

Hard-luck Aggies meet Horns tonight

By Tom Kehoe

SPORTS WRITER

Shelby Metcalf and his Texas Aggies will try to end a four-game losing streak tonight when they take on

Texas A&M at Texas

- **What:** The Texas A&M Aggies (8-11; 1-6 in the SWC) visit the Texas Longhorns (15-4; 6-1 in Southwest Conference action).
- **When:** Tipoff is at 7:35 p.m.
- **Where:** Frank Erwin Center in Austin.
- **Radio/TV:** The game can be heard on KTAM-AM 1240 with Chuck Cooperstein handling the play-by-play and Duke Keith on color commentary.

the University of Texas at 7:35 p.m. in the Frank Erwin Special Events Center in Austin.

The Longhorns will be a formidable opponent, coming off a 96-65 win over SMU. The win kept Texas in a tie with TCU and Arkansas for the conference lead.

A&M stands at 8-11 overall and 1-6 in Southwest Conference play while Texas is 6-1 in the conference and 15-4 overall under new coach Tom Penders.

This game will be the first meeting between Penders and Metcalf. Metcalf has used many lineups up to this point in the season trying to find the combination that will put the Aggies in the win column.

He said tonight's starting lineup depends on who works best in practice this week.

The Aggies continue to struggle in SWC play despite cutting their turnover average from 19.3 per game (prior to the SWC slate) to 11.7 in SWC games. Another curious statistic shows A&M having more points from the field than four of their SWC opponents and more rebounds against four of their SWC antagonists.

A disparity at the free throw line and lapses at critical times have been major factors in the losses.

On a brighter note, junior guard David has apparently snapped out of a slump in which he averaged only 2.2 points per outing after averaging 12.8 over the season's first 10 games.

In the last three games, Williams has averaged 10.3 points with a high of 12 points against Texas Tech last weekend.

Texas upsets Vols

Lady Horns, Arkansas win

ASSOCIATED PRESS
Texas 69, Tennessee 67

Clarissa Davis, who wasn't even supposed to play, scored 38 points, 28 in the second half, to lead No. 11 Texas to a 69-67 victory over No. 2 Tennessee Tuesday in an inter-sectional game at Austin.

The loss dropped the Vols to 18-2 on the season. Texas improved to 13-4.

Texas officials had reported on Monday that Davis would miss the Tennessee game with a sprained ankle. But she suited up and led all scorers.

A Tennessee turnover at 0:25, with Texas in a 68-65 lead, spoiled the Vols' comeback hopes.

Tennessee dominated the first half.

Frost hit two more baskets, including a rebound jumper at the buzzer, to help pull the Vols to a 33-25 lead at the half.

The Lady Longhorns took their first lead, 43-41, with 12:08 remaining on Davis' jumper. Davis then scored Texas' next 18 points.

Gordon and Sheila Frost led the Vols with 18 points each.

The Vols dominated the backboards, pulling down 54 rebounds to Texas' 36, but faltered at the free-throw line, where they hit just 3-of-13.

Arkansas 84, Houston 82

The Arkansas Lady Razorbacks scored the final 10 points, including Juliet Jackson's 10-foot fall-away jump shot at 0:02, to defeat the Houston Lady Cougars 84-82 in a Southwest Conference basketball game Tuesday night in Houston.

Arkansas improved to 12-5 for the season and 6-2 in league play. Houston fell to 10-8 and 4-4.

Houston led throughout the contest and led by 12 points with 10:37 to play. But the Lady Razorbacks outscored the Lady Cougars 27-13 the rest of the way. In overcoming an 82-74 deficit, Arkansas shut out Houston from the field over the final 4:01.

Arlene Brown led Houston with 19 points, and Sallie Roult added 18 points and 14 rebounds. Arkansas was led by Shelly Wallace who scored 24 points and grabbed 14 rebounds.

Magic leads Lakers past Houston

HOUSTON (AP) — Magic Johnson recorded his NBA-leading 11th triple-double and Michael Cooper sparked a third-quarter scoring run Tuesday night to lead the Los Angeles Lakers to a 125-114 win over the Houston Rockets.

Johnson had 17 points, 11 rebounds and 10 assists for his fourth triple-double in his past eight games.

A.C. Green led the Lakers with 24 points, followed by James Worthy with 23 and Cooper with 16. The win is the Lakers' ninth in their last 10 games.

Sleepy Floyd led Houston with 37 points, a season high for him. Akeem Olajuwon followed with 25 points and 11 rebounds.

Los Angeles outscored Houston 24-6 to open the third quarter, with Cooper scoring eight of his 11 third-quarter points, as the Lakers opened an 87-67 lead with 5:34 left in the period.

A 3-point shot by Cooper and a basket by Kareem Abdul-Jabbar gave the Lakers a 92-71 lead before Houston narrowed its deficit 98-84 going into the fourth quarter.

The Lakers led by as much as 24 points, and Houston was never closer than 11 in the fourth quarter.

NFL free agency redesigned

NEW YORK (AP) — Many will be household names. Some may even be legends. On Wednesday, many of the NFL's biggest stars could become free agents when the league puts into effect its new contract plan.

A radical departure from the old free agency system, it is being imposed unilaterally without a union contract and will unconditionally free more than 600 players. Each team will be allowed to protect just 37 of the average of 59 on its roster.

"You'll see Super Bowl players, Pro Bowl players, very big names," said Tex Schramm, president of the Dallas Cowboys and a member of the owners' Management Council.

"But there will be reasons for them — they'll be bad medical risks, they'll be older. A lot of them will be getting good salaries, own homes in the area, things like that. They won't want to move."

Under the old plan, players offered a contract by another team could move only after their team waived its right of first refusal. The

new team would also have to compensate the old one with draft choices.

Only two players in 10 years moved under that system, most recently, linebacker Wilber Marshall of Chicago, who signed a \$6 million, five-year contract last year with Washington. He joined the Redskins after the Bears declined to match the offer and Chicago got two first-round draft picks in return.

Parts of that system remain in effect — protected players whose contracts have expired still would be subject to first refusal, and teams signing them would have to part with draft choices. The rest, under contract or not, will be free until April 1 to go elsewhere without compensation.

Although few teams have identified unprotected players, the consensus is that most will protect younger players with potential while leaving older, more established players unprotected. The older ones have less incentive to move: high sal-

aries, or injury problems that make them unattractive to prospective bidders.

The Chicago Bears, for example, have already said they will not protect three starters from their 1986 Super Bowl champions, including 31-year-old linebacker Otis Wilson and cornerback Mike Richardson, 28. Wilson, coming off reconstructive knee surgery, vowed to return to haunt the Bears.

The New York Giants will probably leave unprotected 29-year-old nose tackle Jim Burt, who has a history of back problems, and starting guard Billy Ard, also 29.

Others likely to be set free include quarterback Danny White and defensive tackle Randy White of Dallas; running back Tony Dorsett, defensive end Rulon Jones and cornerback Mark Haynes of Denver.

running back Otis Anderson of the Giants; defensive end Bruce Clark and nose tackle Tony Elliott of New Orleans and center Dwight Stephenson of the Miami Dolphins.

Parity has turned the NBA upside down

The NBA All-Star game is going to be played Feb. 11 in Houston and with it brings the halfway point in the 1988-89 NBA season.

This is the time when teams that are serious about contending for the championship in June take stock and get ready for the home stretch.

This year the teams that are preparing for the title run just might surprise you.

Usually you could count on the Boston Celtics or the Los Angeles Lakers to be leading the way with the other right on the leader's tail. Boston and Los Angeles have won all but one title in the eighties. This year may be different. Parity has struck the NBA and done so with a vengeance.

Boston (a team everyone loves to hate) has fallen on hard times. How hard? Boston is playing below .500 and has lost for most of the season. Boston (20-21) has lost seven games at the Garden so far this year.

Time was when Boston at home meant a win, guaranteed. Things are so bad at home that even the Indiana Pacers (11-30) beat the Celtics at home. For Boston's sake and its fans, Larry Bird can't get better fast enough.

With Boston in the dumps, Los Angeles should be running away with the league and on their way to their third straight NBA title, right? Wrong.

The Lakers are not in as bad a shape as the Celtics but, they do have problems. At 29-13 the Lakers own the second best record in the league.



Stan Golaboff
Sports Writer

However, the Lakers, who own the best home record in the league, can't seem to win on the road. Last year the Lakers were 15-7 on the road at this point. This year they are 11-12. Their last road victory before Sunday's thrashing of Dallas was on Dec. 13. Despite this fact they are still near the top.

So who is on top at the halfway point? Is it Detroit? The Pistons did knock the Celtics out of the playoffs last year. They took the Lakers to seven games in the Finals. They have everyone back from that team and were picked by many to win it all.

The Pistons aren't even on top of their own division. Detroit is four games out of first, although they do own the third-best record in basketball at 27-13.

"So," you say. "If the Lakers have the second-best record and the Pistons the third and Detroit isn't in first, then the best team in basketball must be in the Central division."

You're right. A drum roll if you please. The top team is the Cleveland Cavaliers. The Cavaliers?

The Cavs (31-9) have compiled the best record in an odd way. Normally the team with the best record has the best home record. The Cavs are 18-2 at home, good for fourth in the league.

However, they do have the league's best road record at 13-7. In fact they are just one of three teams in the NBA that sport a winning record on the road. The other two are the Pistons at 10-9 and the Milwaukee Bucks at 11-9, both Central Division teams.

What makes the Cavs record even more impressive is that they are successful on the road at a time when 65 percent of the home teams are winning, which is up from 55 percent for last year.

The Cavs have also compiled this record in the tough Central Division which placed five of its six teams in the playoffs last year. This year only the Indiana Pacers don't have a winning record in the division. Cleveland is also 20-5 against the tough Eastern Conference. Even the Lakers, the best of the West, are only 8-7 against the East.

But Cleveland as a front runner? Come on? Ain't parity great?

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