

Sports

Ags start 'road' to SWC title

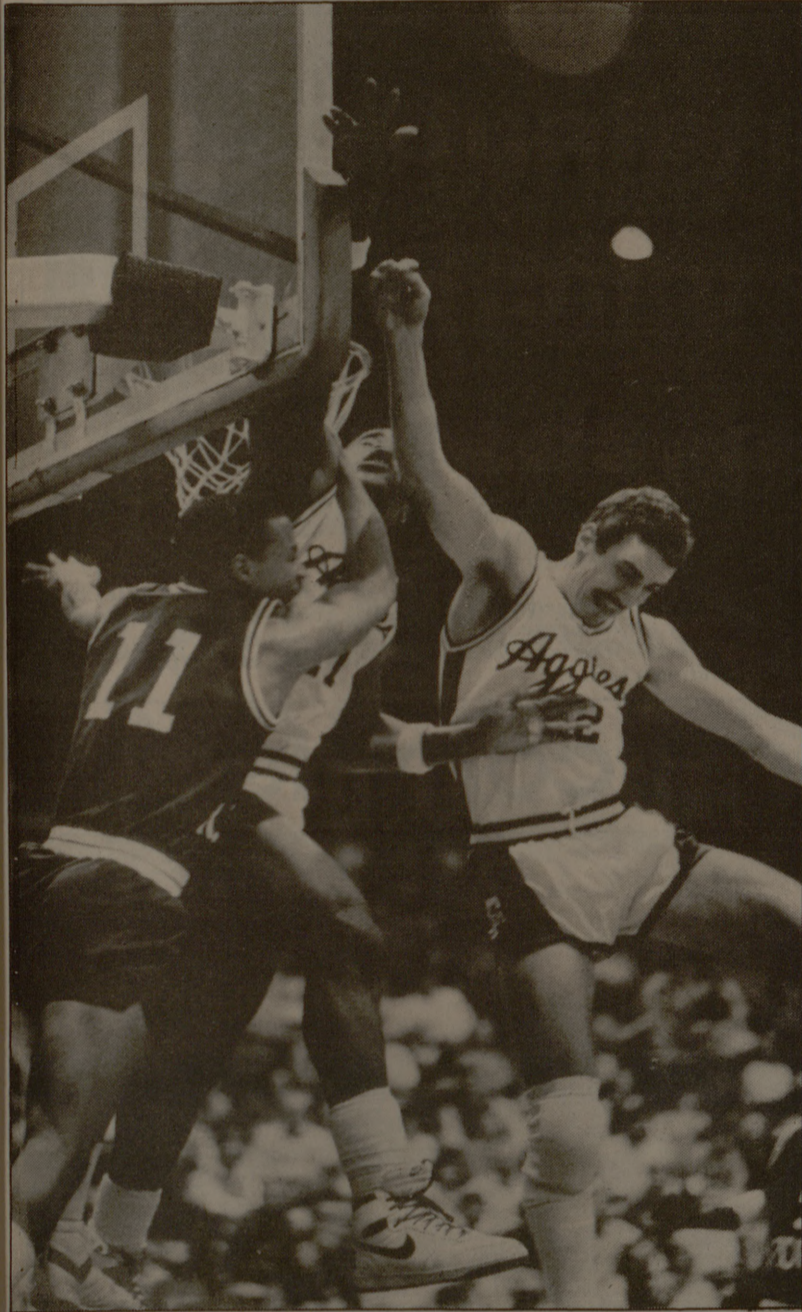


Photo by DEAN SAITO

Texas A&M's Winston Crite and Paul Crawford go up high to block Arkansas' Allie Freeman's shot on a fastbreak Wednesday night.

A&M to begin second half against last-place Baylor

By CHAREAN WILLIAMS
Assistant Sports Editor

Halfway through the tough Southwest Conference basketball season, Texas A&M has already surpassed much of what it wanted to accomplish this year.

• A&M is undefeated at home this season, having won all nine contests played in front of rowdy G. Rollie White Coliseum crowds.

• The Aggies have finally broken the "Arkansas jinx."

Wednesday night, A&M dominated hapless Arkansas 81-67 to end an 11-game losing skid against the Hogs from the Ozarks.

• But most importantly, the Aggies finished the first half of the SWC race in sole possession of first place.

The Ags (13-7, 7-1 in SWC) are a game up on TCU (14-5, 6-2) and Texas (11-8, 6-2), and two games in front of SMU (13-6, 5-3).

"It's no miracle, I know that," A&M forward Winston Crite said.

Are you sure that's not a misprint? A&M, TCU and Texas? What about preseason favorites Arkansas and Houston?

"It feels great (to be alone in first place)," A&M guard Don Marbury said. "Everybody predicted Arkansas to come in first. I think that hurt them. With all that publicity maybe they didn't play as hard as they should have."

"I do know we're a very good team right now. And we're still peaking."

The SWC race is far from over. The trophy is still within at least four teams' reach.

"It's still up for grabs," A&M Coach Shelby Metcalf said. "There's still too far to go and too much can happen."

Way too far to go.

A&M must play five of the last eight games on the road. While they're undefeated at home, the Aggies' record on the road is only 4-5.

"The five games on the road have

to be a factor," Metcalf said. "The place you want to play is at home."

The Ags begin the "road" to the championship Saturday night in Waco against last-place Baylor (9-10, 1-7).

"That is the biggest game of our season so far," Metcalf said. "They just got all of their players back (from NCAA suspensions). They were off (Wednesday night) and had all week to get ready for us. And they took Arkansas into overtime in the hills on Monday."

"That will be one tough ball game. If we play well the game will be decided by five points or less. And that's if we play well. If we don't play well..."

The Bears have received more publicity off the court than on this season.

First-year Baylor Coach Gene Iba dismissed the only two seniors on the squad, Carlos Briggs and Edwin Mitchell, a few weeks ago.

Then the NCAA put Baylor on probation for recruiting violations and suspended several of its players.

On the court, things haven't been much better.

The Bears are tied with Rice in the cellar of the SWC and won't be doing much climbing in the near future although the return of all of their suspended players will help.

Sophomore forward Darryl Middleton is fifth in the SWC in scoring, hitting 17.4 points per game, and is sixth in rebounding, at 7.5 per game.

So the second half of play gets underway Saturday night, and all eyes will be on the Aggies to see if they can hang on.

One thing's for sure, the A&M players have no doubts that the standings will look like when everything's said and done.

"We've never doubted us," A&M center Jimmie Gilbert said. "Nobody else seemed to think we had a team, but we feel like we're a good team. Now we'll just prove it to everyone else."

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Photos will be taken until
February 7 at Yearbook
Associates Studio, above Campus
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Office hours 8:30-12:00, 1:00-4:30

No pictures will be taken at the Pavillion this year

At 21, Roberta Morin was a crew member at Burger King.

Today at 27, she's run three restaurants and trained hundreds of managers.

After graduating from an eastern college, Roberta moved out west — to San Diego where she took a job as a crew member at Burger King. And started moving up the ladder of success two rungs at a time.

"A year later, I was an assistant manager," says Roberta. "And the year after that, I was in charge of 70 employees and a \$1.8 million operation. It was a heavy responsibility, but exhilarating, too. I feel there's so much more to learn. For me, it's only the beginning."

Roberta managed two other restaurants before moving on to her current position as Management Training Specialist. And as she says, it's only the beginning.

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