

Aggies Fast Breakdown

The Texas A&M Women's Basketball Team

A&M women build up hopes for season ripe with potential

"The Young and the Restless" may be the best way to describe my outlook on the season at this time of the year. I wish I could say I am the youthful part of this scenario but alas, I am probably more of the restless part of the description.

I have always had a love-hate relationship with this part of our season. It is a time of great anticipation and excitement, and a time to right all of the wrongs of last season — a time to get a fresh start on your dreams.

But it is also a time of worry and stress. The fall is an emotional period of preparation for "opening night."

It is so hard to let two months of school go by and not even be allowed to watch our players shoot or scrimmage, so to say I'm anxious by the day we hit the practice floor on Nov. 1 is an understatement.

My fundamentalist philosophy has definitely been challenged the past few years with the loss of more and more practice time to NCAA regulations.

I never dreamed that I would install an offense on just the first day of practice! But, I've been in coaching long enough to remember the AIAW rules when we were allowed to practice year-round for as many hours as we felt necessary. That was basketball heaven to me.

I also am restless because we believe this is the finest group of players we've ever had here. Ten out of fifteen players are either sophomores or freshmen.

The youth is negated to some extent by the amount of experience our sophomores received last year, but the maturity factor will be a question mark early on for us.

Our non-conference schedule is very competitive and provides the opportunity to play against teams from the top leagues in the country. We have a tough home schedule that will be both advantageous to our success and good for our fans. Key non-conference opponents this season will be Arizona State, Oklahoma State, Louisiana State and Oklahoma.

The Southwest Conference is coming off a great year of success due to Texas Tech's national championship but we also are stepping into an era of our greatest parity.

Each team will naturally gauge itself on how well it competes against Tech, but we will not have an easy evening any time on the schedule. Overall, the conference is young, but all eight teams are comprised of All-American and All-Conference candidates and have the strongest coaching staffs in the history of the SWC.

For the first time in several years, Texas will be one of the smaller teams in the conference. The Lady Longhorns have signed some great three-point shooter, so look for the old Texas press and running game to be back in full force.

Southern Methodist played very well in post-season play last year, and once again, it will be a strong contender.

Baylor is young, but they had a good recruiting

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LYNN HICKEY
Head coach,
A&M women's
basketball



Branch

Point Guard

Sophomore **Lisa Branch** lived up to preseason expectations last season as she was the 1993 Southwest Conference Newcomer of the Year and second team All-SWC...Freshman **Lana Tucker** from Duncanville is expected to give Branch a breather at times...Branch averaged 13 points, five assists and one steal...Branch set a SWC record with 19 assists against Texas Christian...Tucker helped Duncanville register a 109-4 record during her three seasons...Branch had a career high 12 rebounds in A&M's 63-61 loss to Baylor in the first round of the SWC tournament.



Canada

Shooting Guard

Sophomore **Donyale Canada** had a golden performance over the summer as she starred for the South team that won the 1993 U.S. Olympic Festival...Fellow sophomore **Bambi Ferguson** averaged almost two assists last season...Freshman **Shanae Ford** is a powerful performer who might also see time at forward...Sophomore **Jennifer Christian** is returning from a knee injury that caused her to miss all of last season...Sophomore **Andrea Williams** will join the team once volleyball is over...Canada and Ferguson will see action at point guard also.



Burket

Small Forward

Senior **Beth Burket**, a two-year starter, has been named as a co-captain this season...Junior **Cami Williams**, a transfer from Farmington (N.M.) Junior College, is expected to combine with Branch to give the Aggies two consistent three-point shooters...Junior **Debbie Biermann** runs the floor well and could see time at center...Burket averaged seven points and four rebounds last season...Williams poured in 17 points and pulled down five rebounds for Farmington...Burket recorded her first double-double against Baylor when she had 20 points and 10 rebounds.



Littles

Power Forward

Senior **Nikki Littles** joins Burket as a co-captain...Freshman **Marianne Miller**, who hails from Stratford, Oklahoma, was regarded as the top recruit out of Oklahoma...Miller averaged 25 points per game last season...Littles finished second on the team in free throw percentage by hitting 69 percent of her attempts...Miller has good range, can run and handle the ball...Miller's father, James, is a member of the NAIA Hall of Fame after a stellar career at East Texas State...According to A&M head coach Lynn Hickey, Littles is the best defensive player on the team.



McClelland

Center

At 6-foot-4, sophomores **Martha McClelland** and **Kelly Cerny**, along with 6-foot-5 **Teri Bartlett**, gives the Aggies the second tallest team in the nation behind Vanderbilt...McClelland registered a double-double against Eastern Michigan with 14 points and 10 rebounds...Bartlett and Cerny received GTE Academic Awards for '92-'93...Bartlett had a double-double against Baylor when she had 14 points and 14 rebounds...McClelland made 58 percent of her shots last season...McClelland will also see action at the power forward spot this season.

