

A&M gives way to Bears



STEVE O'BRIEN
Sportswriter

Russo, Dillard bring Lady Ags to higher level

Wednesday night will mark the end of an era in Texas A&M women's basketball. Sheri Dillard and Dena Russo will end their regular season careers against Texas Tech in Lubbock.

The two seniors did something for women's basketball that I thought was impossible — they turned me into a fan.

Shawn Medlock, Jennifer Fasnacht and Vanessa Edwards are also seniors, but it was Dillard and Russo who rose above the crowd.

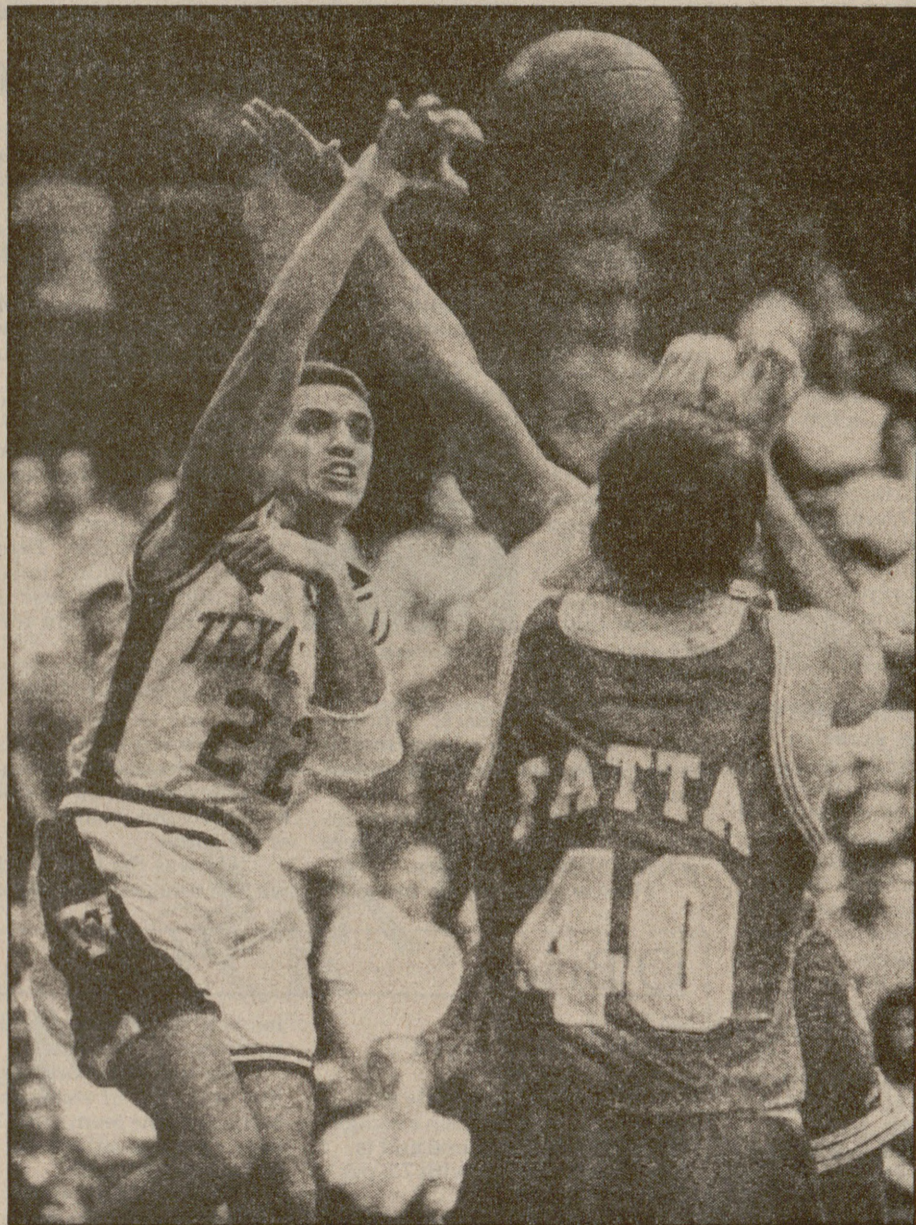
The two combined unique playing styles to push women's basketball at A&M to a new level. The Lady Aggies began the 1992 Southwest Conference season with four straight wins for the first time ever and beat the Texas Longhorns for the first time in 14 years.

The season quickly soured as the Lady Aggies lost five of their next six games. But whatever the record or score, Dillard and Russo always fought. They played with styles that were uniquely their own.

A 6-foot-1 forward from Friendswood, Texas, Russo was a scorer and rebounder. In a loss to Houston on Sunday, she became the ninth player in A&M history to score a 1,000 career points.

During her four years as an Aggie, Russo has used a combination of outside shooting and inside power to become one of the SWC's top players.

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KARL STOLLEIS/The Battalion

A&M junior guard David Martin slips a pass between two Baylor players in the first half of the Aggies' game against the Bears Monday at G. Rollie White Coliseum. A&M lost to Baylor 96-86 and dropped its fourth straight game.

Wesley, free throws shoot down second half Aggie comeback

By Chris Whitley
The Battalion

On Feb. 19, the Aggie basketball team traveled to Waco and ended its Southwest Conference drought with a win over Baylor.

Monday, the Bears returned the favor. David Wesley's record-setting free throw performance shut down a late A&M rally to give the Bears a 79-69 win at G. Rollie White Coliseum.

A&M's record fell to 5-20 for the year and 1-11 in the conference with its fourth straight defeat. The Bears improved to 13-14 and 5-10 in SWC action. It is Baylor's third consecutive win at A&M.

Wesley set up camp at the free throw line, hitting a Baylor record 20 of 25 for the night. He attempted the second most and converted the fifth most free throws ever in a SWC game en route to a 35-point evening to lead all scorers.

Wesley's free throws kept the Bears in the game after the Aggies staged a comeback late in the second half. Down by 26

points with 14:40 to play, A&M picked up the pace with a 15-4 run over the next six minutes.

The Aggies followed with a 16-5 run to cut the deficit to six with 1:06 left. However, when A&M started fouling, Wesley countered with five straight free throws to secure the win.

"Obviously, he was the difference," A&M coach Tony Barone said about Wesley. "He's a great player, and I think he's a superb guard. The thing I like about him more than anything is that he has great strength. We had nobody to contain him."

Corey Henderson provided the spark in the Aggies' comeback run, racking up 16 of his team-high 18 points in the second half.

"We had a good run, but it was a little too late," Henderson said. "We need to do that the whole 40 minutes instead of 20 minutes."

Nothing went right for A&M in the

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Johnson punches back into lineup

By Scott Wudel
The Battalion

Freshman forward Damon Johnson returned to the A&M lineup Monday night in the Aggies' game against Baylor and picked up where he left off six weeks ago.

The 6-foot-5, 227-pound Johnson, who had been sitting on the end of the bench for the last month and a half to let a fractured bone in his left foot heal, stepped onto the G. Rollie White Coliseum floor with 11:13 left in the first half and added muscle to an A&M lineup in need of a little punch.

Less than a minute after his entry, Johnson took a pass from David Edwards and punched in the first two of 14 points he would eventually get in his first night back. The freshman would go on to play 19 minutes and be an integral part of an A&M second half rally that ended in vain, 96-86.

On Jan. 14, in the first half of the Aggies' game against the Texas Longhorns, Johnson left his Southwest Conference Freshman of the Year ballots behind him when he hobbled to the A&M bench with

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