

SPORTS

A&M a step off in Arkansas

By BRANDON BERRY
Sports Writer

FAYETTEVILLE, Ark. — All incoming and outgoing travelers passing through Fayetteville Community Airport are greeted and farewelled by Arkansas floor mats colorfully decorated with the image of a crimson pig.

The Texas A&M men's basketball team thus received two free opportunities to step on the Razorbacks.

But in between, the Hogs used tradition, defense and clutch performances from two unheralded freshmen to hold on to a 58-53 Southwest Conference victory over the Ags Friday night.

With the win, Arkansas climbed into a second-place tie with A&M and back into contention for the SWC title with a 6-3 record.

"We now go into the game with SMU (the current SWC front-runner) feeling that we can win and make a run for the conference championship," Arkansas Coach Eddie Sutton said. "The going would have been difficult if we would have lost to A&M."

The Hogs haven't faced that difficulty much in the past few years. Arkansas has beaten A&M 11 consecutive times and hasn't let the Ags escape from raucous Barnhill Arena with a victory since 1971.

"More than anything else, we won this game with defense," Sutton said. "Our defense in the first half was sensational."

The Ags shot only 40 percent in the first half and missed five of 10 free throws. The Hogs led the Ags from the opening tip-off and built leads as large as 14 points.

At halftime, with the Hogs leading 32-21, a 71-year-old woman seated behind the courtside press table had even interrupted the constant stream of obscenities that theretofore had flowed so freely from her aged lips.

Things looked hopeless for anyone without a pig hat.

"There's no doubt that (freshmen) Andrew Lang and Kenny Hutchinson really came of age tonight," Sutton said. "We couldn't have won this game without them."

They were helped by being left

open by an Aggie defense designed to stop Olympian Joe Kleine.

Hutchinson, a guard who has been lonelier at the top of the key than the Maytag repairman, decided to defy his 28 percent shooting percentage and hit three of five outside jumpers.

Lang, whose shooting and rebounding percentages resembled the price of two wads of Hubba Bubba, chewed up the offensive rebounds and spat out seven tough points in the second half, when the Ags were making their most serious runs.

And their performances hurt all the worse because they were unexpected.

"If somebody were to tell me that we'd do as good a defensive job as we did on Joe Kleine and still lose the game, I wouldn't have believed them," A&M Coach Shelby Metcalf said. "We just didn't play well enough on the offensive end of the court."

"You can't hold it against our guys because they really gave the good effort out there tonight, but we just

couldn't hit the basket."

The only Aggie with 20-20 vision in his shooting eye was junior Don Marbury, who had 23 points.

"Even without hitting our shots, we still outscored them by eight from the field," Metcalf said. "It really came down to the free throws. They hit theirs and we didn't hit ours."

The Razorbacks had quite a few more opportunities. The Hogs were sent to the line 37 times, compared to the 21 free passes issued to the outsiders from Texas.

Three Aggies fouled out of the game, including Kenny Brown, who had never been given more than three personal fouls in any other game this season.

"You get frustrated because you know what's waiting for you but you can't really do anything about it," Metcalf said.

"But, no matter what the score was, we're the real winners. They have to stay in Arkansas and we get to leave."

And probably step on a few floor mats on their way out of town.

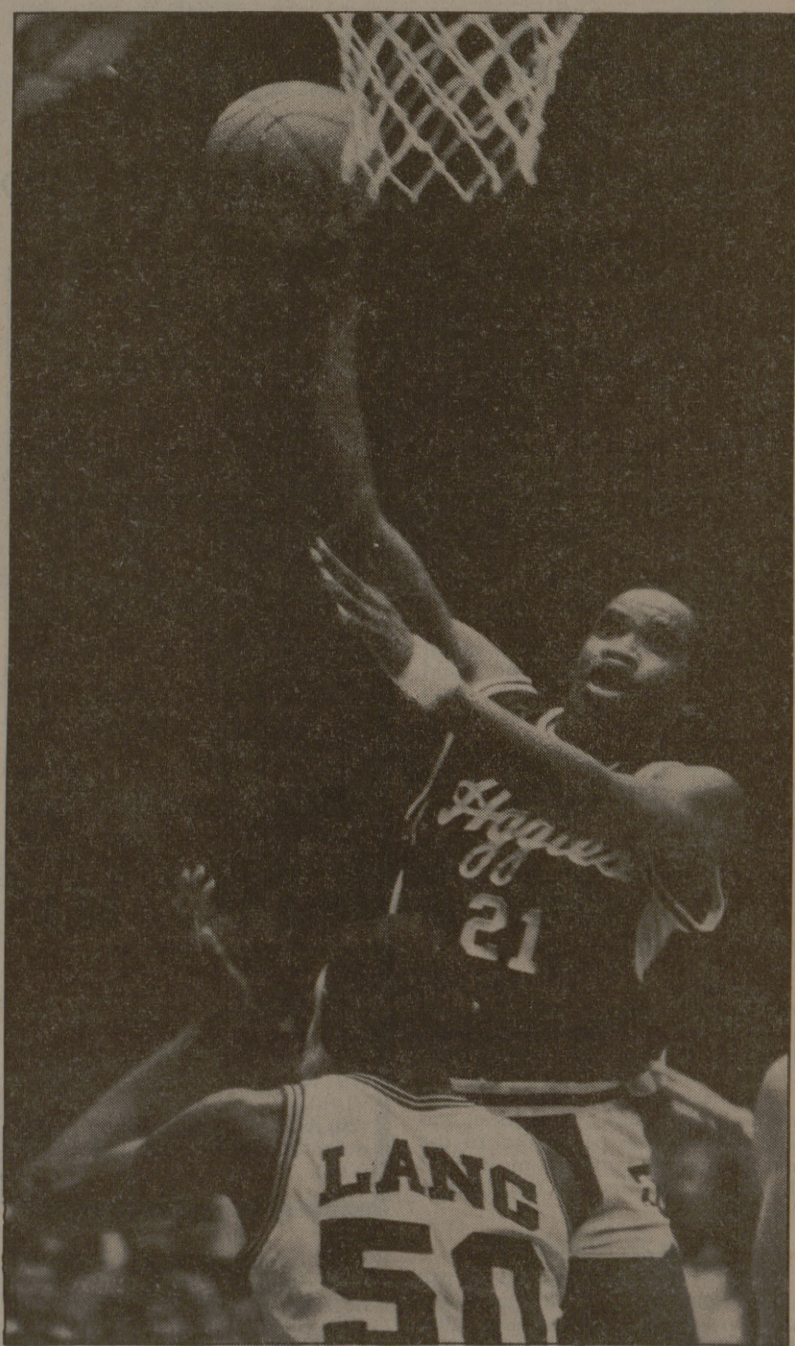


Photo by CHAREAN WILLIAMS

Texas A&M's Winston Crite (21) drives over the top of Arkansas' Andrew Lang (50) during Friday night's game in Barnhill Arena in Fayetteville, Ark. The Razorbacks won their 18th straight game at home and defeated the Aggies, 58-53.

Razorbacks' worth de-Kleine-ing in '85

By CHAREAN WILLIAMS
Assistant Sports Editor

FAYETTEVILLE, Ark. — For Arkansas' Olympic basketball hero, the 1985 season has been anything but gold medal.

Joe Kleine, a member of the 1984 Olympic gold medal basketball team, is going through some rough times. Why?

- Kleine is getting double and triple teamed, which is hurting his performance.

- He has to keep three of Arkansas' starting freshmen in line, while he's on the court.

- The Razorbacks aren't playing up to their usual standards.

Kleine is averaging 24 points per game in Southwest Conference play, up from the 16.7 he averaged during the '84 season. However, his rebounding average has slipped from 8.6 to 7.8 and his shooting has been

subpar the last three games.

He scored only 14 points against Virginia, on Jan. 27, and Baylor, on Jan. 30. During the Razorbacks 58-53 victory over Texas A&M Friday night, Kleine tied his season low, scoring only 10 points.

"A&M wasn't doing anything different from anyone else," said a visibly upset Kleine. "They just double and triple teamed me."

Aggie forward Winston Crite, who guarded Kleine, said stopping Kleine doesn't necessarily stop Arkansas.

"We stopped Kleine pretty good tonight," Crite said, "but his teammates came through for him and they won the game."

Arkansas Coach Eddie Sutton said Kleine was distressed by 10 point performance.

"I know he gets frustrated," Sutton said. "Kleine made some good

defensive plays. He's done well defensively all year. Joe led the club again in rebounds (11 against the Aggies)."

Kleine said his defensive play could be improved.

"I'm doing OK on defense," he said. "I could play a lot better on offense. I didn't shoot the ball well tonight. I just can't get it all together."

As for the young Razorback team, Kleine said he views himself as their leader.

"Freshmen get frustrated on the court sometimes," he said. "I see them hanging their heads sometimes when they make a bad play. You just have to help them get their confidence back."

When guard Allie Freeman picked up his fifth foul against the Ags, Freeman began arguing with the referee. Kleine intervened and told Freeman, "Leave him alone, Al-

lie. Let me handle the refs. I'm better at it."

"I just didn't want him getting a tech," Kleine said afterward.

The Razorbacks have suffered through some unusually rough times this season. Arkansas is only 14-7 overall and 5-3 in SWC play.

A schedule that included three teams that were in the 1984's NCAA Final Four (Virginia, Houston and Georgetown) and four other Top 20 teams, hasn't help the team's confidence.

"(The schedule) has been very hard," Kleine said. "We are so young. It's just really hard on this team. We just have to take them one at a time."

One at a time, at least until the season's over, then All-American Kleine will be seeing some NBA dollars floating his way.

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