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Assistant Sports Editor

The Deegan Raffle

Anyone out there who doesn't want to feel lonely Sunday night after the A&M-Texas Tech game? Then meet Joe Deegan — collegiate basketball stud.

OK, so maybe calling Deegan a collegiate basketball stud is taking things a bit too far. Or maybe way too far. Memorizing Deegan's stat sheet wouldn't be difficult. He's played in one game (against Michigan State), is averaging zero points, zero rebounds, zero assists ... you get the picture. He has registered one turnover.

So, what's all this hype about? It seems he has established a small, cult following around campus, especially within the sororities. And A&M basketball coach John Thornton, the Aggies' most ardent public relations man, found a way to drum up some support.

Raffle off Deegan's body. Actually, Lanie Thornton, the coach's wife, can be credited with the idea. Lanie called up a sorority and talked to a friend of Deegan's, and asked her if she could get the sororities to come out to the games, just talk it up a little bit.

Deegan's friend responded that the sororities already came out for the games, or at least to watch Deegan and freshman guard Brooks Thompson. Then a lightbulb flashed.

Lanie mentioned the idea to Thornton, and soon Deegan was presented with the proposal.

"With all the stuff that was happening with the transition from coach Metcalf to coach Thornton, the interest of the student body was down," Deegan recalled. "Thornton was trying to get

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Milton's shoes big for a 'tiny monster'

By NADJA SABAWALA
Of The Battalion Staff

Texas A&M point guard Tony Milton is more than just Indiana basketball coach Bobby Knight's "tiny monster." He's a dream come true for A&M coach John Thornton.

But that dream is about to end. With the Aggies' regular season ending Sunday, so too ends the college career of the 6-0 senior from Florida.

"It's going to be disappointing because it'll be the end of my college career," Milton said. "I just love playing at A&M, and I'm sorry it will be over."

Milton has performed well for the Aggies this season, and his play in the Hoosier Classic prompted the Indianapolis Star to call Milton a "tiny monster" after his game against Knight and the Hoosiers in the championship game.

This past Wednesday, Milton broke a school record for single-season assists, previously set by Darryl McDonald in 1987-88.

Before the season started, Milton said he had set two goals for himself. One was to break the record, the other was to be named Southwest Conference Player of the Year.

"I know now that at least one of them came true," Milton said. "But I don't know about the other one."

He may be unsure of winning Player of the Year, but Milton is on the right track. After being nominated nine times in the past 12 weeks, Milton finally was recognized as a SWC Player of the Week. Co-Player, that is. He shared the title with Houston's Carl Hererra.

"Sharing it is all right," Milton said. "After being nominated so much, it's been kind of hard."

Milton has started in all 59 games since his career began at A&M, and has scored in double digits in 27-of-29 games this season.

Not bad for someone who's only played at A&M for two years.

Milton said one reason he transferred from Central Florida Junior College was because he liked the traditions of Aggie fans.

"I love the fans and they make me play harder," he said. "Especially when you have a lot of support coming out to the games."

As point guard, Milton needs all the fan support he can get. He sets up the offense

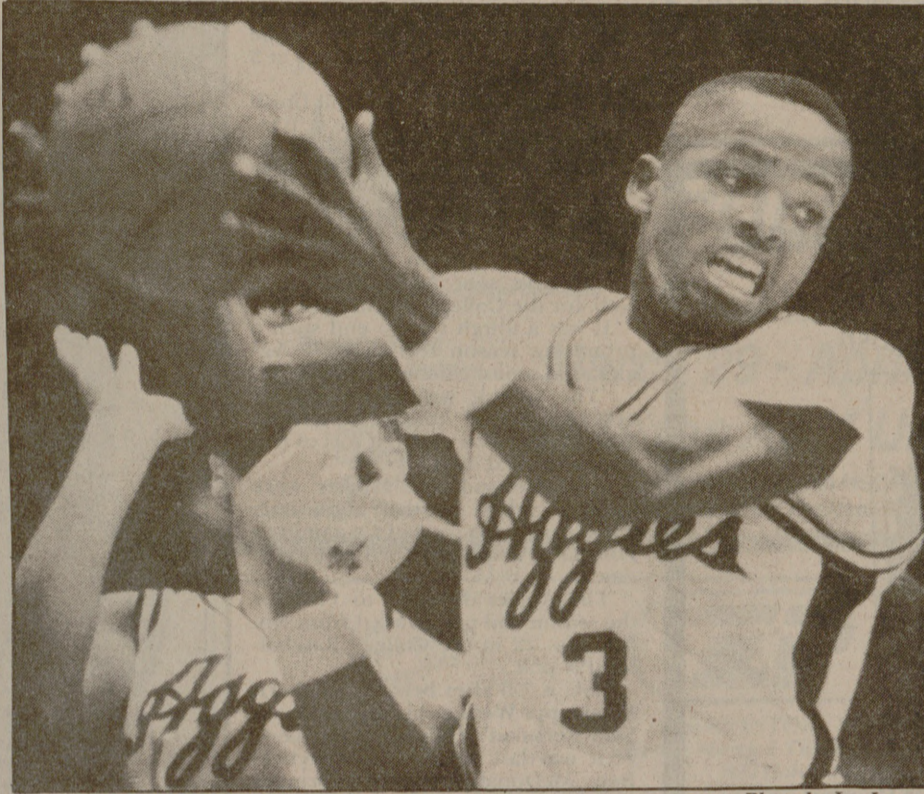
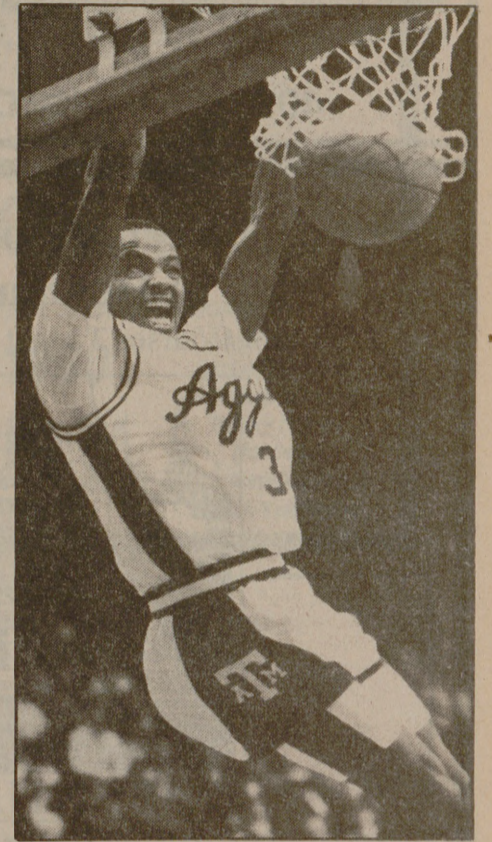


Photo by Jay Janner

A&M senior point guard Tony Milton has been on a tear in 1990, either rebounding (above) or providing the Aggies an offensive spark (right) they need.



Battalion file photo by P. Ebenhack

and brings the ball up court, eyeing out the next attack.

It's a tough position to play, and Thornton said it will be hard finding someone to replace Milton.

"He's crucial to our success and we're going to have to fill his position," Thornton said. "It will be two big shoes to fill."

Presently, Thornton said there are two names being considered for point guard position: junior Freddie Ricks and freshman Brooks Thompson.

Milton said he feels both are qualified to take over.

Milton said he has a lot of confidence in Thompson, but Ricks would have a slight edge because of his seniority and experi-

ence with the team.

In November, senior guard David Williams was suspended for breaking team rules. In January, coach Shelby Metcalf was relieved of his duties as head coach.

"That took a lot out of the team," Milton said. "In the middle of a season, losing a star player and a head coach was really hard on us."

"I told the players they've got to just continue to play. We just pulled together."

As a team, Milton said, the Aggies have talent, but the teams they lose to just have a little more.

"We play hard every night — every time we hit the court we're getting 110 percent," he said. "But there are teams in the league

that have more talent than we do.

"We give it all we can but just keep coming up short."

A&M is likely to play either Houston or Texas in the first round of the SWC Post-Season Classic March 9-11 in Dallas.

"We've got nothing to lose," he said. "We're going to put everything on the line and just try to knock off some of the top teams in the conference."

Milton said he'd really like to get a victory in his last regular season game Sunday against Texas Tech. But even if he doesn't, Milton has two years to look back on and be proud.

It's been a career most guards only dream about.

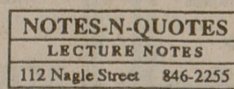
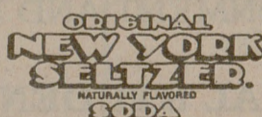
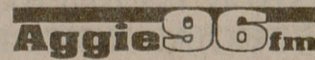
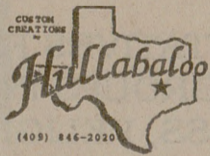
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