

Reports of A&M's death are greatly exaggerated

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Sports Editor

The members of Texas A&M's football team only thought that they were facing a tough opponent when they fell to Notre Dame 28-3 in the Mobil Cotton Bowl back on New Year's Day. Unfortunately for them, the looming shadow of the NCAA poses a much bigger danger in the wake of recent events. As if the Southwest Conference did not have a bad enough reputation, the suspensions of four Aggies before the Cotton Bowl, most notably tailback Greg Hill, just made things worse. Never mind that the charges against the four players of receiving payment for work not done have been levied by still-anonymous sources. Forget about the relatively harmless nature of those charges, which A&M has revealed were indeed factual. And don't even think about the possibility that A&M's athletic department has spent the recent past busting a gut to prevent wrongdoing in the wake of Jackie Sherrill and Kermit Davis. No, all of that doesn't matter, people say. If the NCAA gets a hold of this case, the Aggies are headed straight for the SWC's second football death penalty. Some even have the A&M headstone carved and ready. To put it bluntly, saying that A&M alumnus Warren Gilbert's payments to the aforementioned Aggies will lead to a death penalty is like saying the U.S. Marines' involvement in Somalia will lead to another Vietnam War. Jumping to such a conclusion is either naive, ignorant, wishful thinking, or a combination of all three. Despite the admission of guilt on behalf of the players involved, there are some major problems with the entire situation. The lack of an identified source is a major blow to the credibility of The Dallas Morning News, who

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Aggies drop third straight as Houston rolls, 81-69

FROM STAFF AND WIRE REPORTS

Anthony Goldwire scored 19 points and David Diaz added 17 Saturday, leading Houston to an 81-69 victory over Texas A&M.

The Cougars improved to 9-2 overall and 2-0 in Southwest Conference play while dropping the Aggies to 5-8 and 0-2.

It was the Cougars' fourth consecutive victory and their seventh in a row over the Aggies. Houston has defeated A&M 11 consecutive times in regular-season play.

Texas A&M coach Tony Barone said that his team never was able to put together a sustained scoring surge against the Cougars.

"They were able to stop our runs," Barone said. "I'm not saying they stopped them all the time. Sometimes we did."

"We thought we could run on them. We have to hit on all cylinders. If we don't, we have problems."

Houston led 19-17 with 7:25 remaining in the first half, but went on an 18-9 run for a 37-26 halftime lead. The Aggies used a 12-5 run to pull within 42-38 early in the second half and later got within 4 points again, at 50-46.

But the Cougars, led by Derrick Smith's 9 points, pulled away and the Aggies never got closer than seven points the rest of the way.

"We acted like, played like and reacted on almost all situations like a championship team today," Houston head coach Pat Foster said.

"I think the reason he (Smith) became open is because they really flared on our three-point shooters. They were not letting us hit any three-pointers. That left some gaps open inside."

Damon Johnson scored a game-high 23 points and pulled down 13 rebounds for Texas A&M, while Chuck Henderson added 15 points.

Johnson said the Aggies were simply outmanned.

"They were very physical," Johnson said. "Charles Outlaw and Derrick Smith are very good players. They beat us up inside and Anthony Goldwire hurt us from the outside. They have five great players. You can't key on anyone."

Charles Outlaw contributed 16 points and Jessie Drain 10 for the Cougars. Goldwire "Goldwire was the key to the game," Barone said. "He had total control of the game, and is what I consider a classic point guard."

Texas A&M was without 6-6 freshman reserve Lance Broderson, who sprained an ankle in practice on Friday. Reserve forward Matt Haralson saw extensive action in Broderson's place.

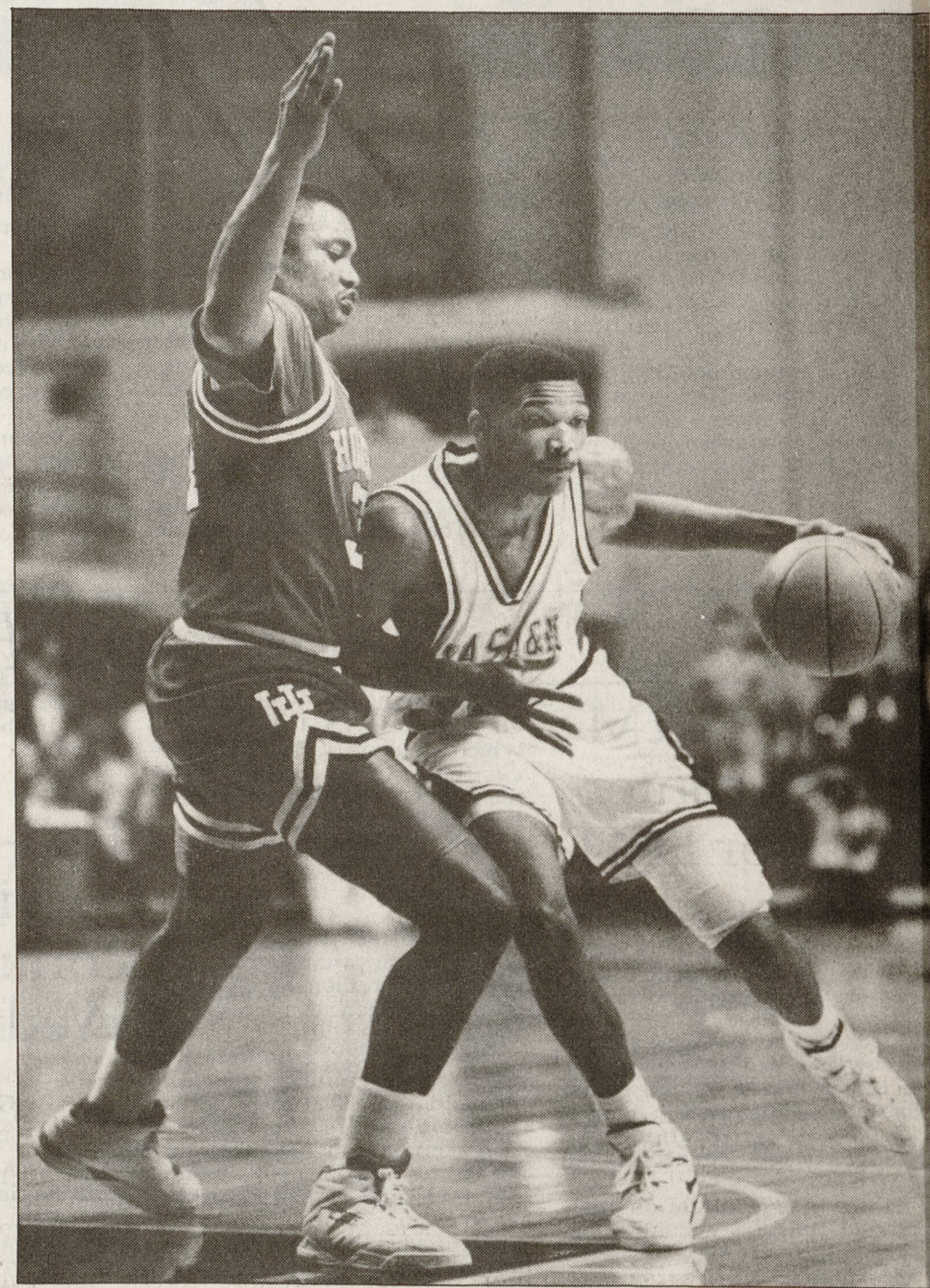
"There was a spell there in the second half where Texas A&M got back into the ball game and had a chance to win," Houston coach Pat Foster said. "However, in the critical situations, our veteran players ... were ready to take charge. That was the difference."

Four of Houston's starting five players scored in double figures, with the other scoring nine points.

A&M is in the midst of a three-game losing streak, and the road does not get any easier. The Aggies next matchup will be in Las Vegas as they take on the University of Nevada-Las Vegas "Runnin' Rebels" at 10:05 Tuesday night.

The Rebels have gotten off to an impressive start in their first year under head coach Rollie Massimino. UNLV is 9-1 overall, and currently own the longest homecourt winning streak with 55 straight victories in the Thomas & Mack Center.

The Aggies lead 3-2 in the all-time series between the two schools, but the Rebels have come out on top in the last two meetings. The two last faced each other during the 1988-89 season, when UNLV pounded the Aggies 110-67 in the Runnin' Rebel Roundup in Las Vegas.



ROBERT J. REED/The Battalion

A&M guard Corey Henderson drives the lane against a Houston defender in the Aggie's 81-69 loss Saturday afternoon. The defeat dropped A&M to 5-8 overall.

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