

# Sports

## Aggies remain SWC front-runner

### A&M uses 2nd half to rip Rice

By CHAREAN WILLIAMS  
Assistant Sports Editor

Texas A&M offered two versions of its basketball team Saturday afternoon in a Southwest Conference game against Rice.

In the first half, it was the bad news bears that showed up in the maroon and white. But in the second half, the real Aggies appeared and saved the day for 6,466 at G. Rollie White Coliseum.

The Ags (12-7 overall, 6-1 in SWC) remained alone in first-place in the conference by virtue of their 68-55 victory over the last-place Owls (8-10, 1-6).

"Texas A&M has a better team than we do and played better than we did," Rice Coach Tommy Suits said. "That's the reason they won."

But in the first half, it looked as if the Owls were the league leaders. In the first half, Rice pulled down 13 offensive rebounds to A&M's 16 total, resulting in a 32-30 Owl lead at the break.

"That's the third time in a row we've played well in the first half, and poorly in the second half," Suits said. "I did think we played very well in the first half. They played some zone in the first half, which opened the perimeter shot for us."

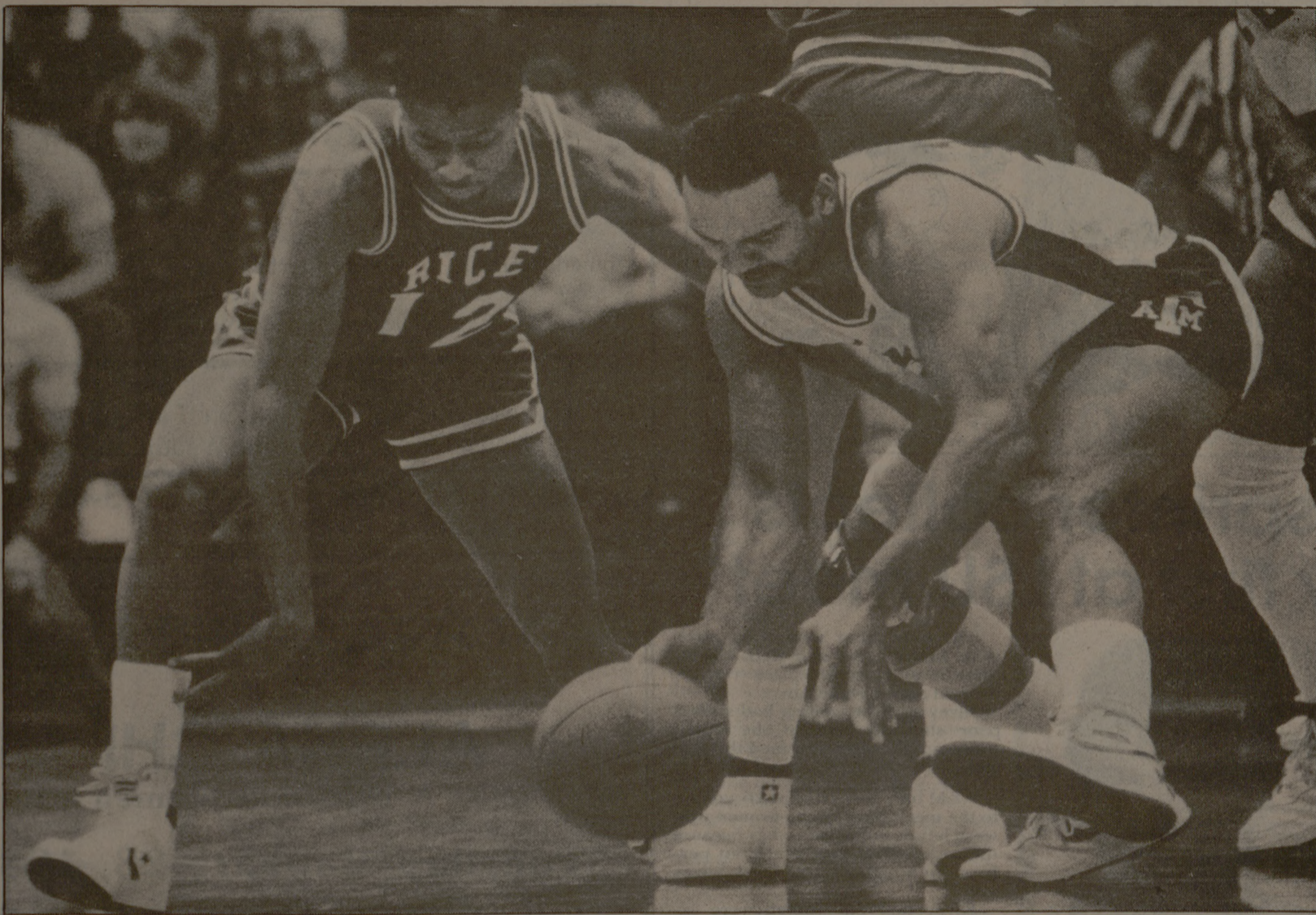
At halftime, the A&M football team was honored for its 1985 SWC Championship. The basketball team must have decided they liked the way SWC Champions sounded.

The Aggies scored the first eight points to start the second half, taking a 38-32 lead they would never relinquish.

With 4:57 left, the Aggies led built their lead to 17.

From there, it was slam, jam and dunk for the Ags.

"It wasn't the prettiest game, I know that," A&M Coach Shelby



A&M guard Gary Lewis (right) and Rice guard Michael Irving scramble for control of the ball in the first half of Saturday's game at

G. Rollie White. By virtue of their 68-55 win over the Owls, the Ags remain alone in first in the Southwest Conference with a 6-1 record.

Photo by DEAN SAITO

Metcalf said. "We played a good second half. That's when we needed to.

"Rice really took the game to us in the first half. I was very disappointed in the way we played in the first half. I hope that was the real A&M team in the second half."

As if Metcalf didn't have enough

to worry about on the court, his starting guards gave him something to worry about off the court.

Friday, *The Dallas Times Herald* published a story stating that A&M's Don Marbury and Todd Holloway had been arrested for possession of marijuana.

"This game really scared me

going in," Metcalf said. "We just weren't excited about it. We've had some distractions."

In that forgettable first half for the Ags, Marbury and Holloway could do little right, which probably did nothing to relieve Metcalf's anxiety.

Marbury, the conference's leading scorer, could muster only four points on two of eight from the field while Holloway hit two of six shots and six total points.

If it hadn't been for forward Winston Crite and center Jimmie Gilbert, the Ags might have been

more than two points down at the half.

And in the second half, while Crite and Gilbert continued to pump in the points and pull down the boards, Marbury and Holloway got hot.

Marbury was the game's leading scorer with 19 points, Gilbert had 17 points (and nine rebounds), Crite 15 (10 rebounds) and Holloway finished with 12.

"In the first half, I think we were just trying too hard," Holloway said. "Once we settled in and started to play our game, that is when we went on our stretch."

"We came out fired up. I didn't feel any pressure from the extra publicity."

Meanwhile, the Owls were hurt by their inability to score in the second half, getting only 23 total points in the last 20 minutes.

"We're just not shooting well right now," Suits said. "We have to put the ball into the hole better than we did today. We shot the exact same (33.3 percent from the field) against Arkansas last Saturday. You can't win shooting like that."

Suits said he was impressed with the play of the Aggies.

"Texas A&M is a very good team," Suits said. "They certainly have a chance to have the best team in the league. If they continue to improve, they could win the conference race."

"If I had to pick one team to win the league right now, I would pick A&M."

But the Aggies will have to play better in the first half of the rest of their games if they have any postseason plans, beginning with Wednesday night's home contest against Arkansas.

"We really need to beat Arkansas," Metcalf said. "They've got some good athletes. I'm not going to worry about any of the other teams until we play them. But I hope they all beat each other up."

If the rest of the conference does that, and the real A&M shows up for the full 60 minutes in the rest of the games, the Aggies can pack their bags and take their show nationwide.



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