

Britton to try out for U.S. Olympic team

By KATHLEEN McELROY
Sports Staff
Dean Smith isn't a man to hold a grudge. A case in point: in the NCAA tournament David Britton led the Texas A&M basketball team over Smith's North Carolina Tar Heels by directing the four-corner offense — a ploy Smith invented.

But that didn't stop the coach from inviting Britton to the tryouts for the U.S. Olympic basketball team. Britton, a senior guard, is thrilled to get invited and said he will definitely try out for team even though it probably won't play in Moscow. "I used to dream about it, but after all this controversy, I blocked it out of my mind," Britton said. But now the Aggie season is over, the all-star team is on his mind. One subject Britton has never

blocked out of his mind is the idea of playing pro ball next season. He feels that a number of National Basketball Association teams could use him. But he realizes his own play needs a little work to make him more attractive to NBA teams. "I have to improve on everything," he said. But, of course, he thinks he'll make it. "I have the determination and the heart."
Britton transferred to Texas A&M from Potomac State Junior College in Keyser, W. Va., after he finished an outstanding high school career in Brooklyn. Britton explained his high school academic record was only good enough for him to go to a junior college, and he said Potomac was a good choice because he got some play and experience. Then Britton came to Texas A&M

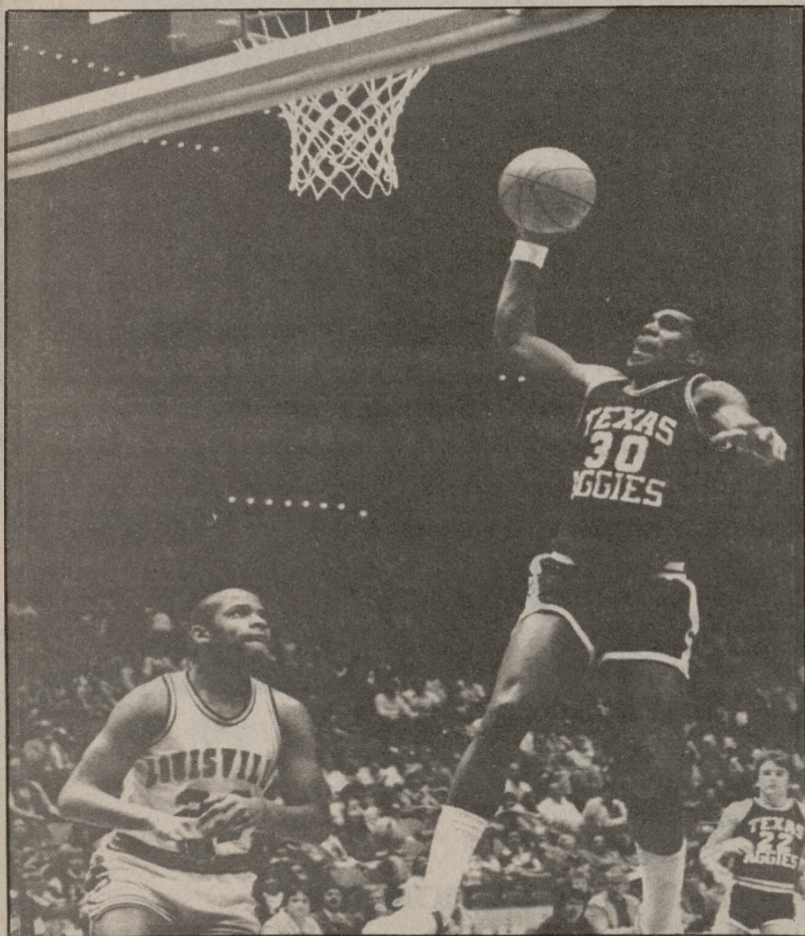
because "they spent the most time after me."
And the main recruiter was, of course, Texas A&M basketball head coach Shelby Metcalf — which started the beginning of what was not a father-son relationship. Metcalf and Britton have contrasting styles. Britton, at the very least, is a flamboyant player — at the most, he's a flashy hot dog style-artist. Metcalf prefers the less-flashy and more fundamental ball player, and

he and Britton had a few disagreements last year. "Things got real hairy," he said. "I was never going to quit, but there was pressure on me."
Sportswriters, students, and Metcalf weren't always happy with his play, and Metcalf benched him sometimes. But this season, the problems and differences seemed to be smoothed out, and Britton not only started, but directed and motivated the Aggies.

The team elected Britton and David Goff, the other senior guard, co-captains. In short, in the eyes of many, he went from a selfish troublemaker to a team leader. "It was fun to read the papers saying David Britton revitalized," he said. Some of these same writers named him the Most Valuable Player in the Southwest Conference Tournament after the Aggies swept through the

their conference opponents to earn an NCAA tournament berth. The Aggies made it to the Midwest regional semifinals before losing to Louisville. Now that Britton and Goff have finished their careers at Texas A&M, Metcalf has to find not only two starting guards, but two more leaders. Britton says he won't have to search far. "There's a lot of talent already here," he said adding Rynn Wright

and Vernon Smith, who senior forwards are charge while other players are developing. Now, Britton, like senior, is trying to get to A&M — with a degree in journalism major, but he has enough journalism classes to graduate on time. And when he's finished his pro career, if he gets a chance, he wants to be sports



David Britton goes in for a dunk against Louisville in the quarter finals of the NCAA Tournament Friday night in Houston. Britton may soon be wearing a United States uniform. U.S. Olympic coach Dean Smith invited him to try out for the team.
Staff photo by Lynn Blanco.

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