

Ags visit Hogs with tourney spot on line



Battalion file photo by J. Janner

A&M players jump for joy after clinching the Southwest Conference co-championship with Arkansas last year.

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The Texas A&M baseball team faces Arkansas this weekend in a three-game series that both teams will want to sweep.

The Razorbacks have a chance to clinch a conference championship while the Aggies can win a berth in the post-season tournament.

Arkansas can wrap up the Southwest Conference championship by taking all three games from the Aggies. These victories would give the 14-4 Razorbacks a half-game lead over second-place Texas if the Longhorns sweep Texas Christian this weekend.

If Arkansas sustains one or two losses, Texas must suffer the same amount of losses to finish the teams first and second.

For Texas A&M, it's not a conference title that's at stake but a place in the SWC Tournament May 17-19 in Austin.

"We need to go to Arkansas to win — that's all there is to it," said A&M right-fielder Dan Robinson. "We need to go there and put our hearts on the line and play as well as we can."

The 10-8 Aggies can clinch the last spot in the four-team tournament this weekend — the magic number is two.

Any combination of Aggie wins or Rice losses that equal two will put A&M into post-season play. Otherwise, the 8-9 Owls, who play Texas Tech next weekend in Houston, will take over the position.

Aggie coach Mark Johnson said he wants his team to win the two this weekend.

"We've got to go in there and take two out of three," Johnson said. "I don't want to have to sit and hope that Rice can lose a game to Tech."

See Ags/Page 10

Lakers topple battling Rockets, ending series 3-1

HOUSTON (AP) — Just as they did their other victories in the series, the Los Angeles Lakers wore down the Houston Rockets.

James Worthy scored 10 of his 20 points in the game's final 7:37 on Thursday night and the Lakers finally pulled away to a 88 victory for a 3-1 victory in the best-of-5, opening-round series of the NBA playoffs.

"They did a great job of double-teaming the lane early in the game," Worthy said. "But they got in foul trouble and maybe got a little tired and the opportunities came to me later."

Three Rockets starters, Akeem Olajuwon, Otis Thorpe and Vernon Maxwell had three fouls at halftime.

The Lakers, who snapped a four-game losing streak in the Summit, will play winner of the Utah-Phoenix series in the Western Conference semifinals. Phoenix leads the series 2-1 with Game 4 in Phoenix on Friday night.

"We came out from the beginning and took control," Lakers guard Magic Johnson said. "Like I said yesterday, we knew we had to contain their guards and we did."

The Lakers, who had double- and triple-teamed Olajuwon in the first three games of the series, abandoned that strategy in the finale.

"We went straight up on them and played honest defense on Akeem," Johnson said. "Offensively, we ran a great transition game. It was just total team effort."

The Rockets, who had leads of 13 and 20 points in their first two losses in the series, didn't have the shooting touch or quickness that helped them in the first three games.

"We wanted to play hard and jump on them," Lakers center Mychal Thompson said. "The Rockets presented a challenge on Tuesday and Byron (Scott) and Magic came out and answered it."

The Lakers shot 61 percent for the game compared to the Rockets' 42 percent. Los Angeles hit six of its first nine shots while the Rockets made just two of the first 18.

Olajuwon led the Rockets with 28 points, 14 rebounds and four blocked shots.

Mavericks give Perkins six-year contract extension

DALLAS (AP) — The Dallas Mavericks have extended a six-year, \$18 million contract to forward Sam Perkins that would make him one of the highest-paid players in the NBA, a Dallas newspaper reported.

Perkins becomes an unrestricted free agent July 1, meaning he'll be free to sign with any team in the league.

Norm Sonju, the chief operating officer and general manager of the Mavericks, has made sure that freedom won't come cheap

if Perkins decides to sign with another team, observers say.

Lee Fentress, Perkins' attorney, could not be reached for comment. But an unnamed source in the Mavericks' front office confirmed Perkins received a six-year, \$18 million offer, according to The Dallas Morning News.

The newspaper also reported that a person outside the organization said it's his understanding that the deal begins at \$2 mil-

lion for the 1990-91 season and escalates to \$4 million in the final year.

Perkins, who said he hadn't had a chance to look over the contract Thursday, has indicated he probably will wait another three or four months before signing with Dallas or any other team.

"It's a tremendous package," said Sonju, who refused to discuss the specifics of the deal. "We offered, in clear conscience, numbers we think are dramatic."

"We hope it will work out."

Observers say it's difficult to assess where this offer falls in relation to other contracts around the league because so many factors, such as deferred payments and signing bonuses, are involved in determining the present-day value. But the offer to Perkins appears comparable in average salary to the nine-year, \$29 million deal forward Charles Barkley signed with the Philadelphia 76ers this season.

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