

# Sports

## McDonald's late jump shot lifts Aggies to narrow win

By Anthony Wilson  
Sports Writer

Guard Darryl McDonald hit a double pump 10-foot jump shot with 10 seconds left in the game to lift the Texas A&M men's basketball team to a 63-61 win over the Northwestern State University Demons Monday night at G. Rollie White Coliseum.

"On the shot, I was trying to get the foul," McDonald said. "I jumped into him, but he wouldn't foul me so I just put it up and made it. Coach probably would have rather me take the shot so I took it. I'd rather he scream at me than at anyone else."

Surprisingly, Head Coach Shelby Metcalf didn't have the team run a specific play to get the ball in his star player's hands.

"There wasn't any doubt in my mind and there wasn't any doubt in Darryl McDonald's mind who was going to take the last shot," Metcalf said. "But I didn't put that hammer on him. That goes with the territory (of being a senior)."

McDonald finished the game with 12 points. Forward Donald Thompson led the team with 22 points, on 9-of-11 shooting, and nine rebounds. Keron Graves chipped in 11 points.

The Aggies controlled the game for most of the first half. A&M took the lead for the final 11:20 of the first half when sixth-man Freddie Ricks took a pass from Graves on the left side and hit a three-point shot to put the Aggies up 13-12.

The Aggies pulled ahead by seven when Ricks found Paul Crawford and Thompson open under the basket for layups on consecutive trips down the floor. The Demons came roaring back to within one point when Ricks canned his second three-pointer to put A&M up 27-23 with 3:24 remaining in the first half.

A&M took a 31-26 lead to the locker room at the half.

A&M maintained its lead in the second half, at one point leading by 10, until NSU's Pernel Smith hit a short jumper to put the Demons on top 54-53.

The two teams were tied at 55, 57 and 59 before Ricks was fouled and hit both of his two free throws with 1:19 remaining in the game.

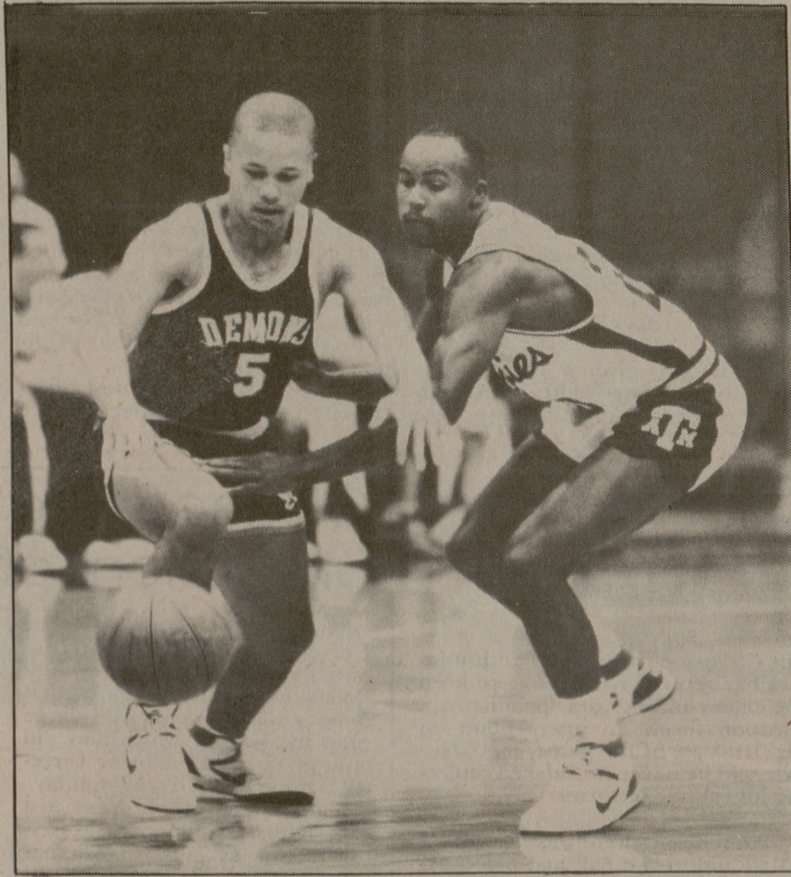


Photo by Robert W. Rizzo

A&M's Keron Graves (right) attempts to steal the ball away from Northwestern State's Byron Smith during the Aggies' narrow 63-61 victory over the Demons here Monday night.

Roman Banks responded with a short baseline jumper for NSU before McDonald hit his game-winning shot.

Ricks, who finished with seven assists, said that although no one said it, the team planned on letting McDonald take the last shot.

"Yes sir, that's the Playground King — number one man on the team," Ricks said. "We'll go to Darryl any time we can. He's the man. Myself, I would rather Darryl shoot the ball. He's the senior and got more experience."

"I'm very excited about this young

man here," Ricks joked as he patted McDonald, who sat next to him, on the head.

A&M, which returned home after a five-game, eight day road trip, was visibly tired.

"I probably scheduled us out of this one," Metcalf said. "We don't have enough players to play this many days in a row. I don't want to take anything away from Northwestern — they're good — but we played better in San Marcos (in the Jowers Jamboree tournament)."

A&M improved its record to 4-2 while NSU dropped to 3-2.

## Wood takes over from Wagner as Astros' new general manager

DALLAS (AP) — The Houston Astros promoted Bill Wood to general manager Monday, ending a two-month scramble among 15 candidates.

Wood, the Astros' assistant GM since July, 1985, had served as interim GM after Dick Wagner resigned Oct. 14.

The Astros wanted to have the position filled by the winter meetings and chairman of the board John McMullen made the announcement Monday.

"I thought it was a fairly reasonable time," McMullen said. "I interviewed 15 people. I did it at my leisure."

Wood said he was patient during the wait, even when Lee

Thomas, who works in the St. Louis Cardinals' minor-league department, was rumored to be the front-runner.

"It was not frustrating," Wood said. "I had things to do as an interim general manager."

Wood, 46, has worked for the Astros for 11 years. He spent the first nine with the minor-league system.

"This is a thing a baseball man dreams about," Wood said. "I know many people say the winter meetings are a boring time, but you'll excuse me if I say this is exciting."

Wood will try to bring some of that excitement to the Astros, who sagged last season after win-

ning the National League West in 1986. The Astros, seemingly on their way up, slumped to 76-86 and third place last season.

Wood said the gap between Wagner leaving and Monday's hiring "did not slow us down."

"There were still teams that wanted to talk to us," Wood said. "We'll try to get something started at the meetings."

The Astros are interested in Atlanta's Rafael Ramirez as a platoon shortstop. Houston has made outfielder Kevin Bass available in trade talks.

Wood broke into baseball in 1969 with the Los Angeles organization as assistant general manager at Class AAA Albuquerque.

## Reds' Rose announces retirement as winter meetings get underway

DALLAS (AP) — Pete Rose confirmed his retirement as a player and Bob Horner prepared to return to the Atlanta Braves Monday, highlighting a busy day at baseball's winter meetings.

"I will not bat again," said Rose, the all-time hit champion and manager of the Cincinnati Reds. "I'm 46 years old and if I'm not retired, I should be."

Rose's announcement punctuated an active day that began with Commissioner Peter Ueberroth's "State of Game" speech and ended with a midnight deadline for teams to offer salary arbitration to their free agents or lose them until May 1.

Rose did not play at all last season. Most thought he was finished, although many never wanted to hear that "Charlie Hustle" was hanging them up.

"I thought I was already retired," Rose said. "I never saw a reason to make an announcement."

On the positive side for those who thrilled to watching Rose, he's now one year closer to the Hall of Fame.

Horner may get a fresh chance with American baseball. He met with Atlanta and officials seemed confident of luring him back from Japan. Horner would prefer to play in the majors but will have to pay for it — the Braves might give him \$1 million for one year, compared to a Japanese standing offer of more than double that amount.

Horner lives about 10 miles from the meeting site and came with his agent, Bucky Woy, to talk with the Braves. San Diego and Texas also want to speak to Horner.

There's still plenty of time to get Carney Lansford and Rafael Ramirez, both mentioned in trade talk. Toronto tried to zero in on Lansford to solve a third-base problem, while Houston and the New York Yankees pursued Ramirez.

Philadelphia bolstered itself by signing free agent Bob Dernier. He batted .317 with eight home runs, both career highs, in a reserve role last season in the Chicago Cubs outfield.

Phillies Manager Lee Elia said

Dernier would fill a variety of roles, including platooning in center field, pinch hitting and pinch running.

"He gives us a lot of flexibility," Elia said.

Dernier joined Brett Butler, Chili Davis and Ron Hassey as free agents who have switched teams recently. This is the first free-agent period since an arbitrator ruled owners conspired to restrict the market after the 1985 season.

Other teams weren't sure what to do with their own free agents. In particular, Detroit had not offered salary arbitration to Frank Tanana by mid-afternoon. If the Tigers did not make that offer by midnight, they could not re-sign the 34-year-old pitcher, who went 15-10, until May.

Ueberroth started the day with a speech in which he said "things got better in 1987."

The commissioner said confidential drug tests of major and minor league players showed only 3 percent positive, compared to 5 percent in 1986 and 10 percent in 1985.

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