile and two-mile teams, was named the outstanding track performer. The outstanding field performer voted by track writers was pole vaulter Billy Olson of Abilene Christian.

There were seven men's records

set or tied in the three-day meet, which ended Saturday night.

The most dramatic of those was the mark of 17-6½ Olson tied in the vault.

Staats enjoys quick success

By JON HEIDTKE
Sports Reporter

In a seven-year span, Dewayne Staats, radio voice of the Texas A&M basketball network, has seen his career blossom from doing play-by-play for a small Illinois high school to doing play-by-play with the Houston Astros' baseball organization.

Staats' short but successful career seemed to come right out of a Hollywood script when he said: "From the time I was about 13 years old, I wanted to do radio broadcasts for the Astro baseball games."

How does a person feel who reaches his childhood goal at the young age of 24?

"I remember sitting down in the press room and meeting Jack Buck and Lindsey Nelson, and suddenly at the age of 24, I am in a sense, one of their colleagues. That was an overwhelming feeling."

According to Staats, only Vin Scully, longtime voice of the Los Angeles Dodgers, began at an earlier age than himself.

The curly-haired, mustachioed Staats' key to a successful career has two ingredients: "First, you have to have the ability and secondly, you need good fortune."

And fortunately for Staats, he has been blessed with large amounts of both.

Staats, who was born August 8, 1952, in Advance, Mo., began doing play-by-play in the fall of 1970, the semester he enrolled at the University of Southern Illinois at Edwardsville.

His first play-by-play broadcast came from the top row of the bleachers at an Edwardsville High School football game. By the time he graduated from SIU five years later, he had done play-by-play for all the school's major sports, including an internship in 1973 doing radio work for the Oklahoma City 89ers, a minor league baseball club.

"In my mind, if I hadn't gone to Oklahoma City, I wouldn't be doing Houston Astro games now," Staats said of his internship.

"It takes a certain temperament

and certain independence for a relationship to live in a situation like mine," Staats said. "And my wife is self-sufficient and can operate in an environment like mine."

After another season in Oklahoma City, Staats became sports director at KPLR-TV in St. Louis. "I felt at that time, that if I needed anything, it was TV experience and exposure," Staats said.

During his two-year stint at KPLR, he anchored the sports segment of the evening news and co-hosted and co-produced the Emmy Award-winning program "Weekend in St. Louis," a sports magazine show.

But in the back of Staats' mind, he still wanted the Astro job.

"I had kept in touch with Gene Elston (longtime Astro broadcaster) since I had met him when I was 14 years old," Staats said.

"The Astros had come to town for a series with the Cardinals and I heard there might be an opening. I called Elston and he said there might be one at the end of the year."

One thing led to another and Staats ended up in Chicago doing a fill-in broadcast for the Astros late in the 1976 season.

A couple of months later, the Astro organization called and offered Staats the job, and he jumped on it.

In 1978, Staats began work as the play-by-play announcer for the Texas A&M basketball network. In his two years as "voice of the Aggies," Staats has been impressed by the school's tradition and conduct of the Texas A&M student body at the games.

"There is a sense of fairness with the A&M crowd," Staats said. "It is called 'class' behavior."

The Texas A&M job might have provided Staats a long-range alternative, that is if he ever gets tired of the major league's demanding schedule.

But for now, Staats is content to be involved with Texas A&M basketball and Astro baseball, and who could blame him? After all, it isn't everybody that gets to fulfill a childhood dream.

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SMU upsets Arkansas, gives A&M lead in SWC

United Press International
DALLAS — Gordon Welch calmly dropped in two free throws with six seconds remaining Monday night to bring Southern Methodist a stunning 62-58 victory over Arkansas — Texas A&M University undisputed possession of first place in the Southwest Conference.

SMU, taking advantage of sloppy Arkansas floor play and poor Razorback shooting, opened as much as an 11-point lead in the second half, only to have the Hogs cut the deficit to two with 3:14 to play.

The Mustangs still led by two with 1:17 left and managed to stall the ball

until 10 seconds remained. Harris made two free throws to give SMU a 62-58 advantage.

But Mustang guard David Harris fouled Arkansas' U.S. seven seconds to play and the free throws moved Arkansas in two again.

Welch was fouled immediately after the ball came inbound. Two free shots wrapped up a surprising victory in the Mustang regular season game.

Arkansas dropped to 12-12 in action, a half game behind A&M. The Razorbacks are the season.

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