

Sports

Reflections

By Richard Oliver



Where are the Aggies?

Will the real Texas A&M University fans please stand up? Ever since I was a little Aggie at home in Corpus Christi, I've heard about the faithful fans of dear Old Aggieland.

Not snow, no, nor rain, nor heat, nor night keeps the faithful 12th Man from its rabid support of the Ags.

Indeed.

Item: The Aggie football team loses to Rice 10-6 last fall in front of a three-quarter filled Kyle Field.

Item: The Aggie basketball team, after completing a furious second half assault on SWC opponents that saw them make the postseason tournament, loses to TCU by two points in front of only 6,000 G. Rollie White playoff fans. Hmmm.

Item: The Aggies are ninth in the nation in attendance for baseball in 1980. The Aggies finish second in the SWC, only one-half game out of first behind the Texas Longhorns.

In 1981, the Aggies can barely draw 100 fans at a game. The number is usually nearer 75. The team is 20-13-1 on the season. Double hmmm.

I guess I was misled as a little Aggie. I was told that I'd never find better support anywhere in the state, perhaps the nation. Yeah, when things are going good, the support is usually adequate, perhaps superior than at most places. I've stressed that several times.

But when things are going bad, forget about too much support from the Texas A&M students, they don't have time.

Granted, this has not been a banner year for Texas A&M major athletics (excluding the 20th-ranked tennis team). Granted, the spring is a busy time for us all.

And granted, we are not required to attend athletic events on this campus. Many may not even like baseball.

But apparently, in 1981, asking that Aggies support, say, the baseball team with their presence, is like asking ants to go to a RAID convention.

Covering the Aggie baseball team has sent us to Sam Houston State, TCU, Rice and Houston. In each of those places, those legs down, road-wearied, book-laden, errand-running baseball fans somehow managed to pack the stands.

I daresay there were more Aggies attending the Rice-Texas A&M series in Houston than have attended a game at Pat Olsen Field all year.

Appropriately, the Aggie baseball team finds itself in a bit of a hole with a 2-6-1 record in SWC action after nine straight league games on the road.

Their total road standing is 4-8-1. At home, the Aggies are a fine 10-4 perhaps the finest baseball facility in the Southwest, if not the nation.

Friday night at 7:30, the powerful Arkansas Razorbacks will roll into town. Included in their crew is probably the finest baseball player to ever grace the SWC diamonds — Kevin McReynolds. The centerfielder last year was the league's MVP and the postseason tournament's MVP. He holds almost every offensive record for the Ags.

The Ags must win. They finally will be at home in front of thousands of Olsen Field silver seats.

Those stands could be full. The downtrodden Aggie baseball team could rebound and make the Final Four for the SWC postseason classic in Austin. Maybe even the band could take some time out of their busy schedule to play a few tunes? Nah, I doubt it.

Silver seats don't clap, and really don't show much support.

Of course, then, neither do the Aggie fans when things are going bad.

That's the latest Aggie joke.

Rockets prepared for Spurs tonight

United Press International
SAN ANTONIO — The upstart Houston Rockets, riding the crest of one of the franchise's golden moments, will try to keep the momentum rolling tonight against the San Antonio Spurs in the opening game of their best-of-seven western conference semi-final playoff series.

To do so the Rockets will have to put behind them the exhilaration of eliminating defending NBA champion Los Angeles from the chase last Sunday — having twice beaten the Lakers on the champs' home floor.

"I'm drained," said Houston guard Calvin Murphy, speaking for the entire club after the Rockets had knocked off the Lakers in the third and deciding game of their mini-series, 89-86.

"We've worked hard for this moment. It's taken 11 years to get national recognition and now we've got it."

The second game of the series will be played in San Antonio Wednesday night before the teams move 200 miles across the state to Houston for games on Friday and Sunday.

While Houston was fighting Los Angeles, San Antonio — winners of the midwest division with a 52-30 record — have had an eight-day rest. And that concerns Spurs coach Stan Albeck.

"I think we will be a little bit sluggish at the beginning," Albeck said. "But I don't think it will take us too long to get over that. I think it has to help Houston, they will be coming in with the momentum."

San Antonio, which had a 34-7 home record this season, will be going after its second seven-game series victory ever. The Spurs'

high point in their five years in the NBA came two seasons ago when they eliminated Philadelphia in the conference semifinals.

San Antonio was then knocked out in the conference championship round by Washington in seven games and last year Houston defeated San Antonio in a mini-series, 2-1.

The Rockets and Spurs split their six-game regular-season series — each team winning on the other's home court. They played twice in the final week of the season — Houston winning a critical game at home, 117-111, and the Spurs winning in San Antonio on the final day of the season, 135-109. That game was a meaningless one, however, since Houston had clinched its playoff berth.

From a technical standpoint the series could well come down to how well San Antonio can handle Houston center Moses Malone and how well the Rockets can control Spurs' scoring machine George Gervin.

Malone averaged 31 points in the three games against Los Angeles.

"The Spurs can be real tough," said Malone. "They double on me all the time. They make life miserable sometimes."

"But I'm expecting a close series. We have the confidence now to go in there and battle with them. If we can beat the champions in their home we should be able to play with the Spurs."

Malone has had a successful season against San Antonio, averaging 26.8 points and having a high game of 40. Gervin averaged 27.1 points per contest this season — a four-year low — but managed just 23.8 a game against the Rockets.

Rice basketball coach resigns for pro job

United Press International
HOUSTON — Rice basketball coach Mike Schuler said Monday night he was leaving his position with the Owls to become an assistant coach with the New Jersey Nets.

Schuler, 40, led the Owls to tie for sixth place in the Southwest Conference with a 12-15 record this past season. The Owls lost in the playoffs, 76-30.

Reached at home, Schuler told UPI he was unsure of the exact date he would be joining the Nets under former UCLA coach Larry Brown but expected it would be sometime during the semester.

"That's something that is going to take place," Schuler said. Schuler said he had known Brown "for quite a while."

Schuler informed his team Monday that he would be leaving the Owls after four seasons.

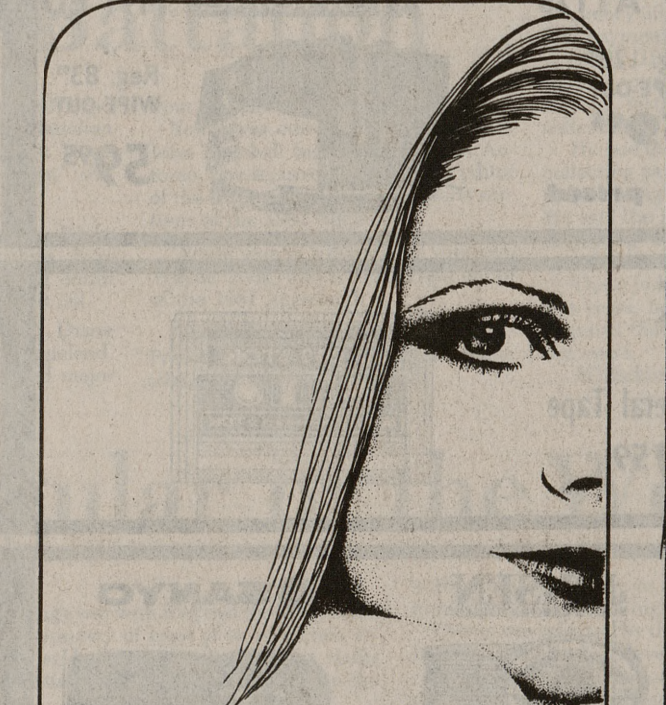
"It's just a great opportunity. It's something I've always wanted to do," he said.

Schuler said there was no general reaction from the team.

"Some of them seemed surprised, disappointed," Schuler said. "It's hard to tell with kids that age."

A 1962 graduate of the University of Ohio, Schuler coached high school basketball for three years after graduation before joining the coaching staff headed by Bobby Knight at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point. He then returned to Ohio as an assistant to veteran Jim Snyder and spent three seasons there.

In 1969, Schuler accepted the head coaching position at Virginia Military Institute where he spent three seasons. In 1972 he became an assistant at the University of Virginia under the late Bill Gibson. He spent five seasons there before joining the Rice staff.



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Netters win two, lose one; raise spring record to 11-7

By RICK STOLLE

Battalion Staff
Spurred on by great individual performances, the Texas A&M women's tennis team won two out of three Saturday at the Oklahoma State four-way tournament to up its spring record to 11-7.

The Ags were defeated in the first game 5-4 by OSU but rebounded in the next two to defeat Oklahoma University 6-3 and demolish Centenary College 9-0.

Amy Closs, Liliانا Fernandez and the doubles team of Closs-Laura Hanna were undefeated for the tournament. Closs played six matches (including three doubles matches with Hanna) and Fernandez competed in four. Fernandez was pulled out of the last two doubles matches due to a sprained ankle.

"We played pretty well throughout the tournament," said Texas A&M coach Jan Cannon. "It hurt us to play the best team first, Saturday morning but the girls came back very well."

The Ags split the singles against OSU but lost two doubles to lose the match. Closs, Fernandez and Hanna kept the Ags in the match in singles with wins.

However, only the team of Closs-Hanna were able to get a doubles victory. The team defeated Holly Harris-Anatasia Petrovic 6-3, 1-6, 6-3.

The Ags came out firing against OU as they won all but one of the singles matches. Two of the matches lasted three hours against the Big Eight champs.

Closs beat Stefanie Flory 7-5, 2-6, 7-5 and Sonja Hutcherson defeated Susie Brennan 4-6, 6-4, 7-5. The matches began at 6 p.m. Saturday and finished about 9 p.m.

"Both of those matches were some of the hardest played I have seen in a while," said Cannon. "All the girls played really well and we were fortunate to get both matches."

The win gave OU its fourth loss in 30 matches. The Sooners are now 26-4 for the season.

Cannon said, "It was tough getting the two toughest teams on the same day and we'll take the split."

"Both OU and OSU are very comparable. They have played each other twice and have each won once."

The team travels to San Antonio today to take on Trinity University.

"I believe they are ranked fifth nationally," she said. "I would put them in the same category as their men's team."

The Trinity men's team is currently ranked eighth nationally and defeated the men's team 9-0 earlier in the season.

The Ags will travel to Dallas this weekend to play SMU and to Denton to take on North Texas State University.

Ags defeat Tigers; most invitational

By CAROLYN BARNES
Battalion Staff
A double-header victory Friday at Louisiana State University gave the Texas A&M softball team its 25th and 26th victories of the season.

The second-ranked Aggies shut out LSU, 4-0, in the opener before the no-hit pitching of Lori T Darby.

Roll had her second no-hitter this spring in the opener against LSU. She struck out 10 and allowed no walks, bringing her career pitching record to 13-1.

Of the seven hits by the Aggies during the opener four were in the ninth inning to score three times.

During the nightcap the Aggies hit for time hits for an 8-2 win over Shann McDonald struck out 11 and had the pitching win. McDonald is now 13-2 for the spring.

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