

Money proves more important to Cotton Bowl

Let the record show that the 1992 Texas A&M football team was one of the best in the history of the school and one that was screwed at every turn.

The Cotton Bowl opted to bring No. 5 Notre Dame to Dallas and in doing so ended any shot whatsoever of the Aggies winning the national championship. The powers that be decided against bringing No. 3 Florida State back for a second straight year because they didn't want to see a rematch of the 1992 game and because Notre Dame could bring a bigger television draw.

And as the Cotton Bowl rakes in their money, the Aggies are paying the price.

What happened by the Cotton Bowl Athletic Association on Sunday not only demolished the integrity of the newly-formed Bowl Coalition, but it also took the one team in the Southwest Conference that had any kind of national respect and threw it aside for a fast buck.

Robert Smith, chairman of the Cotton Bowl, and Jim "Hoss" Brock, chairman of the selection committee, should be ashamed of themselves. For an organization that has committed itself to preserving the integrity of the SWC, its latest action has shown that they couldn't give a damn about the conference or what its champion wants.

By selecting Notre Dame (9-1-1), Texas A&M (12-0) lost whatever infinitesimal chance it had at the No. 1 spot in the Associated Press poll. Should

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CHRIS WHITLEY
Sports Editor

Cotton Bowl chooses fifth-ranked Notre Dame

FROM STAFF AND WIRE REPORTS

DALLAS—The Cotton Bowl, despite the objections of host team No. 4 Texas A&M, picked No. 5 Notre Dame over No. 3 Florida State for its guest team on New Year's Day.

In the first year of a long-term agreement with NBC television, the Cotton Bowl on Sunday ignored a possible 3-4 matchup between the Seminoles and the Aggies, and went with a team which has all of its home games exclusively televised by NBC and has a strong national following.

"We wanted to play the highest ranked team possible and I'm disappointed in that regard," A&M head coach R.C. Slocum said. "Notre Dame is a great opponent and I hope we are still in the national playoff picture. We played the schedule given to us and even played Stanford in an extra game. We did our job."

Florida State coach Bobby Bowden got a tip on Friday that the Cotton Bowl had

decided to let the Orange Bowl have the Seminoles.

"I had thought we would be in the Cotton with 3 playing 4, but I was told Friday something might happen," Bowden said. "I finally tracked R.C. down on a recruiting trip and told him to get on the telephone with the Cotton Bowl people. He wasn't sure what was happening, but I could sense it wasn't going to be us in the Cotton Bowl. I'm happy to be going into the Orange Bowl."

Cotton Bowl officials said they didn't want a rematch of last year's Florida State-A&M game which was won 10-2 by

the Seminoles.

Robert Smith, chairman of the Cotton Bowl, answered criticism of the Fighting Irish as the choice by saying, "We didn't have a national championship game. If we picked Florida State it would be a repeat game. We didn't think there was that much significance in choosing No. 5 over No. 3."

"We thought some questions would be raised over our choice," Jim Brock, chairman of the selection committee said. "We put the coalition together to get No. 1 and No. 2 together, not No. 3 and No. 4. We have a strong matchup. We wanted to avoid a

rematch."

Brock denied that NBC called the shots.

"Anytime Notre Dame is in a football game you have to take the TV ranking into account, but NBC didn't have anything to do with the selection," Brock said. "Notre Dame is one of our favorites."

A&M athletic director John Davie Crow said there was still a chance the Aggies could win the national title if Miami and Alabama tied.

"There are a lot of what ifs and we rather play the highest ranked team possible, but we support the Cotton Bowl decision," he said.

Notre Dame, 9-1-1, will lose about \$1 million by being in the Cotton Bowl instead of playing Nebraska in the Orange Bowl.

However, Notre Dame athletic director Dick Rosenthal said the Irish "are eligible to be playing in the Cotton Bowl. We

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Missouri tough on A&M again this year

By K. LEE DAVIS

Sports Writer of THE BATTALION

Texas A&M head basketball coach Tony Barone has said that he doesn't think his team can get better without playing against some of the top teams in college basketball, if for no other reason than to gauge how far his team might have progressed.

After playing against and losing to the Missouri Tigers for the second time in little over a year, Barone may already be forming an answer.

Yes, the Aggies are improving. Slowly. "Texas A&M did a good job," Missouri coach Norm Stewart said. "I was impressed, one of our coaches went out to New Mexico and watched them play, and they had that game won with a minute to go, then I watched them and I was really impressed because they play a little bigger than they are."

"They've gotten better since last year, and they can do what they set out to do."

Playing in front of a near-capacity crowd of 6,498 in the home opener at G.

Rollie White, the Aggies led the Tigers for most of the first half Saturday before succumbing 81-55 to a taller, faster and more physical Missouri team.

Barone said after the game that A&M was clearly out-muscled on the court.

"We new the key to the game going in would be playing physical," Barone said. "They just kept coming at us and it really took a toll on us."

"They just wore us down."

Asked what the difference in the game was, Barone gave a complete answer.

"Bring the players in here from both schools, and I'll show you; They're bigger than us, stronger than us, and faster than us, I promise you," Barone said.

Freshman forward Lance Broderson agreed with his coaches assessment of what went wrong for the Aggies.

"They were more physical than us tonight, that was the difference," Broderson said. "They were bigger and stronger and that wore us down."

Broderson played 18 minutes in the first home game of his career, scoring 11 points in that span.

For the evening, Broderson was 5-for-5

from the field including a three-pointer, and was 2-for-3 from the free-throw line.

If there was one facet of the game that the Aggies did control, but still failed to excel at, free throw shooting was it. A&M shot 11 of 22 from the charity stripe for a dismal .500 percentage.

Missouri standout forward Jevon Crudup said the Aggies had improved over the last year.

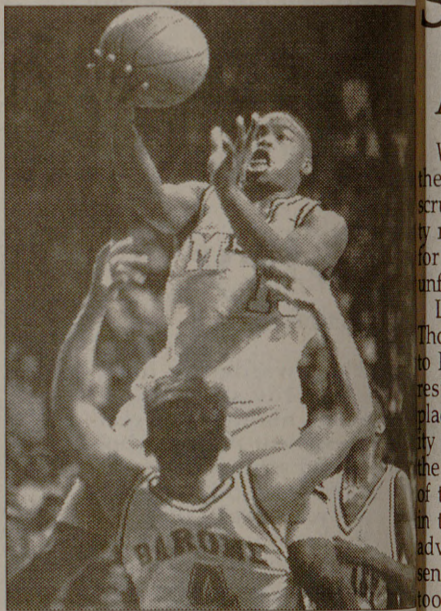
"They're going to be a good ballclub, and they're real young right now," Crudup said. "It was a big improvement from last year and they have a good coach, and as the year goes on they're going to improve a lot."

Missouri shot .750 from the free throw line, draining 18 of 24 against the Aggies.

While A&M struggled against Missouri, sophomore forward Damon Johnson, who led his team in scoring with 17 points, restated the teams belief that they have to play quality competition to improve.

"We've got to play the best to be the best," Johnson said. "When you can beat

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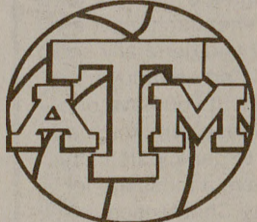
KARL A. STOLLEIS/The Battalion

Missouri guard Melvin Booker Jr. during the Tigers' 81-55 win Saturday, but is called for a charging foul on the play.

COAST INTO G. ROLLIE WHITE FOR "COASTER NIGHT"

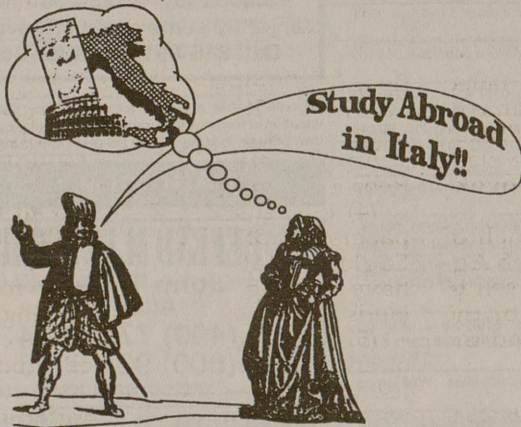
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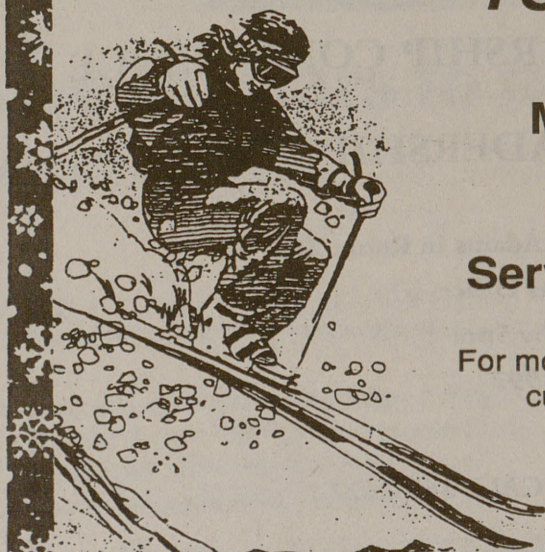
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