

SPORTS

Tech, Myers bask in SWC sunshine

Associated Press

Texas Tech Coach Gerald Myers was savoring his team's first Southwest Conference basketball title in 12 years today, getting his suit dried out, and giving himself 24 more hours to enjoy the Red Raiders' remarkable resurgence.

Tech's 61-53 victory over Texas Christian on Saturday produced an outright title and the Red Raiders' first 20-victory season since 1977, only the sixth in the history of the school.

"I'm not even going to think about the conference tournament until Monday," Myers said. "We won our game against SMU (last Wednesday) and really didn't get to enjoy it because we had this one (TCU) coming up and wanted to concentrate on it. We want to enjoy it."

Arkansas, Texas A&M and SMU all finished in a three-way tie for second place with 10-6 records by virtue of SMU's loss to Houston. The Mustangs finished the regular season by losing six of their last nine games.

In other games on Saturday, A&M crushed Rice 79-62 to clinch the No. 4 seed in the tournament while Arkansas ripped Baylor 106-71. Sunday, Houston ambushed SMU, 79-76.

Texas Tech, picked in the preseason to finish fourth behind SMU, Houston, and Arkansas bounced

TCU, then gave their coach a shower with his suit on.

"It was worth it," beamed Myers.

"It's a great feeling to win the championship," Myers said. "We came into the game wanting to win it outright and were able to do that."

"I'm happy for our fans and players who have waited a long time since we did this last and I'm glad that we've been able to give them something they can enjoy."

"It was a great reward for our seniors who worked hard and have gone through some tough times. That was the big thing to me, we won it for those guys."

Tech finished its regular season at 20-7 and posted a 12-4 league record. TCU fell to 8-8 in SWC play and is 16-11 going into the tournament.

TCU Coach Jim Killingsworth said the Red Raiders were "a deserving champion."

"They beat everybody else so they ought to be the champion," Killingsworth said. "They play mighty tough defense."

Vince Taylor, who had a game-high 15 points for the Red Raiders said: "It's really hard to believe we did this," said Taylor. "We always had the confidence we could do it but we just had to go out and prove it."

Ags accomplish mission #1

By CHAREAN WILLIAMS
Assistant Sports Editor

Before the season began, the Texas A&M men's basketball team wanted to finish in the top three of the Southwest Conference.

Mission accomplished. "I'm very pleased with an 18-9 record with the schedule we played," said A&M Coach Shelby Metcalf after the Aggies stumped Rice 79-62 Saturday night. "It's a tribute to this team of fine young men. This is the only way to end the season. It was a great win for us."

However, after three blown chances to sit alone at the top, the Aggies must now look toward winning the SWC tournament, which would give the Ags an automatic NCAA bid. An NCAA or NIT bid was another of the Aggies' goals before the season.

Mission yet to be accomplished.

"I think we should get an NCAA bid," Metcalf said. "I've been disappointed when I hear about only two schools from this conference being invited. I think (the SWC) should get at least three or four bids to the NCAA. It's really out of the coaches' hands. But, I think we should get at least four teams."

The Aggies finished the season tied for second in the SWC with Arkansas and SMU with a 10-6 record. A&M will be seeded fourth in the tournament because it lost two games against both SMU and Arkansas.

Friday at 12:08 p.m., the Aggies will begin the search for the second goal, winning the SWC tournament, when they take on TCU in Dallas' Reunion Arena.

"I think everybody is playing together," said A&M forward Kenny Brown, who led the Aggies with 22 points. "It has been a team effort. Our goal is to win the tournament and get a NCAA bid."

"I think (the NCAA) will take about three or four Southwest Conference teams. If we get in the finals (of the SWC tournament), I think we will get a bid. I think we can get into the finals, but we just have to take them one at a time."

Brown said Saturday night's win got the momentum rolling back in the right direction. The Aggies have suffered through a slump the last two weeks. The win over Rice was

the second straight for the Ags after they lost three of four SWC games, putting them out of contention for the regular season title.

"(The Rice win) will start another good note for us," Brown said. "TCU will be a great game for us. We know they will be ready for us and of course we will be ready for them. (The Rice win) will build a lot of confidence for us."

With no shot clock at the SWC tournament (the teams usually have 45 seconds to shoot the ball), Metcalf expects the Horned Frogs to stall the ball.

"TCU will sit on the ball without the clock at the tournament," Metcalf said. "It's going to be a tough game. They have great perimeter shooting so we will have to play them man-to-man."

"Without the clock, everybody is going to have to go in and put a delay in their game. It will change the completion of the game."

Guard Todd Holloway, who had 20 points, said the Rice victory will keep the Aggies rolling toward their goals.

"We're 2-0 (after consecutive wins over Houston and Rice)," Holloway said. "We hope this will start another string of wins for us. This will get things started."

Rice Head Coach Tommy Suits agreed the Aggies have a good chance in the tournament.

"A&M played very well," Suits said. "I was very impressed with the way they played. They had emotion, enthusiasm and intensity. They have good players and they played a good ball game."

"I hope they play as well in the post-season tournament, since they are capable of earning a (NCAA or NIT) post-season bid."

Forward Winston Crite, who broke the A&M block shot season record when he recorded five blocked shots against Rice, said the Ags have are in good shape to win the tournament.

"We want to be on a roll going into the tournament," Crite said. "Since we won our last home game,

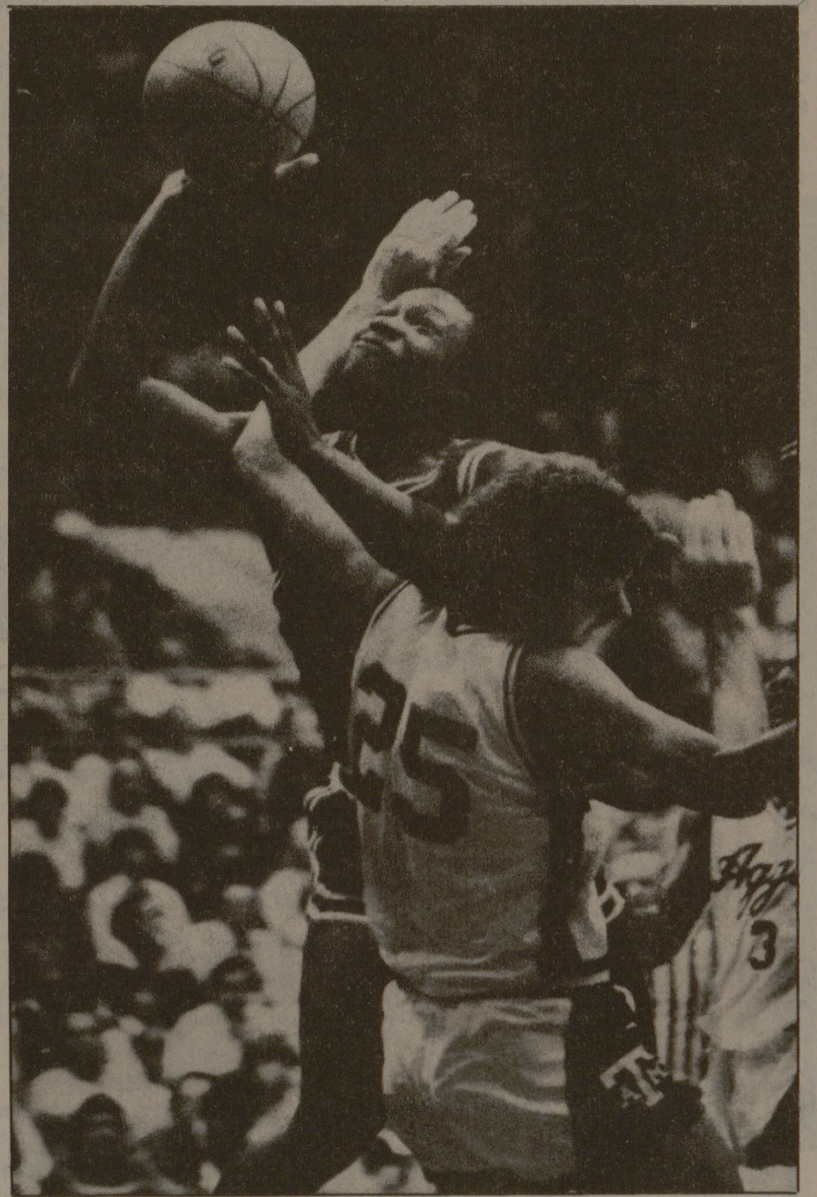


Photo by DEAN SAITO

Rice's Greg Hines charges into Texas A&M's Mike Clifford (25) during Saturday night's game at G. Rollie White Coliseum. The Aggies charged past the Owls 79-62 to force a three-way tie for second place in the Southwest Conference.

we are on a roll. We have as good a chance as anyone to win the tournament."

Brown said skill wasn't the only reason the Aggies won. "Coach Metcalf had a lucky rab-

bit," Brown said. "I rubbed it a couple of times and that helped."

If the lucky rabbit helps this weekend, the Aggies will have accomplished all their preseason goals. Mission Impossible? Not quite.

'85 SWC Tournery Format

Here are the Southwest Conference Post-Season Basketball Classic pairings for this coming weekend with each team's tournament seeding in parentheses:

Friday, March 8 — Reunion Arena — Dallas

12:08 p.m. — (1) Texas Tech vs. (8) Baylor

2:08 p.m. — (4) Texas A&M vs. (5) Texas Christian

7:08 p.m. — (2) Arkansas vs. (7) Texas

9:08 p.m. — (3) Southern Methodist vs. (6) Houston

Saturday, March 9 — Reunion Arena — Dallas

1:08 p.m. — Tech-Baylor winner vs. A&M-TCU winner

3:08 p.m. — SMU-Houston winner vs. Arkansas-Texas winner

Sunday, March 10 — Reunion Arena — Dallas

1:08 p.m. — SWC Tournery Championship Game

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