

STATE AND LOCAL

# Hoopsters say fans important to performance

By KAREN ATTAWAY  
Reporter

Student support during sporting events really does boost the athletes' morale, four basketball players said during Sully's Symposium Wednesday afternoon.

Lisa Langston and Janet Duckham of the women's basketball team and Gary Lewis and Mike Clifford of the men's basketball team discussed their views on the University's basketball programs.

All four players said student body support at the games was important. "We're excited to watch," Duckham said.

"There are only three more home games for us, and it's hard to get up for a game when there's a small crowd,"

Lewis thanked those people who have attended the games, and he said he encouraged everyone to continue to support the team.

"We play hard, and people appreciate that," Lewis said.

Langston said the teams represent the student body, and because of this they try to give a good impression of Texas A&M.

"We like to show people what class is all about," she said.

Duckham said, however, students should not expect too much from the women's team right away. The team just received a new coach, and it will take three or four years to build the program, she said.

"You can't expect miracles; it takes time," she said.

Duckham also said the recruiting for the women's basketball team looks promising, but it will be hard to recruit players when the program isn't established.

"If our coach gets good players like I know she can, we will be nationally ranked in three or four years," Duckham said.

Langston said the National Collegiate Athletic Association ruled each athlete must take a urine test to detect drug use.

On the first offense, the player must get counseling, and on the second offense the player must find somewhere else to play.

Speaking on behalf of the men's basketball team, Clifford said the scholarship athletes are sometimes at a disadvantage.

"Some professors will help us out, but others think we're nothing special," he said.

Lewis said he is optimistic about next year's team.



Basketball team forwards Janet Duckham (L) and Lisa Langston talk at Sully's Symposium

"We have plenty of guards, Lewis said. "If we can recruit one solid big

man, it could take us a long way." Each of the athletes said that playing basketball for fun is important.

Langston said there are always hard times, but there has never been a moment when she wanted to quit.

Photo by ANTHONY S. CASPER

# State land office fires 12 workers

Associated Press

AUSTIN — The state's General Land Office has fired a dozen people in a continuing effort to shift the agency's emphasis to revenue-producing operations, officials said Wednesday.

Michael Connolly, spokesman for Land Commissioner Garry Mauro, said the 12 people "were let go" on Tuesday as part of an on-going review of the agency's work. Another nine employees have resigned, he said.

"We're trying to work as leanly and efficiently as we can," Connolly said.

As the state government's financial problems have worsened, Comptroller Bob Bullock last month fired 127 people from his agency. Bullock also ordered that only one of four vacancies due to resignations be filled.

Connolly said some of the 21 land office vacancies would be filled, but in different divisions than those from which people were fired.

"It's part of an on-going re-evaluation program we began last summer," Connolly said. "We're taking a look at all employees."

The land office now is reviewing its employment every six months, he said, and this week's firings followed such a review.

"The idea is, we're trying to shift our weight from nonrevenue-producing areas to revenue-producing areas," he said.

The General Land Office manages 22 million acres of state-owned lands. Money is generated from that land through oil and gas royalties, fees from the mineral industry, money paid for grazing rights and other uses.

The proceeds go to a variety of state funds, including the permanent and available school funds, and the state's general revenue fund.

Connolly said the land office collected \$406 million last year.

# Panel endorses \$800 million Texas water plan

Associated Press

AUSTIN — A House committee Wednesday unanimously endorsed an \$800 million statewide water program which the panel's chairman said should appeal to most Texans.

"It's a comprehensive plan that has a little bit in it for every area of the state," said Rep. Tom Craddick, R-Midland, chairman of the House Natural Resources Committee.

Craddick predicted the bill, scheduled for floor debate in the House on Tuesday, has a good chance of becoming law.

"We haven't heard of any substantial opposition," he said. "Normally, that would have surfaced by now. I think that most people realize there needs to be a water plan, and I think we'll see a plan passed this session of the Legislature."

The committee voted 9-0 to send a water bill and companion constitutional amendment to the House. The plan would establish a bond program to raise funds for a variety of water development and conservation projects. The constitutional amendment portion of the package

would be placed before voters in November.

The plan calls for \$200 million in water supply projects, \$200 million for sewage treatment projects, \$200 million for buying and developing sites for reservoir projects and \$200 million for flood control projects.

The measure also includes a \$250 million bond insurance program to help cities or agencies that want to get better credit ratings for their water projects.

Craddick noted lawmakers tried

hard to give all major interests something.

"It was put together not just by this committee but over a two-year period," he said.

While the House committee was approving its version of the plan, the Senate Natural Resources Committee began water legislation hearings and Sen. John Montford, D-Lubbock, said he will offer his own \$1 billion plan.

Among other differences from the House legislation, Montford's plan would create an additional

\$200 million agricultural water conservation fund.

Testifying before senators, Agriculture Commissioner Jim Hightower said the idea would conserve water and save money.

"Sen. Montford, with my support, is proposing legislation to do just that, by creating an Agricultural Conservation Fund to be used for small water conservation cost-share grants and by authorizing a program of low-interest water conservation loans," Hightower said.

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