

Cooper

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Kansas and Missouri, along with several basketball scholarship offers.

But Cooper chose Texas A&M.

"The main thing I was looking for in a school was a good solid athletic program with a good reputation," she said. "I also wanted to go to a school with a top softball program and a good women's athletics program."

As her senior year came to a close, Cooper wrote a letter to Brock telling him she was interested in playing at Texas A&M. The feeling was mutual.

"He already knew all about me," Cooper said. "And he wrote me back and told me he was interested in me, because they were losing their third baseman (Maria Resendez, a senior)."

All it took was a visit to the campus and Cooper was hooked.

"I came on a weekend," she said, "and there weren't many people around, but I was really impressed with the school and its neatness. You know, the campus is so pretty, and of course I had heard all about the traditions."

She'd heard about them, but she'd never had to bat against them. Cindy Cooper, meet Aggie softball tradition numbers one and two — Lori Stoll and Shan McDonald.

Stoll and McDonald are the Aggies' pitching staff. They don't just pitch in ball games, they control them.

"When I watched them pitch in practice I knew they were good, but it wasn't until I got up to bat against them that I stepped back and said 'Wow, these guys are awesome,'" Cooper said.

"They throw the ball so hard and they move it around so much that you really have to think when you bat against them. In summer ball I could just stick my bat out there and

get a hit, but you have to be on top of things against them."

And so far, the Aggies' opponents haven't been. Cooper and her teammates are rolling right along. The freshman third baseman fits right into the Aggies' mold of pitching, defense, and speed.

In the first inning of the Aggies' second game against Baylor on Monday, Cooper singled, moved to second on a sacrifice, and scored when the Baylor first baseman threw the ball into left field attempting to pick her off.

That was Texas A&M's only run, but McDonald threw a two-hit shutout at the Bears and the Aggies left Waco victorious.

Cooper says the Aggies' 10-0 start may be a sign of things to come.

"These first 10 games have helped us to get everybody to play together and to get to know each other better," she said. "We didn't go out there feeling like we had to win all 10, but to get experience."

TANK McNAMARA

by Jeff Millar & Bill Hinc



Rockets deal Malone for Jones, draft pick

HOUSTON — The Houston Rockets, who are suddenly offense-poor one month before training camp, gave their fans something to watch next season besides themselves.

While Coach Del Harris struggles to rebuild his club over the winter in the wake of their trade Wednesday of high scoring center Moses Malone, South Texans can zero in on the performance of the Cleveland Cavaliers.

The worse the Cavs play, the more the No. 1 draft choice obtained from the Philadelphia 76ers will be worth in 1983.

That draft choice was obtained by the 76ers from the Cavs in 1977 and, along with 76ers center Caldwell Jones, made the Malone trade go through.

If the Cavs should finish last this season as they did in 1981-82, then the Rockets would flip with the Eastern Conference's worst team for the rights to draft 7-4 center Ralph Sampson — a franchise-maker like Malone.

Sampson, the University of Virginia All-America, would be Harris' choice.

"Sampson. No question," he said.

But even if center Pat Ewing entered the draft after two seasons at Georgetown?

"Then it would be a lot of fun to pick between the two," Harris said.

Rockets owner Charlie Thomas said he decided to trade Malone when he learned Malone wanted to play for the 76ers more than he did the Rockets.

But Thomas didn't disclose to the 76ers his disappointment in Malone, and Thomas would not budge in his demand for Jones and Cleveland's No. 1 draft choice in bargaining face-to-face with 76ers owner Harold Katz Tuesday night.

"When we went down their list of offers, nothing else would work. It wasn't that we wanted what they wouldn't give," he said.

Katz returned to Philadelphia early Wednesday without a deal but his attorney called Thomas' attorney in the late afternoon to accept Thomas' terms, the Rockets owner said.

The 76ers' Sept. 2 offer of \$2.2 million a year to Malone,

which the Rockets would have had to match to retain him, would have required selling the 16,000-seat Summit and increasing ticket prices, Thomas said.

"We were still ready to run at it, to see if we could get 16,000 fans in here," he said, "until Moses said he was interested in playing here."

Thomas said he ended the hunt. "If the Rockets pay Caldwell Jones what the 76ers would have paid him this season — \$500,000 — and then in 1983-84, Jones the same amount, the Rockets will have saved \$1.2 million in 1983-84."

"We can go out and get good solid free agent for less than that," Thomas said.

Thomas disclosed he was hinted the Rockets might be interested in a team without Malone.

"You don't know any additional announcements will make," he said.

Thomas disclosed he was offended by Katz' claims he signed Malone to a sheet that the Rockets could match the money.

"That's my decision, not said Thomas, an auto dealer. "He doesn't know what I can do and what I can't. I took that personally. I would never say a man can or cannot do it. I get in the league to get over."

Thomas bought the Rockets in June.

Paine

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"The experience factor probably as much of a problem as anything. I still feel like I got a lot of room for improvement," he said.

"I'm glad we have two non-conference games. They give me a chance to get a feel playing."

Of his unexpected, quick try into the starting line, Paine said he always felt the complexity of the tight end duties in the Aggie offense would eventually require the help of all three tight ends.

"I'm sincerely sorry that (Lewis' injury) happened. I cause we worked hard together in the spring and we passed each other — myself and Mark — and we all got each other better," Paine said.

"I believed that it was going to take all three of us to get through the season as it was just didn't expect such a serious injury so soon."

Tight end coach George Paine said Paine lacks the speed Lewis had but makes up for it in hands and desire. He said Paine's Kellen have solidified the tight end position.

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