

Texas A&M

The Battalion Sports

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Nuggets beat Mavericks to win eleventh in a row

United Press International
DALLAS — The Denver Nuggets moved a step closer Wednesday night to what only a few weeks ago seemed to be a most unlikely spot in the NBA playoffs.

The Dallas Mavericks, meanwhile, gave their home fans a brief glimpse at what the future probably holds.

Denver, as it turned out, won yet another thriller Wednesday evening, 120-119, and extended its winning streak to 11 games. That is a club record for the Nuggets since they entered the NBA and puts them only two games back of the San Antonio Spurs in the battle for the Midwest Division crown.

Not so long ago the Nuggets were wallowing around the .500 mark at 31-30. But now they are not only in excellent shape to seize a playoff spot, they have a chance to either host a first-round mini-series or even avoid having to play in the first round at all.

"Before our winning streak nobody figured we had a shot at the playoffs," said center Dan Issel. "We've even won five of these on the road and have proven we are a playoff team."

Last Saturday night the Nuggets went two overtimes before beating Phoenix and on Tuesday night they came from behind to nip Seattle in an extra period. Their current run of

good fortune held up Wednesday night.

If Jay Vincent's would-be layup in the game's final second had dropped, it would have been Dallas claiming the victory.

Denver had a six-point lead with a minute to play, but a two-point basket by Mark Aguirre followed by a three-point goal by Aguirre left the Mavericks trailing by only one with 16 seconds to play.

The Nuggets' Glen Gondrezick was fouled with eight seconds left, but he missed both free throws to give Dallas a chance at the win. A shot by Jim Spanarkel with three seconds remaining bounced off the rim, but Vincent grabbed the rebound and went up with what seemed certain to be a certain basket, but it rolled off the rim as well. The game ended with Dallas yelling that Vincent had been fouled.

Vincent and Aguirre teamed up for 61 points, the largest combined total for the two players in this, their rookie seasons. Vincent scored 31 of them.

The Dallas franchise depends heavily on the ability of Aguirre and Vincent to work together in the future and their performance Wednesday night could well be a hint of things to come next year.

Denver retaliated with 27 points from Alex English and 25 by Kiki Vandeweghe. Billy

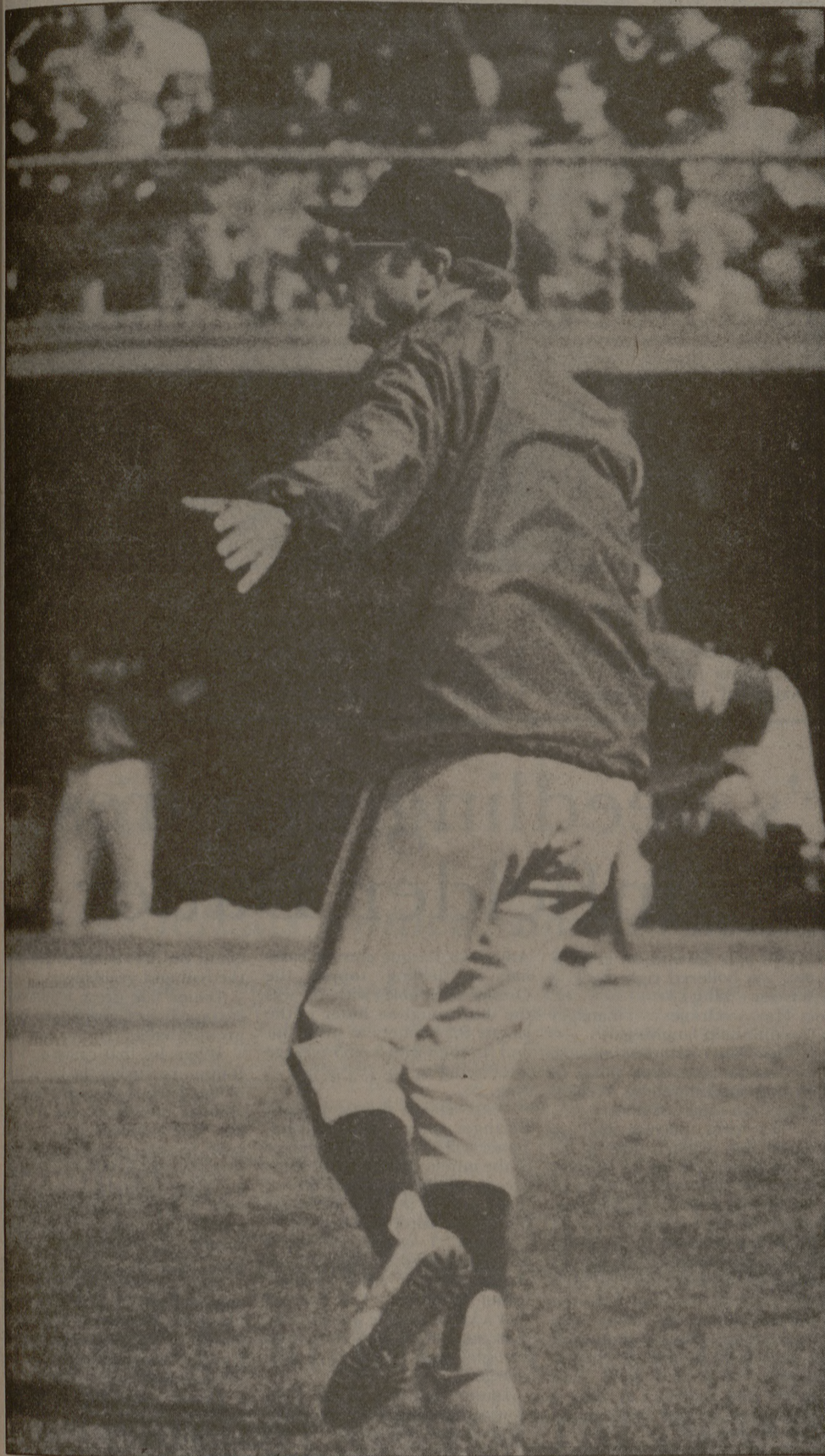
McKinney added 14 — six of them in a row down the stretch that helped the Nuggets build up the lead they almost lost.

"We really worried at the end," said Denver coach Doug Moe. "Dallas had their shooters in, but it wouldn't drop for them. It was a tough win for us. We had to keep fighting back in the second half. We just have to say it was a good win, especially

since it's the 11th in a row."

Denver will go after No. 12 on Friday night at home against Portland, but after that only two of their last nine games will be in their own arena.

Dallas, meanwhile, must go to Detroit tonight. It will be something of a homecoming for Vincent, who played his collegiate ball at Michigan State.

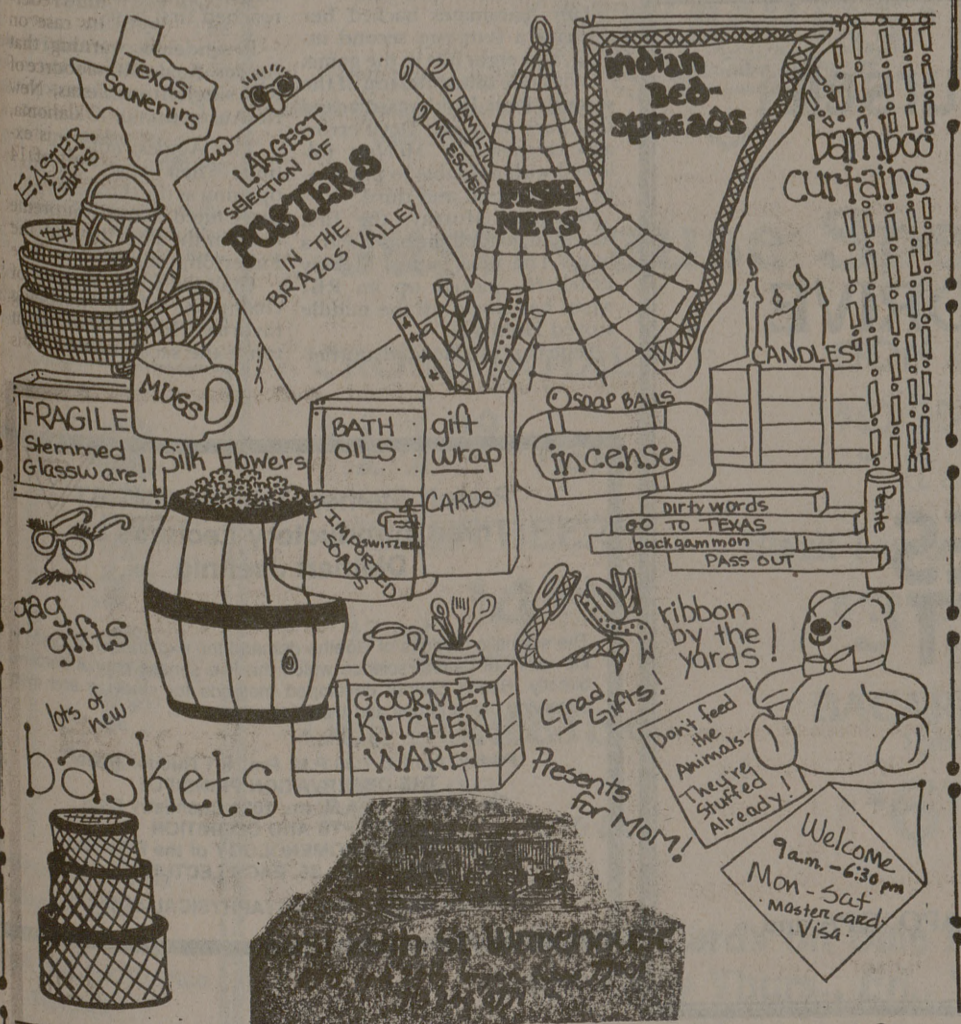


staff photo by Peter Rocha

Aggie baseball coach Tom Chandler motions to a baserunner during Texas A&M's double-header Sunday with the TCU Horned Frogs. The Aggies host the

Southwest-Conference-leading UH Cougars Friday and Saturday in Olsen Field. Texas A&M has a 22-10 season record and a 3-5 mark in SWC play.

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