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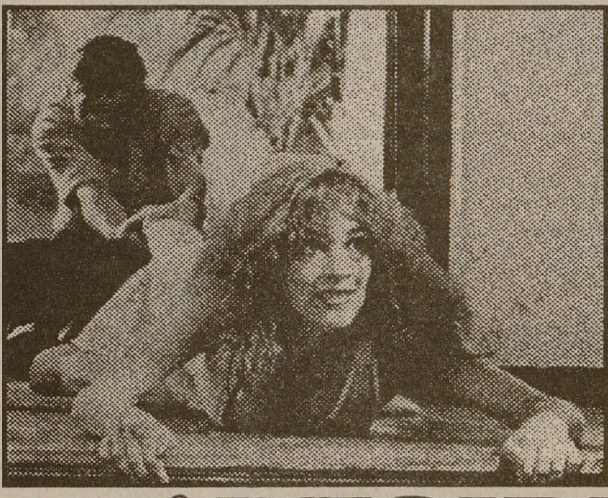
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Ags struggle over break

Metcalf's troops slump during holidays

By Jerry Bolz
Assistant Sports Editor

The Texas A&M men's basketball team used their Christmas break to take an unwanted rest from their winning ways, losing six of eight games.

The Aggies left final exams with excellent grades, posting a 6-1 mark. But trips to Beaumont, Nevada, Oklahoma and Dallas, as well as some sloppy play at home left A&M with only an 8-7 record.

The Aggies first game over the break was against Lamar December 19. The Cardinals had fallen to A&M earlier in the season at G. Rollie White Coliseum but the game in Beaumont had a different outcome.

Senior forward Donald Thompson, the Aggies' leading scorer, played an excellent game in scoring 26 points. As a team A&M hit only 12 of 34 field goal attempts in the second half to give Lamar a 74-67 win.

Things started looking up for the Aggies when they traveled westward to the Runnin' Rebel Round-up at Las Vegas, Nevada.

A&M drew Central Michigan (5-3) for their first round game Dec. 21 and pounced on the Chippewas 73-57.

The Aggies showed a lot of balance with four scorers in double figures headed by Freddie Ricks with 14. The overall shooting percentage was a high .569 compared to Central Michigan's .318.

Unfortunately for A&M, the level of competition hit a steep incline while their play headed downhill — right into the losing streak.

High-scoring host Nevada-Las Vegas waylaid the Aggies 110-67 before a crowd of 17,437. Thompson was back on top of the scoring for A&M with 25. Lynn Suber also had a good effort with 17. Tony Milton led both sides with nine assists.

The loss dropped the Aggies to 7-3 and things weren't looking up as they traveled to Oklahoma City for the All-College Tournament Dec. 29-30.

For the first round the Aggies faced an Oklahoma team that was scoring well over 100 points a game. A&M didn't prove to be much competition as the Sooners ripped the Aggies 128-80.

Oklahoma led 66-25 at halftime but only outscored A&M by eight points after intermission. Suber had another good effort for the Ags with 17 points.

The Aggies had another slow start the next night, trailing Oklahoma State 47-29 at the half. Although they came back in the second half with 50 points, the effort wasn't enough and they dropped their third straight game, 94-79.

Thompson was back on top A&M with a career-high 29 points. Another bright spot for the Ags was at the free-throw line, where they hit all 15 shots.

Turnovers cancelled the good points of the Aggies game in three tournament losses. They committed 33 against UNLV, 29 with Sooners and gave the ball away OSU 21 times.

What should have been a treat for the Aggies turned into a disaster when Texas Christian downed the 58-51 at G. Rollie White Coliseum on Jan. 4. A&M shot a disappointing 38.8 percent from the field and 6 percent from the line. Thompson and Suber again led the scoring with 20 and 19, respectively.

The Aggies headed to Dallas five days later to face the Southern Methodist Mustangs.

Another slow first half knocked the Ags out of the game, digging themselves a hole 46-34 at halftime. Although a more controlled Ag team, with only six turnovers, scored SMU in the second half, it lost 77-69.

Guard Tony Milton came on with 12 points in the second stanza to lead A&M with 16 points. Suber led the team with four rebounds and six assists.

The Aggies finally turned the tide around Saturday beating Baylor 53-

from him today," Knicks coach Pitino said. "He was great against their pressure and really made halfcourt offense go."

New York's full-court pressure forced 17 first-half turnovers, but the Knicks converted into 14 points. "It was hard to watch," Sp. coach Larry Brown said. "We didn't handle their press well."

"They were much more aggressive with it than they were when they played in San Antonio."

The Knicks weren't happy about letting their big lead slip away.

"I think we got a little bit careless," Oakley said. "We have to stick to basics and play the whole 48 minutes. We have to learn the game not over at halftime."

"We have to learn to keep it especially at home, because we so well here we tend to relax."

The Knicks now face a road game road trip.

They are 8-10 on the road season and have lost six of their eight away from home.

Jackson, streaking Knicks

pressure struggling Spurs

NEW YORK (AP) — Mark Jackson had 24 points, 10 rebounds and 12 assists for his third career triple-double as the New York Knicks won their 14th straight home game with a 116-106 victory over the San Antonio Spurs on Monday.

It was only the third time in the Knicks' 43-year history that they have won as many as 14 straight at home.

The Knicks have won five in a row overall and have a 17-1 mark at home this season.

The Spurs have lost five straight and 10 of their last 11 road games.

Before a sellout crowd of 19,591, the Knicks led by as many as 23 points in the second half, but the Spurs reduced it to 89-78 after three quarters and to 103-97 with 4:47 left in the game.

The Knicks then ran off six consecutive points to take a 109-97 lead with 3:04 left and the Spurs never drew closer than eight the rest of the game.

Patrick Ewing added 21 points for the Knicks and Charles Oakley and

Gerald Wilkins each had 18.

Willie Anderson led the Spurs with 20 points despite playing with foul trouble and Greg Anderson had 19.

Jackson's previous triple-doubles came in his rookie season last year, on April 15 against Washington and Jan. 18 against Atlanta.

New York grabbed a 36-27 first-quarter lead, as Jackson had eight assists and three rebounds.

The Knicks then outscored the Spurs 27-15 in the second period to take a 63-42 lead at halftime.

Oakley's layup to open the third quarter gave the Knicks a 65-42 lead, their largest lead of the game.

Johnny Newman's two foul shots at the 7:19 mark of the first quarter broke an 11-11 tie and New York held the lead the rest of the way.

Jackson has led the Knicks in scoring three of the last four games, averaging 19.5 during that span.

He was only 7-for-16 from the field, but made 2-for-3 from 3-point range.

"We really needed a big game.

from him today," Knicks coach Pitino said. "He was great against their pressure and really made halfcourt offense go."

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Super sub leads Lakers by Rockets

Rice hires grid coach

INGLEWOOD, Calif. (AP) — Mychal Thompson came off the bench to score 13 points without missing a shot in the first half as the Los Angeles Lakers remained the only NBA team with a perfect home record this season by beating the Houston Rockets 124-113 on Monday.

The two-time defending champion Lakers are 15-0 at the Forum this season and have won 22 straight regular-season home games dating back to last season.

Los Angeles is 10-12 on the road and has played more road games than any NBA team this season. The Lakers' 25-12 overall record is the best in the Western Conference.

The Lakers went ahead for good by outscoring the Rockets 17-2 over a 4:07 span of the first quarter and weren't threatened seriously after holding a 56-44 halftime lead.

The Lakers put the game away by making 15 of their 17 field goals in the third quarter and held a 95-75 lead entering the final period.

The Rockets got as close as 109-99 with just under four minutes left, but that was as close as they could get.

James Worthy led the Lakers with 26 points. Byron Scott added 24, 12

in the third period, and Thompson finished with 21.

Magic Johnson had his eighth triple-double of the season with 17 points, 13 rebounds and 18 assists.

Mike Woodson led the Rockets with 24 points and 10 assists. Purvis Short and Otis Thorpe had 23 and 20 points, respectively, for the Rockets, and Akeem Olajuwon had 19 points and 10 rebounds for Houston.

The Rockets took a 12-4 lead in the opening three minutes, but the Lakers then scored 13 straight points to make it 17-12 after 6:23 of play.

The Lakers went on to make it a 17-2 spurt, giving them a 21-14 lead. The Rockets narrowed the deficit to 27-24 at the end of the first quarter, but Los Angeles slowly pulled away in the second period to earn its 12-point halftime lead.

Thompson, the NBA leader in field goal percentage, made all six of his shots from the field and his only free throw in the opening half.

The Lakers made 22 of their 37 field goal attempts in the first half and were 37 of 54 after three quarters.

Rice hires grid coach

HOUSTON (AP) — Fred G. Smith, defensive coordinator at Kansas for the past five seasons, formally become Rice University's third head coach in four years on Sunday.

Goldsmith apparently accepted the job Sunday but a formal announcement won't come until later.

"Why we picked him over particular individuals I don't know," said J. Evans Attwell, chairman of the coaching search committee.

"Obviously, we believe he's a class individual in every respect is a heck of a coach," Attwell said. "The people he recruits were students first and athletes second."

Goldsmith will replace J. Berndt, who resigned last month to become head coach at Temple.

Associate athletic director Bill May is expected to be named athletic director.

"He knows the situation the Attwell said. "He has the respect of the people in the athletic department. So we're very pleased that."

Goldsmith, 44, was head coach at Slippery Rock in 1981, posting a 1 record.

Goldsmith has been an assistant under Coach Ken Hatfield for past nine years at Air Force and Kansas.

The Owls finished 0-11 in Berndt last season and open season with an 18-game losing streak, the longest in the nation among major colleges.

Stephen F. Austin athletic director Jim Hess and North Texas coach Corky Nelson were top contenders behind Goldsmith.

"I didn't feel I was a very serious candidate," Hess said. "There were too many things they didn't know about me and too many things I didn't know about them."

Hess said he and Nelson had discussed the job.

"Corky and I talked about Nashville and we both had the opinion, that neither of us was seriously involved."

"I appreciated the interest showed in me and I wish Fred because he's an awfully good son."

Notre Dame receivers coach Cordelli also was a candidate for job.

Spring sports passes on sale at ticket office

Students who purchased a football only coupon book in the fall of 1988 will be able to purchase the all sports general admission cards for \$15.

Students will gain access to men's basketball, and baseball games as well as women's athletics by purchasing the cards.

With a card, a currently enrolled A&M student with a 1988-89 I.D. will be admitted to events on a general admission, first-come, first-served basis to all events.

Incoming students and students who did not get a card in the fall will be charged \$15 for each card.

Students must get a card individually for men's basketball, baseball and women's athletics.

Season passes may be purchased in the Athletic Business Office located in Room 113 in G. Rollie White Coliseum during regular business hours.

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