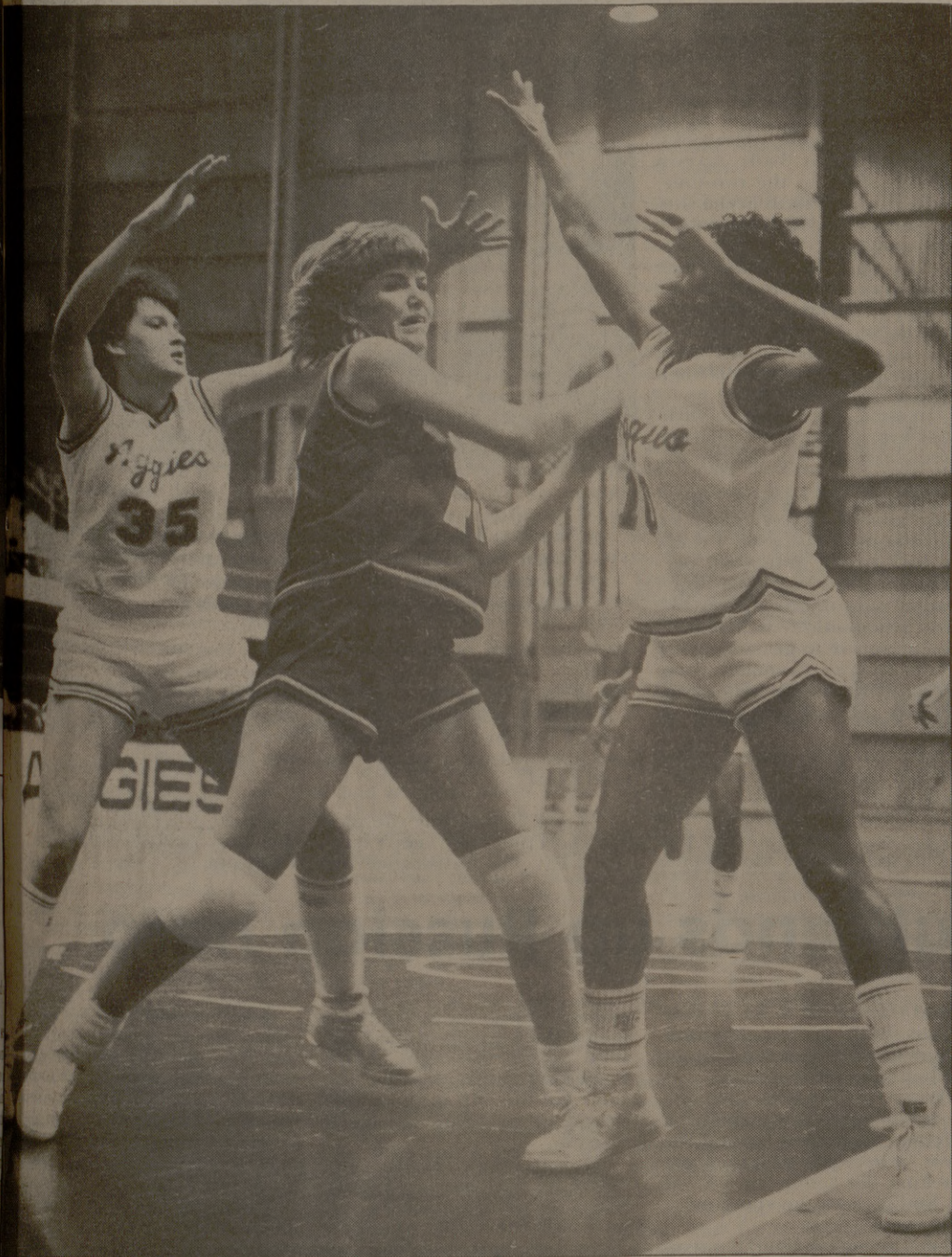


Basketball

Tonight

Women at Arkansas



Joanna Hooker (35) and Rochelle Bennett surround Rice center Holly Jones. The Texas A&M women's basketball team defeated Rice 71-69 Saturday. The women play in Arkansas today.

Inexperience key to loss

By KAY MALLET

Sports writer

The play of the Texas A&M men's basketball team has been regulated by inexperience this season.

At times the Aggies have played aggressive, determined ball, to counter that inexperience and be competitive in conference play.

Other times that inexperience becomes obvious.

Saturday night was one of those nights. The Aggies were neither aggressive nor competitive in front of 3,673 fans in G. Rollie White.

Rice plainly outwitted the Aggies for a 43-42 win and moved into fifth place in the Southwest Conference standings with a 4-5 record. The Aggies fell to sixth place with a 4-6 record — one-half game behind the Owls.

"We just didn't play as aggressively as we should have," forward Winston Crite said after the game. "We can dominate inside, but we didn't do that tonight. If you don't work hard,

it won't fall into place for you."

A&M led 20-12 in the first half with 2:48 left to play, but then the Owl's Tony Barnett took over.

He quickly depleted A&M's lead with a baseline jumper and then sank four free throws after two A&M fouls. Barnett soon tied the score at 20-20 when the Aggies were called for goaltending on a last-minute shot.

Their spirits dampened, the Aggies started slowly in the second half and Rice took a quick 28-22 lead.

But the Aggies were given renewed momentum as the fans in "The Holler House on the Brazos" got into the battle when the duo of Todd Holloway and Darnell Williams came off the bench.

Williams, coming off a fight with the flu, and Holloway, who is suffering from tendonitis in his big toe, seemed to be near full strength. Both players missed the Houston game.

Their skills complimented each other as Williams grabbed steals on defense and pitched

the ball to Holloway for fast breaks on offense. A&M soon took a 30-28 lead with 12:11 left in the game.

Then the Aggies began to slow down the pace of the game.

"As the clock ran down we had to be more conservative with our shots," Holloway said. "They were beating us on the boards — in shooting and in rebounds."

Actually Barnett was beating the Aggies. He finished the game with 12 points and 14 rebounds. But only four of his points came from the field, the rest were free throws.

Crucial free throws. Just as Barnett had tied the game in the first half, he helped the Owls maintain their lead in the second — a lead that changed hands eight times during the course of the game.

Rice had possession of the ball with 39 seconds left in the game and Kenny Brown fouled Tracy Steele.

Steele missed the back end of a one-and-one for Rice and Jimmie Gilbert grabbed the re-

bound for A&M. The Aggies called time-out with 27 seconds left and the score 41-40.

"We wanted to take the good shot," Holloway said. "Al (Puliam) picked for me as I went across the foul-line. I shot and missed."

With A&M still down by one, Gilbert immediately fouled Barnett under the basket to stop the clock. But Barnett hit both ends of the one on one. The Aggies then added a final basket.

Neither Holloway nor Williams started the game, but they played 28 and 17 minutes respectively.

Holloway, who stumbled up and down the court for 28 minutes of the game, said his toe didn't affect his play during the game.

"It didn't affect the way I played tonight," he said. "I kept stumbling to keep from landing on my toe. I wanted to stay flat on my feet and I got off balance a couple of times."

Holloway was high point for A&M with nine points.

Nothing new in SWC race

United Press International

There were some who thought the Houston Cougars-SMU Mustangs matchup Saturday deserved a question mark. The Cougars, however, chose to supply an exclamation point.

"We tried as hard as we could," said SMU coach Dave Bliss. "But they are just a darned good basketball team."

Houston had struggled to nip SMU by a single point last month, but Saturday night in their home lair the Cougars displayed the kind of stuff that has carried them to the Final Four the last two seasons.

Houston jumped on top early and never showed signs of a letup in romping to a 76-57 vic-

tory. SMU came into the game leading the nation in field goal percentage (55.5), but could shoot just 35.8 percent from the field against the Cougars.

"I think this might have been our best game of the year on both ends of the court," said Houston coach Guy Lewis. "I don't mean to take anything away from our offense, but I thought our defense did a heck of a job."

The fifth-ranked Cougars, with Michael Young scoring 26 points, thus elevated their league record to 9-0 and they are 19-3 for the season. Only Arkansas remains as a challenger for the league title and the first meeting of the season between the Razorbacks and Cougars is

still three weeks away.

Arkansas stands at 7-1 in SWC action after its routine 63-44 win over Baylor in Fayetteville Saturday. The win ended a rare two-game losing streak for the Razorbacks.

In the other conference contest over the weekend David Reynolds' 15-foot jumper with four seconds left gave Texas Tech a 47-45 win over the hard-luck TCU Horned Frogs in Fort Worth.

The victory was a critical one for Tech, which had fallen to SMU earlier in the week. Combined with the SMU loss to Houston, it allowed the Red Raiders to move back into a third-place tie and kept alive their hopes for a bye past the first round of the tournament.

Conference action resumes on Wednesday with SMU traveling to Rice. The last time the Owls played at home they beat Arkansas.

Houston will be at TCU Thursday night, going after its 33rd consecutive SWC victory.

Next weekend's top attraction will have Arkansas visiting SMU. The Mustangs lost by only one to Arkansas in Fayetteville earlier this season and the game could be a key one to both clubs hopes of making it into the NCAA tournament.

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Women win third straight

By DAVE SCOTT

Sports writer

After the Texas A&M women's upset victory over Houston last Thursday, the match-up against the Rice Owls was almost sure to be a let down.

But the match against Rice was no let down, although it was tonight almost an upset for the Owls. Rice has now lost nine straight games and their only conference win was against the Aggies earlier this year.

It was different this time, the Aggies escaped with a 71-69 victory on freshmen Rochelle Bennett's 18-foot jumper with six seconds left in the game. The Aggies are now 11-8, and 4-5 in conference play.

If the team was tired Saturday, they'll have to do all their resting on a plane Sunday as they fly to Fayetteville where they take on the Razorbacks tonight. Arkansas is third place in the conference with a record of 15-5, 7-2 in conference.

The Aggies ran hot and cold against Rice. The hot came first. They jumped to a 15-8 lead behind Beth Young's outside shooting. For most of the first half the Aggies led, until they

went cold with four minutes left in the half. The Aggies ended the half having shot 38 percent from the field and trailed 38-35.

In the second half, Janet Duckham got the Aggies heated up again. She scored 10 second-

half points, eight of those from the same spot in the right corner.

The lead swung back and forth for the last five minutes until Bennett's jumper gave the victory for the Aggies.

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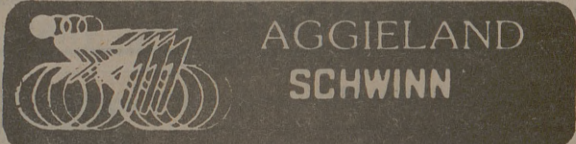
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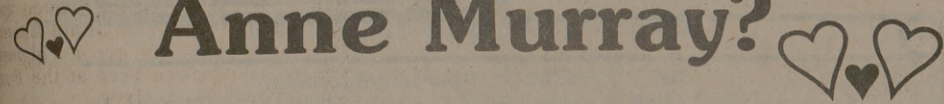
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