

## A&M basketball needs talent, better arena

I knew it was a bad omen when I went to see the Aggie basketball team scrimmage last semester.

As the circus began, the crowd yelled and roared with excitement while I just shook my head in shame.

"This is pitiful," I thought to myself.

I grew up playing basketball in the streets of Manhattan.

If it rained, my friends and I played. If it snowed, we played. If it was cold, we put on gloves and we played.

I watched the New York Knicks win a championship at Madison Square Garden in 1973, and I remember the thrill of meeting Bill Bradley, Earl Monroe, Walt Frazier, and Phil Jackson in a Manhattan record store.

I was fortunate enough to make the team at the Atlantic 10's George Washington University in Washington, D.C., although I turned down the opportunity in favor of my education.

I have watched New Yorkers Sam Perkins, Jerry Reynolds, Rod Strickland, Kenny Smith, Mark Jackson, Chris Mullin go from high school to the NBA.

I am lucky enough to have played in pickup games with Spud Webb, Rickey Green, Nick Anderson, Kenny Norman, Sherman Douglas, and Danny Ferry, all current professionals.

I know good basketball when I see it. That makes me, I think, qualified to say that the Texas A&M basketball program is terrible.

In Washington, D.C., I had the opportunity to see Georgetown and Maryland games on a regular basis and I was tickled pink.

Since coming to Aggieland two years ago, though, I have felt like a lost soul searching for decent basketball somewhere, anywhere!

The pickup players at the Read Building, I'm sorry to say, boast almost equal talent to that which this University produces on the court for NCAA Division I competition, and there's no excuse for it.

At a school of 40,000-plus students, there is little reason why there shouldn't be a respectable hoops program.

Texas, Ohio State, Minnesota, Michigan, UCLA, LSU, and Illinois are just a few of the larger schools that produce basketball teams of the same caliber as their football teams.

Don't let the media fool you. Teams and coaches know they're going to win when they come here, and vice versa.

I felt bad for A&M, a team already suffering from disciplinary and academic problems, when a recruiting scandal began over Tony Scott's transfer from Syracuse.

Several Texas Aggie football players have enough talent to be basketball team members. I know because I've played with them. Coach Davis could surely use their strength and quickness. But they're accustomed to winning also.

I think the first step in resolving this issue is to build the new arena the Board of Regents has approved.

What talented high school athlete, in this modern era of technological advances, honestly wants to play in G. Rollie White Coliseum? The majestic complex is now a liability as a recruiting tool.

The new arena looks fabulous on paper, and will undoubtedly help draw better transfers and better raw talent than before.

There may be a myriad of other problems, as the NCAA is trying to find out, and I have no solution for those.

But I will go so far as to say that since Shelby Metcalf left, the youth movement has produced nothing but troubles.

Until the university can attract top-notch talent and the team can avoid off-court distractions, the Aggies will continue to crawl in the SWC cellar.



Craig Wilson  
Sports Writer

## Lady Ags can't catch Coogs, lose 73-63

By CRAIG WILSON  
Of The Battalion Staff

Like Wile E. Coyote, who never quite caught the Roadrunner, the Texas A&M Lady Aggies never quite caught the University of Houston Lady Cougars.

The Lady Ags succumbed to the Lady Coogs 73-63 at G. Rollie White Coliseum Wednesday night, in what was a coach's nightmare of turnovers, low intensity and sub-par shooting.

A&M (9-9, 4-4) committed an unorthodox 32 turnovers and were outrebounded 40-35 by the Lady Cougars (13-6, 5-3), much to Lady Aggie coach Lynn Hickey's dismay.

"We didn't do the two things that we had talked about," Hickey said, "to outrebound them and to take care of the ball."

"We killed ourselves by making mistakes and then that opened up things for them offensively."

Houston used a quick perimeter passing attack to open the lane area, leading to several easy shots for UH junior post, Darla Simpson, who scored 10 of her 14 points in the first half.

Leading the Lady Cougar rebounding attack were Simpson, with nine rebounds, and junior post Kellye Jones, with eight boards. Simpson also blocked three Lady Aggie shots.

"Houston played real smart and pretty much under control," Hickey said, "but they gave us a lot of chances and we just couldn't capitalize on them this evening."

Despite 18 first-half turnovers, the Lady Ags still managed to trail by only nine points at the intermission, 42-33.

Junior forward Dena Russo and junior guard Sheri Dillard scored seven points apiece at the half.

The Lady Ags went on a 14-5 run to open the second half, and tied Houston at 47 with 14:02 left to play.

The game seasawed from that point, as the Lady Ags subsequently tied the Lady Coogs twice more, but never overtook them because of a lack of consistency.

"I think the rhythm was really obvious," Hickey said. "We'd make a run at them but we couldn't put them away."

UH junior guard, LaShawn Johnson, scored 12 second-half points, including three key free throws in the final 2:40, finishing with 19 to lead the Lady Cougars.

After scoring only four first-half points, Lady Ags' senior forward Yvonne Hill scored 11 points after the break to lead A&M with 15 points. She also added a game-high five steals.

Russo finished with 11 points and a team-high 14 rebounds.

Hickey said she felt the Lady Ags did a lackluster job of playing cohesively.

"At times we've played as individuals and not as a team," she said. "We don't have enough great players to beat anyone by ourselves."

"If we play as a group I think we can compete with anybody in the conference, but we haven't seemed to get that concept across. That's probably typical of a young team."

Junior center Vanessa Edwards had another solid performance with 14 points and six rebounds. She was in the starting lineup for only the third time since a knee injury forced her into part-time duty.

Among Coach Hickey's major complaints was the Lady Ags' lack of intensity.

"I'm just real disappointed with our competition," she said. "But the important thing is to really get upset with ourselves, but not to get down."

"You want to be real positive and come back and work hard. We've got a long part of the season left so the worst thing you want to do is get depressed at this time."

The Lady Ags indeed have a tough road ahead, as the always-formidable Texas Lady Longhorns bring their nationally ranked squad to College Station Saturday night at 7:30.

"We've got Texas Saturday, then we go to Texas Tech and we go to TCU," Hickey said. "So that's not a fun week."

"We're going to have to be real determined and just play together as a group, and if we keep our heads we'll be alright. We'll see how much character we have this next week. We'll see what we can pull off."

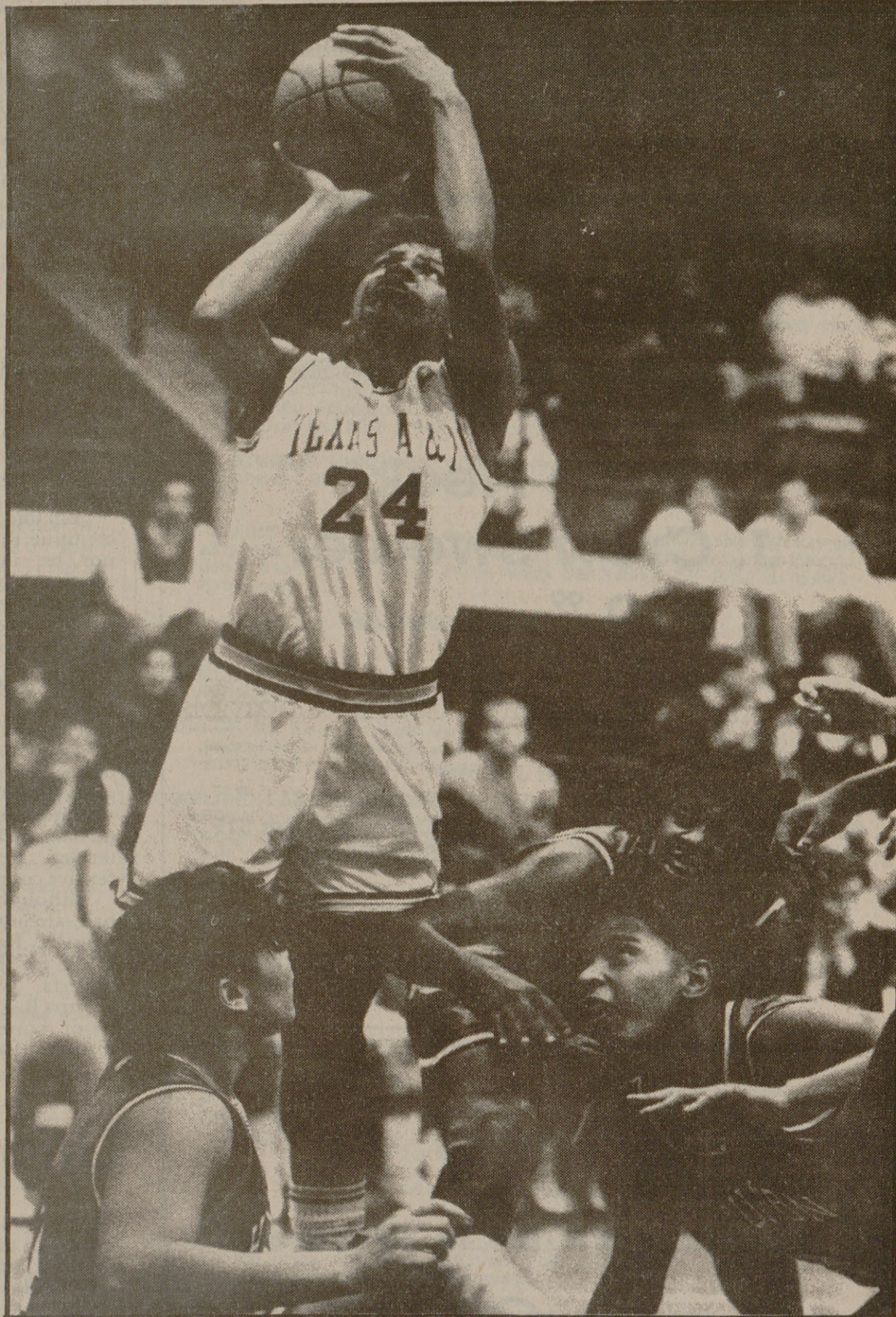
Despite the downfalls the Lady Ags suffered there is still a bright spot in Hickey's mind.

"We've worked real, real hard in practice," she said, "so that's a good indication."

The loss by the Lady Aggies drops them into fifth place in the SWC, one game behind Houston.

A&M will face a Texas team that is 6-1 in conference play this season.

The Lady Longhorns are seeking their ninth consecutive SWC title.



KARL STOLLEIS/The Battalion

Texas A&M forward Yvonne Hill makes a shot early in the second half after a struggle for the ball with several Lady Cougars. A&M lost 73-63.

## Arkansas smashes UA-Birmingham ...

FAYETTEVILLE, Ark. (AP) — Todd Day had 10 of his 33 points in a 21-2 run to begin the second half as second-ranked Arkansas disposed of Alabama-Birmingham 104-72 on Wednesday night.

Arkansas (21-1) held a 46-42 lead over UAB (13-8) at the end of a first half that saw 10 ties and 11 lead changes, then put the game away by scoring 21 of the first 23 points of the second half in a 4:53 span.

The Razorbacks' Oliver Miller got the first basket of the second half as UAB opened in a zone. Miller fed Lee Mayberry for a layup, then hit an 8-footer to make it 52-42. After Day got a slam on a pass from

Ron Huery, Huery fouled UAB's Andy Kennedy, who hit two free throws to make it 54-44.

Day scored the next 6 points on four free throws and a tip-in, then Ernie Murry added a three-point play, stole the ball and slammed it to make it 65-44. Huery then picked off a pass and fed Day for another slam to put the Razorbacks up by 23.

After the 21-2 run, the Blazers cut the lead back to 18 points on two free throws and a 3-pointer by Kennedy with 14:35 to play. But an alley-oop layup by Miller put the Razorbacks back up by 20 and Arkansas kept pulling away.

## ... as SWC investigates Richardson

DALLAS (AP) — The Southwest Conference is investigating remarks made by Arkansas Coach Nolan Richardson about the league and about a Baylor University clock operator.

"I'm just gathering information," Commissioner Fred Jacoby said Tuesday. "I have nothing to report now."

But Richardson said Wednesday, his comments, made Saturday after a controversial ending to his team's 73-68 victory in Waco, were not negative.

"They (reporters) were asking the questions," Richardson said. "Whether they (SWC) took it as negative, that's up to them ... I didn't say anything negative, about the clockman or the league."

Arkansas, leading 70-68 with eight seconds left, made an inbounds pass to guard Ernie Murray. He started dribbling, then

was fouled by Baylor's David Wesley, but no time elapsed on the clock.

"Ray Charles could have looked up at the clock and known something was wrong," Richardson said of Don Hay, who has operated the Baylor clock for more than two decades. "I'm happy I never have to come back here again."

Arkansas is leaving the SWC to join the Southeastern Athletic Conference next season.

"I told (Baylor Coach Gene) Iba, 'that I'll see you in Fayetteville,' and he knows what I mean," Richardson said. "I'm so happy to get out of this conference, I don't know what to do. I used to help this league. I was their biggest fan."

"But I'm not going to help them anymore."

According to SWC guidelines, those "un-

Roosevelt Wallace added 17 for Arkansas and Miller had 14. Kennedy led UAB with 20, Elbert Rogers had 13 and Stanley Jackson and Jack Kramer added 12 each.

The Blazers' last lead came with 3:43 left in the first half when Kramer hit two free throws. Miller tied it on a layup and Huery's slam dunk on a feed from Arlyn Bowers put Arkansas ahead. But Jackson tied it again on an 8-footer, Wallace slammed home a follow to make it 42-40 and Jackson tied it for the final time with a 12-footer.

Arkansas went ahead to stay when Day hit a follow shot and Miller dunked a feed from Day.

## Klingler to stay at UH

## Klingler to stay at UH

HOUSTON (AP) — Quarterback David Klingler, who replaced 1989 Heisman Trophy winner Andre Ware and broke many of his NCAA records last season, will return for his senior season at the University of Houston, The Houston Post reported Wednesday.

Klingler, however, refused to confirm the report.

Houston officials scheduled a Thursday news conference for Klingler to announce his plans. Friday is the NFL deadline for college underclassmen to declare themselves available for the NFL draft in April.

"The decision is made. I was just trying to find a time convenient for me to hold a news conference," Klingler said Wednesday. "It's amazing how many things have been said that supposedly I said or somebody else said. So tomorrow, we're going to set the record straight."

Asked if there was truth to the Post story, Klingler replied, "No, tomorrow I'll make my decision known."

"It's all more speculation and rumor. One of the many reasons we're calling a press conference tomorrow is to see if anybody else is going to show up who's using my name."

Ware passed up his senior season with the Cougars and became the first round draft pick of the Detroit Lions. He signed a 4-year contract worth a reported \$5.2 million.

The Post source said Klingler had strong feelings about returning for a second season as the starter.

duly critical of game officials, conference personnel, another school or its personnel are in violation of the unsportsmanlike conduct rule.

Violators can be reprimanded, put on probation and suspended.

University of Texas head coach Tom Penders was suspended for the Longhorns' SWC opener this year after making derogatory remarks about the conference officiating at the end of last season.

Much of Richardson's motivational speeches this year are stemming from comments made by coaches from the around the SWC.

The Razorbacks next game will this Saturday when they take on Rice in Fayetteville. The Owls have won two straight SWC games.

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