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# Aggies bidding adieu to four seniors

## Sunday's Tech game marks end of college careers

By CLAY RASMUSSEN  
Of The Battalion Staff

This Sunday will be the last home game for four Texas A&M seniors. It might just be the last hurrah for basketball coach John Thornton as well.

A&M closes the regular season Sunday at G. Rollie White Coliseum against Texas Tech. The Aggies are coming off their fourth consecutive home loss Wednesday to Houston, 100-81. The Red Raiders still are looking to pick up their first Southwest Conference win.

Tipoff is scheduled for 2:04 p.m. Thornton, the Aggies' interim coach since A&M Athletic Director John David Crow relieved Shelby

"I feel like I've got some common feelings with the seniors. We've been through a lot together."

— John Thornton, A&M coach

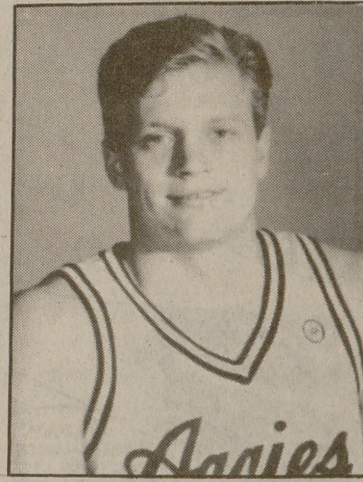
Metcalf of his coaching duties Jan. 22, may make his last walk onto the floor at G. Rollie White.

Crow said that A&M will conduct a national search after the season for a new head coach. Crow already has contacted the University of Idaho and asked permission to speak to the Kermit Davis. Idaho athletic director Gary Hunter has given A&M permission to talk to Davis at the end of the season.

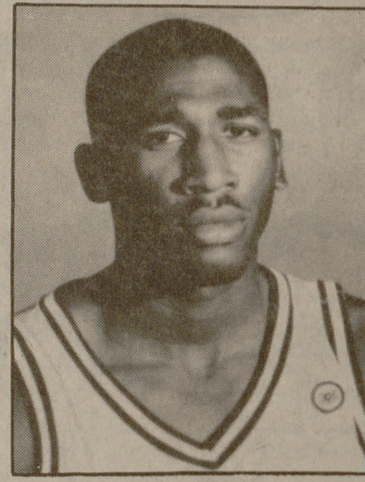
Other names thrown around as possible candidates include former Kentucky coach Eddie Sutton and University of Oklahoma's Billy Tubbs. Crow has said Thornton also will be considered as a possible candidate.

If Sunday is Thornton's last home game as the Aggies' head coach, he said he can look back at his nine years at A&M with pleasure.

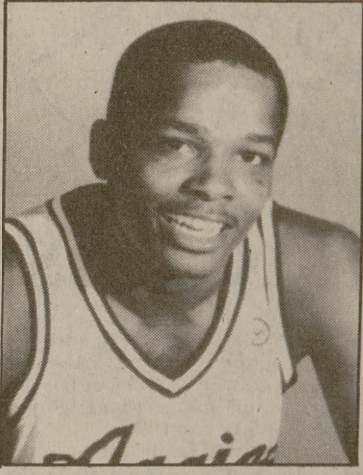
"I think that it could be an emotional thing because of the past experiences I've had here," Thornton said. "But it's also kind of neat in a



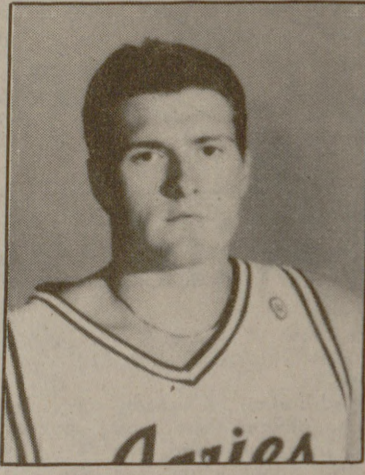
Daryl Duncan



Ray Little



Tony Milton



Darren Rhea

certain respect that it could come down to one basketball game. I'm glad it is at home.

"I think the closer it gets, the more it'll get to me. At tipoff it will probably really hit me."

Senior forwards Daryl Duncan, David Rhea and Ray Little, along with senior guard Tony Milton all end their regular-season careers at A&M.

"I feel like I've got some common feelings with the seniors," Thornton said. "We've been through a lot together."

Milton, who broke the school's record for single season assists against Houston, said leaving A&M will be hard for him to face.

"It's going to be disappointing, because it'll be the end of my college career," Milton said. "I just love playing here."

And the Aggies will miss Milton. In his last two years at A&M, Milton has racked up some impressive statistics. Starting in all 29 games this year, Milton has averaged 20.4 points per game. He is 47.7 percent accurate from the field and shoots 38 percent from three-point range. Probably his most impressive statistic, though, is his record-breaking 199 assists.

In addition to filling Milton's shoes, A&M will be faced with replacing six-foot-nine-inch forward Darren Rhea.

"I think Rhea made up his mind last summer to make his senior year his best year ever," Thornton said. "He has just played super for us. He has been one of the most consistent players, other than Tony, for us all year long."

Texas Tech, which has been un-

able to beat a SWC team this year, ready has been eliminated from SWC Postseason Classic March 3. Shutting down Milton and the of the Aggies' seniors will be Red Raider coach Gerald Meyer he searches for win No. 1.

Tech also will face the accurate three-point shooting of junior Lynn Suber. The Aggies have been able to weather many storms, relying solely on the three-point shot. Suber, last Saturday against Houston, hit four-of-five treys and over 70 percent from the free-throw line to lead A&M to a 103-95 victory.

Milton said the Aggies are excited about a tough game from Houston in spite of the Red Raiders losing record.

"We're going to just go out there and play hard," Milton said. "I want to beat them up in Lubbock by points, but this is their last game they're going to want a win."

To be successful against Tech, Thornton said A&M must return to the basics.

"We're going to have to rebound our speed and quickness, and as well as in the transition," Thornton said. "We have to get and down the floor and press them defensively."

Other than execute well, Thornton said the Aggies must not Tech lightly.

"I hope that their experience and mature enough to realize it's their last game," Thornton said. "This is the one they're always going to remember."

Milton said a win Sunday will give A&M the momentum it needs to go into the SWC Classic.

"We're going to go out and win this game," Milton said. "It would be a big boost going into the tournament."

With a win Sunday, the Aggies will go to Dallas seeded sixth in the tournament, and most likely meet the loser of the Texas-Houston game Monday night. The contest among the basketball team is to meet for Houston, so Texas would be A&M in the first round.

Junior guard Freddie Ricks said the team would much rather face Longhorns in the first round.

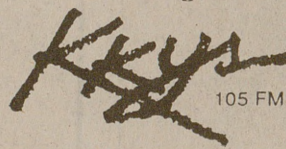
The Aggies have lost twice to Longhorns this season, but they have been close. A&M dropped a 94 decision to UT in January in Austin, and lost 79-73 in February at home.

Ricks said it's easier for the Aggies to match up with the Longhorns than against the physical and quick Cougars.

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