

Aggie basketball team learns, grows, ages on trip to Alaska

by Frank L. Christlieb
Sports Editor

ANCHORAGE, Alaska — Many people say that with age come learning and experience. But the Aggie basketball team has discovered that with the Great Alaska Shootout, come age, learning and experience.

Returning to Texas A&M University after a five-day stay in the "Land of the Midnight Sun," the Aggies aren't hanging their heads about losing two of three games in the 1982 Shootout. Take it from coach Shelby Metcalf — there's loads of experience locked inside his players' heads at this point, and what lies ahead must be positive.

The Seawolves, plagued by ice-cold shooting throughout the tourney, managed only 35 percent accuracy against the Aggies. UA lost its three games — to Washington, Florida and Texas A&M — by a total of 60 points.

Meanwhile the Aggies, taking advantage of the three-point shot throughout the tourney,

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ment, shot 51.45 and 61 percent in three games. Forward Claude Riley led all tournament shooters with his 21 of 31 from the field. Riley also had 31 rebounds in the tourney, as he led the Aggies with 24 points and 13 rebounds against the Seawolves.

In Sunday's victory, the Aggies opened up a 27-17 lead on Freshman guard Doug Lee's 18-foot jumper with 7:47 left. Lee, who chipped in with seven rebounds, had eight points during the game.

A three-point shot by Rainer Gruenke and two free-throws by Luke Dallafior cut the Texas A&M lead to 27-22. But the Aggies increased the lead to 39-33 by halftime, as Lee scored on a layup and Riley put in a dunk

off an offensive rebound.

The Aggies shot 55 percent and the Seawolves shot 31 percent in the first half. Brown led Texas A&M with 11 points, while Gruenke and Mark Booker each had nine for UAA.

Baskets by Tyren Naulls, Riley, Brown and Roy Jones gave the Aggies a 47-35 lead at the 15:57 mark of the second half. Two straight layups by freshman center Jimmie Gilbert and a 5-footer by Naulls moved the score to 53-35.

After Texas A&M built the lead to 19 at 60-41, the Seawolves came back to within 14 at 65-51 on three-point jumpers by Sloan Carlson and Pete Adams, and two more baskets by Adams.

For the game, Adams sank three of three from the three-point range and led the Seawolves with 21 points and five rebounds.

A fadeaway 14-footer by Riley, as well as a bucket and three freethrows from Naulls, gave Texas A&M a 72-51 lead with 9:10 left. The closest UAA could get after that was 75-57 with 7:08 remaining, as the Aggies went on to take a 28 point victory on late baskets by forward Lowell McHenry and guard Reggie Roberts.

Riley, who scored 14, 12 and 24 points in the three games said the Aggies learned about team togetherness while at the Shootout.

"I feel like we really learned about unity," Riley said Sunday. "The first two games we played real hard against good teams but we lost. Today, we picked up our intensity and played well. There was no selfishness on anyone's part and we all passed to the main jersey ... to the open man."

"Sometimes it's hard to get into the flow of the game when you're getting the season started because you tend to be a little nervous. But you lose your tightness and settle down after that. I believe that judging how we played here and from how we know we can play, we'll learn from this ... and get better. We have to use this to learn from."

Metcalf, in his 20th season with the Aggies, said the team played a more relaxed game against the Seawolves.

"I think we needed to play more relaxed," he said. "I think it's going to make us a better ballclub. We brought five old players and five new players up here and played well."

Seawolf coach Harry Larrabee, who played his college basketball at the University of Texas, said the Aggies simply outmanned his team.


"We need a rebounder," he said. "We're going to be a decent rebounding team in (NCAA) Division II, but A&M really plays about 12 feet above the floor. So all we could do was feel their numbers."

"I was real proud of our players, though. Even though we got beaten substantially, we could have lost by a lot more because A&M has some great shooters. We didn't win a game in the Shootout last year, so we don't put a whole lot of emphasis on (the tournament) in terms of victories. I think we played our best overall game of the season today."

"We had a chance if we'd done better in the first half," Larrabee said. "I think A&M was really kind of sluggish in the first half. We had a lot of shots that rolled around but didn't go through. The difference was

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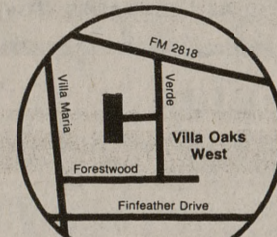
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