

Sports

Home basketball games exhibit lack of Aggie spirit

By Homer Jacobs
Sports Editor

Throwing newspapers and ice. Sitting down. Sparse crowds. Frisbees and beach balls.

Where does the Aggie spirit disappear during the spring semester?

Viewpoint

It seems that the Twelfth Man doesn't really turn into a decent sixth man during basketball season.

I realize football is king in Texas and the Twelfth Man originated from E. King Gill; but Aggie spirit is supposed to carry throughout the whole year, not just the fall term.

Nowadays, going to an Aggie men's basketball game is just about comparable to attending a game in Austin or Waco — the only difference being the Aggie Band and five yell leaders.

Let's start with the newspaper gag.

Besides the fact that A&M Assistant Athletic Director John David Crow earlier announced that throwing newspapers in G. Rollie White Coliseum is against University and NCAA rules, Aggie

fans continue to shower the stands and court with papers.

What's so great about this pre-game ceremony, anyway? Heck, Arkansas fans even do it. Maybe Feb. 8 when the Aggies take on TCU at home, we can all wear those lovely Hog hats to the game.

Okay, newspapers have been successfully tossed on the court, so let's go to this sitting-down business.

So E. King didn't play basketball. Aggies should be able to stand at basketball games, anyway.

It's only two hours, compared to over three for football games. And anything can be better than sitting hunched over on a solid wood bench for a two-hour game.

It's halftime now, and you guessed it — the A&M crowd's halftime show featuring frisbees and beach balls. It's the can-you-peg-a-tuba-player time. Hold on to your Hog hats.

In regard to the 5,000 or so fans that usually attend an Aggie basketball game, I can only wonder why the turnout is so low.

Granted Aggies are born and bred on football, but Aggie spirit should not be limited to Kyle Field.

The Aggie basketball team may not be nearly as good as a North

Carolina or an Indiana, but the fan support should be, if Aggie spirit is true in meaning.

Supposedly it takes a winner to bring in the fans. And with the Aggies currently at 4-4 in the Southwest Conference, I can see how that might be a problem.

But even last year when the Aggies were on pace to a SWC championship, the stands of G. Rollie were rarely completely filled. Maybe plans for the new A&M special events center should be put on hold.

And probably the most serious problem at basketball games this year is fans throwing ice on the court. A bad call by a referee is discouraging to a home crowd, but to throw ice on the court is foolish.

Obviously, a player can be injured, and secondly, a technical on the crowd can be assessed. The newspaper thing may not be enforced very well, but ice-throwing can be.

Aggies pride themselves on being different from everyone else. And Aggie spirit is the key to that difference.

After all, I can't stand those Hog hats.

TCU off to best start in the school's history

FORT WORTH (AP) — Texas Christian's basketball program has never produced such heavenly happenings in the Horned Frogs' 62-year Southwest Conference history.

TCU has posted a perfect 8-0 mark at the halfway point of the league season and a 17-3 overall record, its fastest start ever. The Frogs are also ranked No. 16 in the Associated Press poll, again their highest mark.

With Wednesday night's 64-38 whipping of Rice, TCU established three other school records, chalking up 13 straight victories (third-best in the nation) and 21 consecutive home victories and allowing only nine points in the first half.

TCU Coach Jim Killingsworth is concerned about all the hoopla surrounding his Frogs, who have a two-game lead over Baylor in the SWC.

"We can't be overwhelmed, because it isn't over yet," Killingsworth said. "If we think we have it made now, we don't have very big IQs."

TCU shot to a 30-9 halftime lead against Rice, and by early in the second half Killingsworth already was thinking about Arkansas, which travels to Fort Worth Saturday night.

"I really couldn't enjoy it thinking about those Razorbacks coming in here," Killingsworth said. "I know they'll be all pumped up. I hope we're ready."

The Frogs were definitely ready for Rice.

"It's the easiest game we've had," Killingsworth said. "Usually we have to fight for our lives against those guys. We got lucky and played really well, and Rice couldn't buy a bucket."

Rice shot only 28 percent from the field for the game and 19 percent in the first half.

Larry Richard and Carven Holcombe each scored 17 points for the winners.

TCU outrebounded the Owls 49-19, with Richard hauling in 13.

"We're one big happy family right now," Richard said. "We're happy. Our fans are happy. It's a good feeling."

"Our defense just stopped Rice cold," guard Jamie Dixon said. "It feels great to win games like this. Killer (Killingsworth) was worried we wouldn't be up for this game. We knew they had upset Texas A&M. We were ready, and we'll be ready for Arkansas Saturday."

Lucas' layup leads Bucks over Rockets

HOUSTON (AP) — Milwaukee's Jack Sikma scored 20 of his season-high 22 points in the second half and John Lucas hit a crucial layup with 25 seconds left to lead the Bucks to a 99-93 NBA victory over Houston Thursday night.

Milwaukee blew a 10-point fourth-quarter lead, allowing the Rockets to tie the score at 93-93 with 1:09 to go on a basket by Akem Olajuwon, who scored 29 points.

But Sikma added his 11th and 12th points of the quarter to give the Bucks the lead for good. Lucas followed with a steal against his former teammates and turned it into a layup for a 97-93 lead.

Lucas added a pair of free throws with 13 seconds to go and finished with 17 points. Terry Cummings hit 20 first-half points for Milwaukee and finished with 25.

Trailing 81-71 early in the fourth quarter, the Rockets pulled back into the game in the closing minutes and tied it at 91-91 with 2:34 to play on Cedric Maxwell's jumper.

Sikma's basket made it 93-91 and Olajuwon tied it at 93-93.

Lady Aggies to host No. 7 La. Tech

By Doug Hall
Sports Writer

Fresh off their 84-74 win over Baylor Tuesday night, their first victory in the last six games, Texas A&M's Lady Aggies might prefer to be playing a team other than seventh-ranked Louisiana Tech tonight at 7:30 in G. Rollie White Coliseum.

The Lady Techsters, who are currently making a tour of the Southwest, raised their season record to 14-2 Wednesday by easily defeating Texas Tech 71-43 in Lubbock. Earlier this season, Louisiana Tech defeated SMU 95-54 and UH 85-50.

The Lady Aggies raised their sea-

son record to 7-10 with Tuesday's win, but are only 3-5 in the SWC, trailing 8-0 Texas, 6-2 Houston, Arkansas and Rice which both have 5-3 records and 4-4 Texas Tech.

Texas A&M Head Coach Lynn Hickey, who said the Baylor game was a "must-win" if the Aggies were to stay in the race for the six-team SWC tourney in March, was pleased with her team's performance on Tuesday.

Leading the way for the Aggies was senior forward Paula Crutcher who poured in 20 points.

Defeating Louisiana Tech, how-

ever, will require a heroic effort from the whole team, not just Crutcher.

The Lady Techsters are led by 6-3 center Tori Harrison who is averaging 18.4 points and 7.9 rebounds a game. In last year's meeting between the two teams (Tech leads the series 5-0), Harrison scored 17 points in the first half — which equaled the entire Aggie first-half effort.

Aggie notes. . . A&M starting guard Beth Young, who was carried off the floor in the second half of the Baylor game, is expected to be out two to three weeks with sprained ligaments in her left knee.

FREMANTLE, Australia (AP) — Stars & Stripes sets sail Saturday on the final leg of a mission never asked of a U.S. boat: bring back the America's Cup.

The San Diego yacht, skippered by Dennis Conner, will meet Kookaburra III, defender of the trophy the Australians brought home in 1983.

The forecast for the opening race calls for winds out of the southwest at 17 to 19 knots, in the moderate to heavy range.

As the best-of-seven series progresses, the winds are expected to moderate, as they usually do in February.

Stars & Stripes, known as a heavy-weather boat, could be just as dangerous in those lighter winds.

The U.S. challenger's planners thoroughly researched weather patterns in this Indian Ocean port and how they change from October through February, the period for the Cup competition.

"We spent lots of time on statistical analysis of about 15 years of Fremantle weather," Stars & Stripes design coordinator John Marshall said. "You have to have a good handle on conditions you race in."

Modification work to adapt the boat to conditions specific to a particular time period has gone on during the Cup races, which began Oct. 5.

The boat was excellent in strong winds through the three round-robin series. In the challenger semifinals in late December and early Jan-

uary, Stars & Stripes swept USA 4-0 in primarily moderate conditions.

In the challenger finals, Stars & Stripes eliminated New Zealand 4-1. All the races took place in strong breezes.

In Thursday's practice, with light winds, Conner's crew sailed on Stars & Stripes '85, a heavy-weather yacht, while Stars & Stripes '87, which will meet Kookaburra III, stayed on land for some finishing touches.

Kookaburra III and Kookaburra II worked on racing tactics against each other.

"We don't know as much about them as we'd like to," Conner said.

John Bertrand said Stars & Stripes may have a technical edge in terms of straight-line speed.

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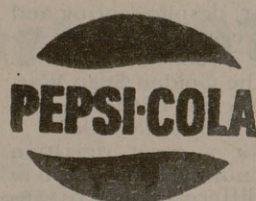
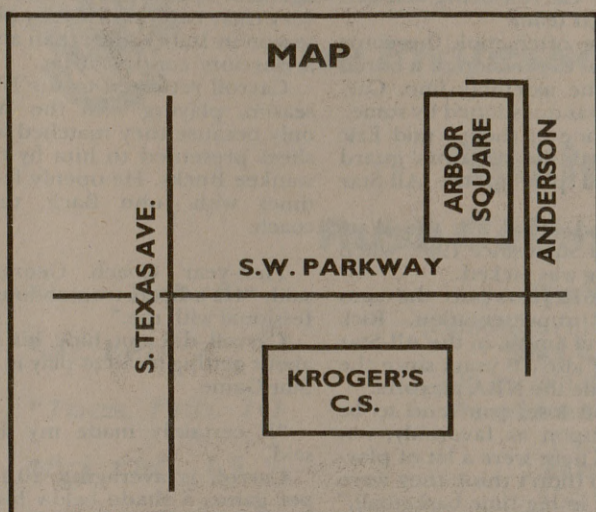
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