

SPORTS

Tuesday, February 1, 1994

THE BATTALION

Basketball at A&M: fantastic

How about them Cowboys! No, wait. How about them Aggies! Yeah, that's better. You thought I was going to write about those football players, didn't you? Ha, ha. No, not me.

I was so sick of the Cowboys and Bills by Sunday, I could barely watch the game.

Instead, I'm going to write about some of the part-time inhabitants of G. Rollie White Coliseum.

You know, the ones who are leading the Southwest Conference with an 11-5 record. It's not the women, either, even though they are dominating the conference, too.

No, I'm talking about the A&M men's basketball team.

A&M finished sixth in the SWC last year, and, when they were picked to finish second in the conference this year behind the University of Texas, I admittedly raised an eyebrow.

"Well, maybe they'll finish third or fourth," I thought. "But, not second."

Head coach Tony Barone and his crew have definitely given me something else to think about.

With tenacious play and an unselfish attitude, the Aggies have already matched last season's Conference win total at five, and surpassed the overall 1992-93 win total of 10.

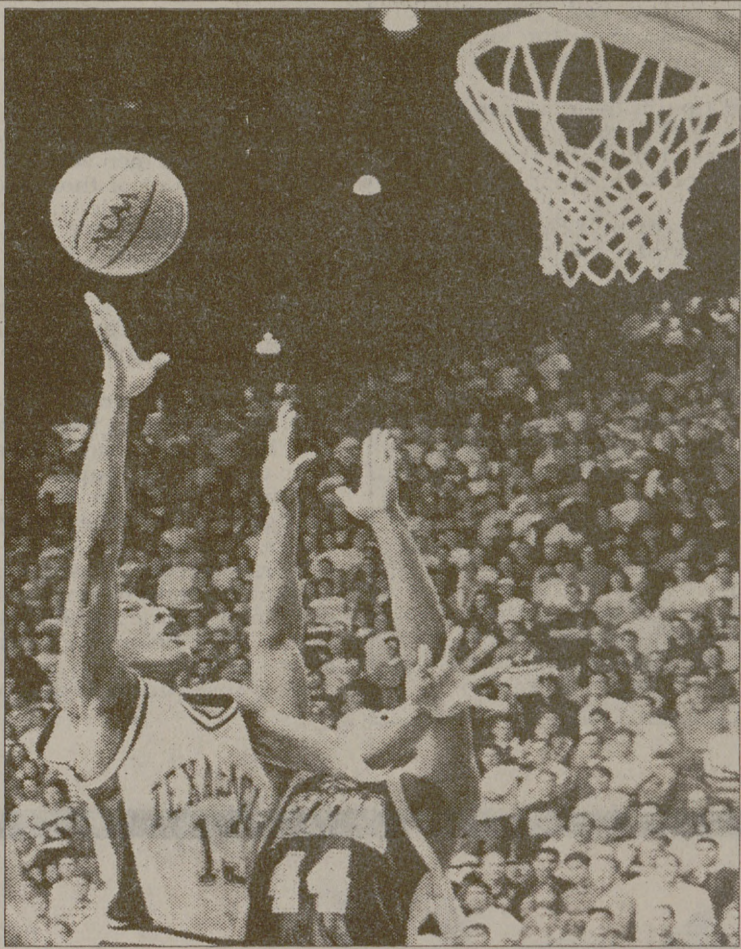
One difference this season has with last season is the comeback wins A&M is compiling.

The Aggies' comeback heroes have delighted fans, espe-

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Mark Smith
Asst. sports editor



Tony McGinnis drives during the Siena game.

Mary Macmanus/The Battalion

Hard-working forward basis of Aggie success

By Jose de Jesus Ortiz

THE BATTALION

Point guard David Edwards and forward Joe Wilbert may get the publicity for Texas A&M's basketball team, but both said guard Tony McGinnis is a key reason the Aggies (11-5, 5-0) are atop the Southwest Conference.

McGinnis said he does not mind not getting publicity as long as the Aggies realize he will do whatever it takes for A&M to be successful.

After all, his mother Ellen McGinnis, who raised him after being divorced with his father Leon, is the main reason he plays basketball.

"She sacrificed many things for us," Tony McGinnis said. "There have been times when I have gotten down and felt like quitting, but knowing what my mother has done for me has kept me going."

"If she had to get an extra job to supply us with what we wanted, she did it. My work ethic is mirrored after her. She is such a hard worker."

Tony McGinnis averages

about 33 minutes and 10 points a game, but Wilbert said the Aggies depend on him for hard work that does not necessarily show up as statistics.

"Tony is the centerpiece of our defense," Wilbert said. "He usually covers the other team's best offensive player."

"When Tony speaks everybody on our team listens."

Tony McGinnis said he wants to be heard, but added that the most important message he gives is the one sent off the court to his three younger siblings and the children that look up to him back home in Alabama.

"I want them to see that I can succeed," he said. "Back home, I used to visit the Boys Club and was like a role model to those kids. I felt like if I quit, what will save the kids trying to make it in the community?"

"So I just keep working hard. It is not really for myself, it is for the people that look up to me."

He said he tries to call back home to Alabama to keep in touch with his brothers, Cedric, Frederick and Reginald. Cedric

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Track team trips during Sooner meet

By Stewart Doreen

THE BATTALION

The Texas A&M men's track and field team found things a little tougher this weekend when they traveled to Oklahoma for the Sooner Indoor Relays.

A&M competed with 18 teams that included top teams from the Southwest Conference and the Eight Conference.

A&M coach Abe Brown said the meet brought together quality teams.

"This meet showed a lot of strength and character," Brown said. "What used to be a warm-up has now become a meet of quality."

Brown added that A&M's results showed improvements in the team could be used as building blocks for the season.

For the second straight year, Anjanette Kirkland ran away from the field in the women's 100-meter hurdles. Her first-place time of 7.89 qualified provisionally for the NCAA indoor meet.

"I hit my goal by going under 7.9," Kirkland said. "But I want to automatically qualify in the NCAAs."

Kendrick Smith took second place in the men's triple jump with a mark of 49-10 1/2. She also placed third in the long jump at 23-4 3/4.

"This week I was pretty content," Smith said. "I feel with a good jump I could go much better."

Curt Young and Larry Williams made the finals of the 55-meter hurdles.

Lydia Herrera earned a spot in the finals of the women's 400-meter race with a season high toss of 17.2.

Mark Mullins cleared 16 feet in the pole vault for the second straight week.

A&M coach Ted Nelson said he is optimistic about the Aggie track season.

"We had some people who were well," Nelson said. "We had some things that, because of the quality of the meet, didn't show up."

Groff: Aggie-Longhorn traditions would be lost in Thanksgiving change

By Nick Georgandis

THE BATTALION

Tradition will be the victim if the Southwest Conference reschedules the annual Thanksgiving Day football game between Texas A&M and the University of Texas in 1994, A&M athletic director Wally Groff said Monday.

The SWC, in association with UT, has speculated on switching games around so that the UT-Baylor match-up would fall on Thanksgiving day.

Groff said he thinks that while the new line-up would be good for the conference overall, it would hurt the long history of the Aggie-Longhorn duel.

"I think the conference has taken this initiative to try to maximize funds and television exposure for the conference schools," Groff said. "I don't disagree with what they're trying to do."

"I just don't like 'em stepping in on tradition."

The UT-Baylor game would be placed on Thanksgiving so that UT and the conference would not be penalized for A&M's probation clause that states the football team cannot appear on television next season.

The game is scheduled to be played on Nov. 24 at Memorial Stadium in Austin, but, as Groff explained, the schedule has not been finalized yet.

"The future schedules have already been laid out, but we have to renegotiate every two

years," Groff said. "Last year was the second year of the two-year contract, so in the next few months all the teams in the conference have to renegotiate their schedules."

Since 1935, the UT game has been the last game of the Aggies' season every year except for 1988 when the Aggies played the "Hurricane Bowl" against Alabama the week after Thanksgiving.

Groff also expressed concerns for the future of the student-related events that surround the Thanksgiving game.

"There are so many things, such as Bonfire, that are associated with the Texas game," Groff said. "Seeing as how Bonfire preparation takes several months, it would not be fair to move the game to mid-October or even early November."



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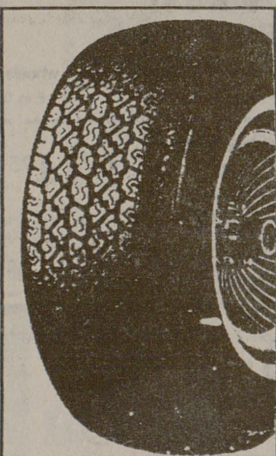
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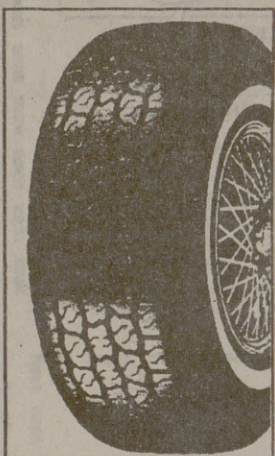


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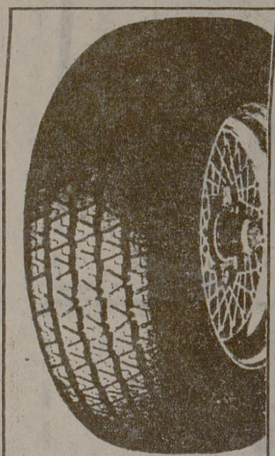


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