

SPORTS

Bench warmer signs with Oklahoma State

Associated Press

ARLINGTON — When Dana Gray's signed national basketball letter of intent was delivered to Oklahoma State Nov. 14, Gray officially became a Cowboy point-guard-to-be and one of the first Tarrant County high school players this season to commit to a major university.

But Gray, now assured of four years of free NCAA Division I education, is not even in the starting lineup for his own Martin High School team.

Oklahoma State did not recruit Gray for his performance at Martin but because of what he did last summer at the Texas Basketball Congress International Shootout in Houston. As a member of a summer league team from Arlington, Gray faced a Houston all-star team in the first game of the shootout and scored 17 points.

Coaches and scouts were so impressed by Gray's play then and in a second game that Jay Parker, director of the Texas High School Basketball Scouting report, organizer of the Shootout and self-appointed coach of the Houston team, gave the Arlington group an unscheduled third game.

"He's a gym rat, that's the key," Parker said. "I think he was lucky, even in the draw. He played my team first. The Houston team was the strongest and the coaches showed up to watch them. If Arlington was playing Irving, the coaches might not have even been in the gym."

"I'd never heard of this kid, but he busted our butt. He laid it in their face numerous times. I know he buried a 20-footer. There was no pressure on him. When he's free, he does some really creative stuff."

That "creative stuff" may have earned Gray a scholarship, but it is not what Martin is looking for.

Martin Coach Danny Husband says that sometimes people think he is crazy for not starting a player who already has a college scholarship. "We weren't starting well at the first of the year, and we had to make a change somewhere," Husband said. "I think his shot selection early in the season was real poor. Sometimes he

tries to force things.

"He really gets the same amount of playing time as if he were starting. He gives us an added boost."

Gray is averaging just more than seven points and three rebounds a game. He is shooting 43 percent from the floor and 56 from the free-throw line.

"He shot more in a summer recreational situation where he could shoot it and get it and shoot it and get it," Husband said. "Our style, probably bothers him worse than others. He's probably better in a run-and-gun situation."

Parker, who said he has seen more than 150 teams play this season, contends that Gray is one of the top eight guards in the state, but is in the wrong situation.

"He's going to be much better in college than in high school," Parker said. "He's got real talent and the nature of high school basketball in Texas is not conducive to real talent."

Gray's personal life is as different from his Martin teammates as is his playing style. And his personal life probably helped shape his future by pushing him into basketball.

Since Gray's father was in the military years ago, Gray moved from state to state. It was hard to develop lasting relationships, and Gray says that is one reason he likes basketball. Only one person is needed to practice.

Almost every day since he was in the seventh grade, Gray has gone to the Woodland West Recreation Center to play basketball.

On non-game nights, after Martin's practice, Gray goes to the center, where he plays with former Continental Basketball Association players, a lawyer and some business types who "always wanted to play basketball."

"The rec," where his fast-paced style developed, was a refuge during the initial depression of not being a starter. Gray said he is no longer de-

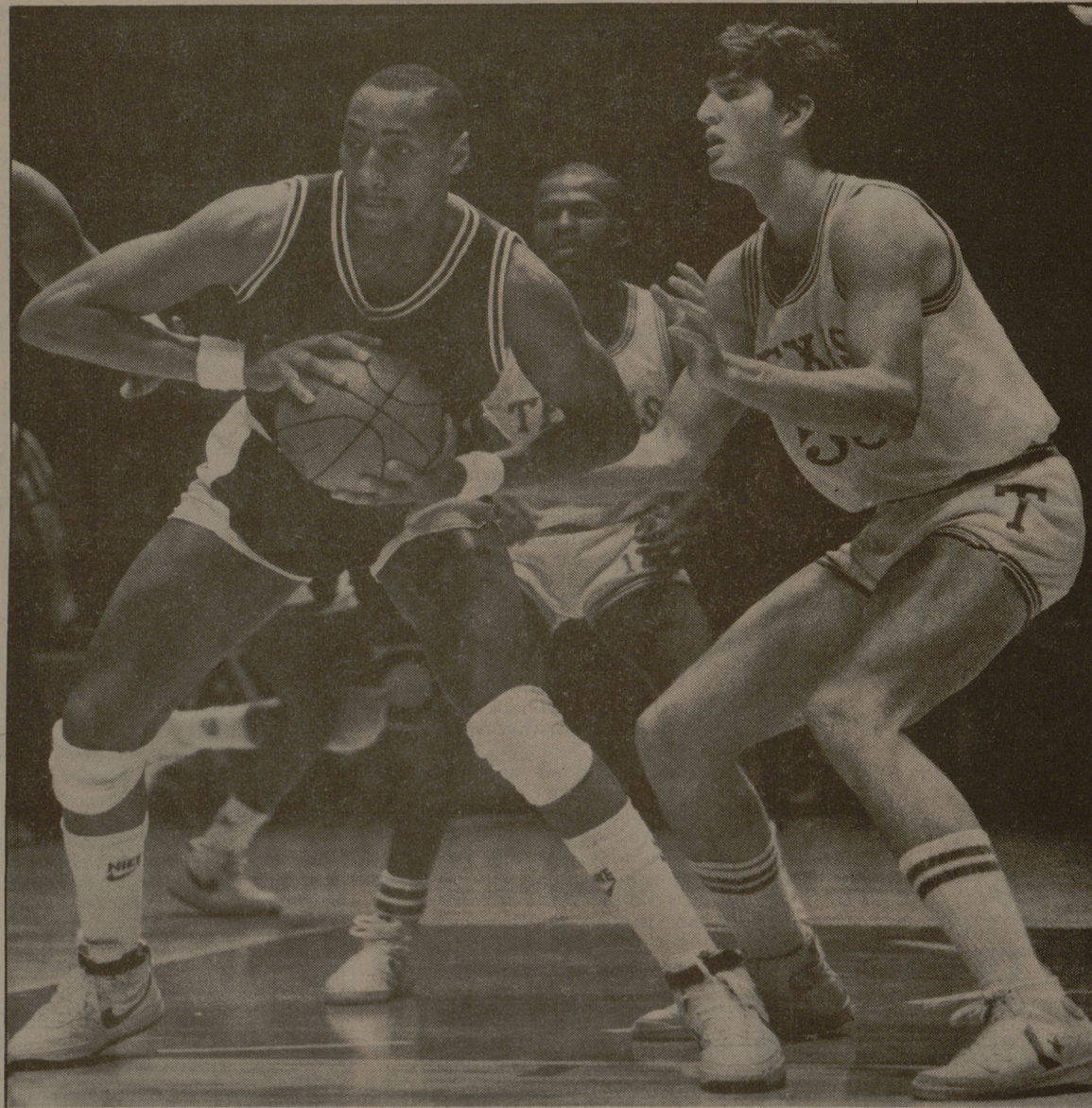


Photo by DEAN SAITO

First Texas, then Tech

A&M's Jimmie Gilbert holds the ball tightly as Texas' John Brownlee (55) and Alex Broadway (12) move in during the Aggies 66-61 victory Sunday. A&M hosts Texas

Tech Wednesday at 7:30 p.m. The Aggie women, who lost 80-58 to the Horns Saturday, begin Wednesday evening with a 5:15 p.m. tipoff against the Red Raiders.

pressed and will continue to try to contribute to the Martin team he calls "very special."

But he knows there will be more use for his talent — the talent built and now honed during his spare

time — next fall at OSU.

"Dana's got exceptional ability," Parker said.

49er fans celebrate Super win

Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO — More than half a million fans of the San Francisco 49ers jammed sidewalks and perched on window sills Monday to shower their Super Bowl XIX champions with confetti and release red and gold balloons during a joyful parade through the city.

Although the size of the crowd was similar to the one that gathered for the parade three years ago after the 49ers' Super Bowl XVI victory, there was little of the rowdiness or clashes with police that marred that day.

Quarterback Joe Montana, the Super Bowl's most valuable player who led the 49ers to Sunday's 38-16 rout of the Miami Dolphins, skipped the parade along with nine teammates and flew to Hawaii for next week's Pro Bowl.

Running back Wendell Tyler, wide receivers Dwight Clark and Freddie Solomon and tight end Russ Francis were among the 30 players who did show up to wave to the fans, along with Coach Bill Walsh and team owner Edward J. DeBartolo Jr.

Walsh and DeBartolo flanked Mayor Dianne Feinstein atop the back seat of a shiny blue 1931 Lincoln touring car at the head of the parade, just behind a phalanx of police motorcycles.

There were a few isolated incidents of violence and theft, said police spokeswoman Carri Lucas. About 20 people pounced on two parked cars near City Hall, smashing windows and breaking roofs about an hour after the parade ended. Police also investigated the stabbing of three people by a man.

Aside from those incidents, the celebration was peaceful.

"We were a lot better prepared for this parade," said police Cmdr. Ray Canepa, who estimated the crowd at "at least a half a million."

The parade lasted only 40 minutes, but it was loud and colorful.



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