

Sports

The Battalion

Page 7

Tuesday, April 7, 1992

History repeats - Duke wins NCAA

Laettner wakes up, sparks Blue Devils

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — History didn't come easy for the Duke Blue Devils. Nevertheless, history they made, energized at last by their star, Christian Laettner.

They became the first team in 19 years to repeat as NCAA champions Monday night with a 71-51 victory over Michigan's Fab Five freshmen, the youngest team to ever vie for the title.

Not since UCLA ended a seven-year

reign as national champions in 1973 had a team managed to win two NCAA titles in a row.

Duke did it the hard way, with national player of the year Laettner struggling for the second straight game and another starter hobbled by injury.

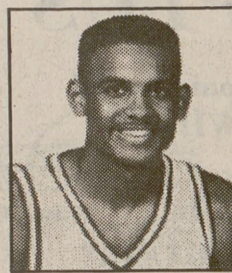
Laettner, who personally lifted the Blue Devils to two of their five straight Final Four appearances with buzzer-beaters, rebounded from his worst half of the year to lead a closing 23-6 Duke charge.

After missing six of eight shots and making a season-high seven turnovers in the first half, Laettner finished with 19 points and seven rebounds.

Duke's defensive pressure, mean-



Laettner



Grant Hill

point total in eight years.

Grant Hill had a terrific all-around game for Duke with 18 points, 10 rebounds, five assists, three steals and two blocks. Thomas Hill added 19 points and seven rebounds for the Blue Devils.

However, it was Laettner's long-distance shooting that sparked Duke, which trailed 31-30 at halftime.

Laettner's 3-pointer 44 seconds into the second half gave Duke the lead for good, 35-33. Another 3-pointer by Laettner with 11:05 left gave the Blue Devils a 46-39 lead, and they took off from there.

Mike Krzyzewski, in his 12th season with the Blue Devils, has taken Duke to six Final Fours in the last seven years.



STEVE O'BRIEN
Sportswriter

Fabulous five still too fresh for Final fight

The Fab Five from Michigan weren't so fabulous after all Monday night.

The Duke Blue Devils, on their way to a second straight NCAA basketball championship, put the wonder boys from Ann Arbor back where they belong.

Back to earth that is.

In a season of overachieving for the five Michigan freshmen, it seemed as if they couldn't be beaten.

But wait just a minute. College freshmen are, in a word, young — much too young to be challenging older, more experienced players like the Blue Devils.

After squeaking by Indiana to get to the Final, though, it appeared the defending champions were susceptible to the speed and enthusiasm of the Michigan players.

Before the game, Duke sophomore Antonio Lang said his team was like a heavyweight boxer who had taken a lot of punches but had one more to go. In the end, it was the old fighter who won.

The five freshman of Juwan Howard, Jimmy King, Jalen Rose, Chris Webber and Ray Jackson are, undeniably, one of the most talented groups of starting collegiate basketball players ever.

But they are, at least for now, still young.

The Blue Devils, on the other hand, were in their sixth Final Four in seven years and their third straight championship game. It was old hat to the players from Durham, N.C.

Of the five Duke starters, Christian Laettner and Thomas Hill are

See O'Brien/Page 8

PAYING THEIR DUES

Graham tired of wait, ready for big returns

By Steve O'Brien
The Battalion

For two years, Texas A&M linebacker Reggie Graham has paid his dues.

Now he wants a return on the investment.

The redshirt freshman was a special-team's player last fall and watched as Quentin Coryatt and Jason Atkinson led the Aggies to the 1992 Cotton Bowl on defense.

The year before, he watched A&M linebacker Anthony Williams get all-Southwest Conference honors and take the spotlight in A&M win over BYU in the 1991 Holiday Bowl.

Graham is tired of watching.

This spring, he is the leading candidate to replace Coryatt, who is expected to be a top pick in this month's National Football League draft.

"Right now Reggie is at the point in his career where it's time for him to become part of our defense," A&M defensive coordinator Bob Davie said. "We spend an awful lot of time out here on the practice field. He hasn't played in a lot of games, but I've been with Reggie for two years now, everyday.

"His development and career started out here on the practice field."

Graham said he is ready to become a starter, on

See Graham/Page 8

Jackson built in mold of former LB Coryatt

By Becky Blum
Special to the Battalion

He might be the next Quentin Coryatt.

Larry Jackson, who stands 6-foot-4 and weighs 240 pounds, measures up with the former A&M linebacker and future NFL star inch for inch, pound for pound.

Coryatt, a senior and A&M's defensive team leader last season, stunned his victims with explosive tackles and helped carry the Aggies to a 10-2 record and a trip to the 1992 Mobil Cotton Bowl.

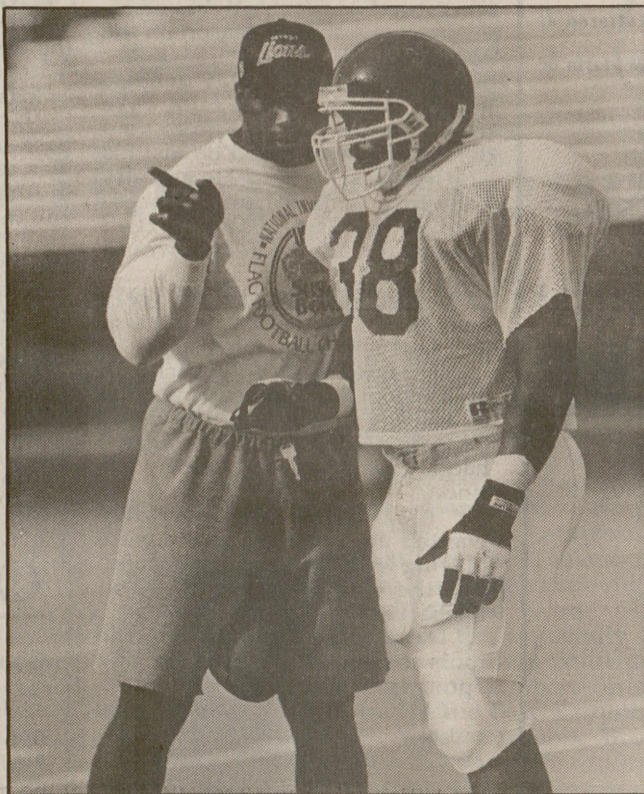
But Coryatt's position stands vacant now as the Aggies continue spring football drills at Kyle Field. Jackson will be pushing fellow redshirt freshman Reggie Graham and sophomore Jessie Cox for one of the starting inside linebacker spots next to Jason Atkinson when A&M begins its season next August.

Jackson said he has learned a great deal from watching Coryatt play in practice and in games. A&M defensive coordinator Bob Davie said he fits the mold of the recent Aggie tradition of top-notch linebackers.

"When you look at Larry, at his size and weight and speed, he compares favorably with any linebacker at A&M, or anywhere else," Davie said.

Jackson was recruited by every Southwest Conference school, as well as national standouts like Stanford and Oklahoma. He said he chose A&M because of the

See Jackson/Page 8



DARRIN HILL/The Battalion

Former A&M linebacker Quentin Coryatt gives advice to Reggie Graham at Monday's spring practice.

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