

SPORTS BRIEFS

Knicks fly past Rockets in rematch

HOUSTON (AP) — John Starks shook off the memory of his last game at the Summit, scoring 22 points and shooting above 50 percent from the field to lead the New York Knicks past Houston 93-77 Thursday night in a rematch of the NBA finals.

Starks was only 2-of-18 from the field last June 22 when the Rockets beat the Knicks 90-84 in Game 7 of the championship series, but he was on target in the rematch, going 3-of-3 from 3-point range and leading the Knicks in scoring.

Houston never led in the game and managed only one tie at 53-53 in the third quarter. New York outscored Houston 30-18 in the fourth period.

San Francisco fans attacked by gunman

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — A gunman opened fire on a group of San Francisco 49ers fans, killing one and seriously wounding another.

The assailant walked up to several men standing on Natoma Street on Monday night and asked if they were 49er fans, homicide inspector Napoleon Hendrix said Wednesday.

"They yelled, 'Yeah!'" said Hendrix, who said the gunman cursed and fired five rounds.

A 21-year-old man was shot in the head and killed. Authorities still have not released his name.

Adolfo Mero, 29, remained in serious condition today with three gunshot wounds.

The assailant ran away and no arrests have been made.

The dead man's friends gathered the night after the killing at the spot where the man was killed for an impromptu beer-drinking memorial, Hendrix said.

Draft list released for expansion teams

The list includes a Super Bowl MVP, a Heisman Trophy winner, a six-time Pro Bowl selection and more than 600 pounds of Perry brothers.

Mark Rypien, Desmond Howard, Chris Doleman, and William and Michael Dean Perry are among the players who will be available in the NFL expansion draft.

On Thursday, the league released the list of players who can be picked in the Feb. 15 draft by the expansion Carolina Panthers and Jacksonville Jaguars, who will both begin play next season.

Each of the 28 established teams must make six players available in the draft. All those teams submitted their lists except Super Bowl opponents San Francisco and San Diego, which don't have to send in their names until Jan. 31.

Former AL umpire takes own life

ENDICOTT, N.Y. (AP) — The death of former major league umpire Ron Luciano, whose theatrical style made him a favorite among baseball fans, was classified Thursday as a suicide.

In a brief statement, Endicott police said an autopsy performed by Broome County coroner Dr. Michael McCarville concluded that Luciano, 57, died from carbon monoxide poisoning.

Lt. Harlan Ayers said no additional information or details would be released by authorities.

A woman who answered the phone at the Luciano home but who would not identify herself said the family had no comment.

"The family is not taking this well," Ayers said.

Luciano's body was discovered by a hunting friend Wednesday in the garage area of his home.

Key to basketball victories: Confidence

□ Lady Aggie team looks to turn road season around.

By Shelly Hall
THE BATTALION

Although the 22nd-ranked Texas A&M women's basketball team has had problems winning on the road this season, Lady Aggie head coach Candi Harvey hopes her team can turn it around when they visit the University of Houston on Saturday.

"I tell the girls to play on the road just like they do at home," Harvey said. "I tell them when we go on the road to a game like Houston, to play like it is their house."

Harvey attributes part of the Lady Aggies' difficulties on the road to the fact that other teams have done a good job filling the stands, but says the ultimate key to victory is player confidence.

"None of the other factors really matter if your players have confidence,"

Harvey said. After establishing themselves mentally, coach Harvey said the Lady Aggies need to be prepared for the quickness that the Houston Cougars will bring to the game.

"Houston is very quick, very athletic, and they like to push the ball around the court," Harvey said. Sophomore guard Lana Tucker also agrees that Houston will play a fast-paced game, therefore, the Lady Aggies need to control the game from the start.

"I expect an up-tempo game from Houston," Tucker said. "We can't get caught up in their game. We have to come out and control the tempo by sticking with our game plan." Part of that game plan includes stopping UH's quick drives to the basket. "They are all great athletes with a lot of speed," Tucker said. "We need to play

smart and defend against the inside drive." Lana Tucker's 4-of-7 performance from behind the three-point line against Texas boosted the Lady Aggies to victory on January 14. She said that freeing up the inside game will give the outside shooters more open shots.

"If the three point shot is available, I will take it," Tucker said. "It was there against Texas." The Lady Aggies' top gun, guard Lisa Branch hit 8-of-13 three-pointers on her way to a 30 point performance in the win against Rice University Wednesday night. She said the keys to the game for A&M will be to execute both the inside and outside game.

"Number one, we need to execute on offense, because once our offense gets going, they will have a hard time defending both our inside and outside game," Branch said.

"We will use a run and shoot offense to tame their speed."

Two of UH's performers that A&M will need to hold in check are junior guard Stacey Johnson, a transfer from Arizona State, and sophomore forward Pat Luckey. After a period of academic ineligibility, Luckey is expected to return with force, while Johnson leads the team with 23.4 points per game.

"One key player that we have to contain is Stacey Johnson," Branch said. "She is a guard who can control the game."

After sitting out the first 12 games due to insufficient grades, Cougar forward Pat Luckey is back. Luckey racked up 13 points and 10 rebounds in her debut last week, leading the Cougars to an 80-58 win over Texas Christian University.

The Lady Aggies loss last year to the Lady Cougars prevented A&M from sharing the Southwest Conference title with Texas Tech.

"We've got to go down there and create our own atmosphere in order to win," Harvey said. "They could end up in the middle of the race for the Southwest Conference title."

"We've got to go down there and create our own atmosphere in order to win."

— Candi Harvey,
Lady Aggie head coach



Aggies need win to stay in contention for title

By Chip Hanson
THE BATTALION

Home sweet home.

The Aggies (7-10, 1-2) are currently on a five game winning streak at G. Rollie White Coliseum. Saturday at 3 p.m. the Aggies hope to extend their "Holler House" hot streak against the University of Houston. "This is a bounce back game for us," senior forward Joe Wilbert said. "If we don't win this game it will be tough for us to win the conference."

The Cougars (3-11, 0-3) are led by post Tim Moore who is averaging 21.7 points and 15 rebounds in Southwest Conference play.

"We need to contain Moore through-

out the game," A&M coach Tony Barone said.

Houston also returns starters Jesse Drain and Tyrone Evans. Drain is averaging 14.7 points and 6.3 rebounds in the SWC. Point guard Tommy Davis has been dishing out seven assists per game.

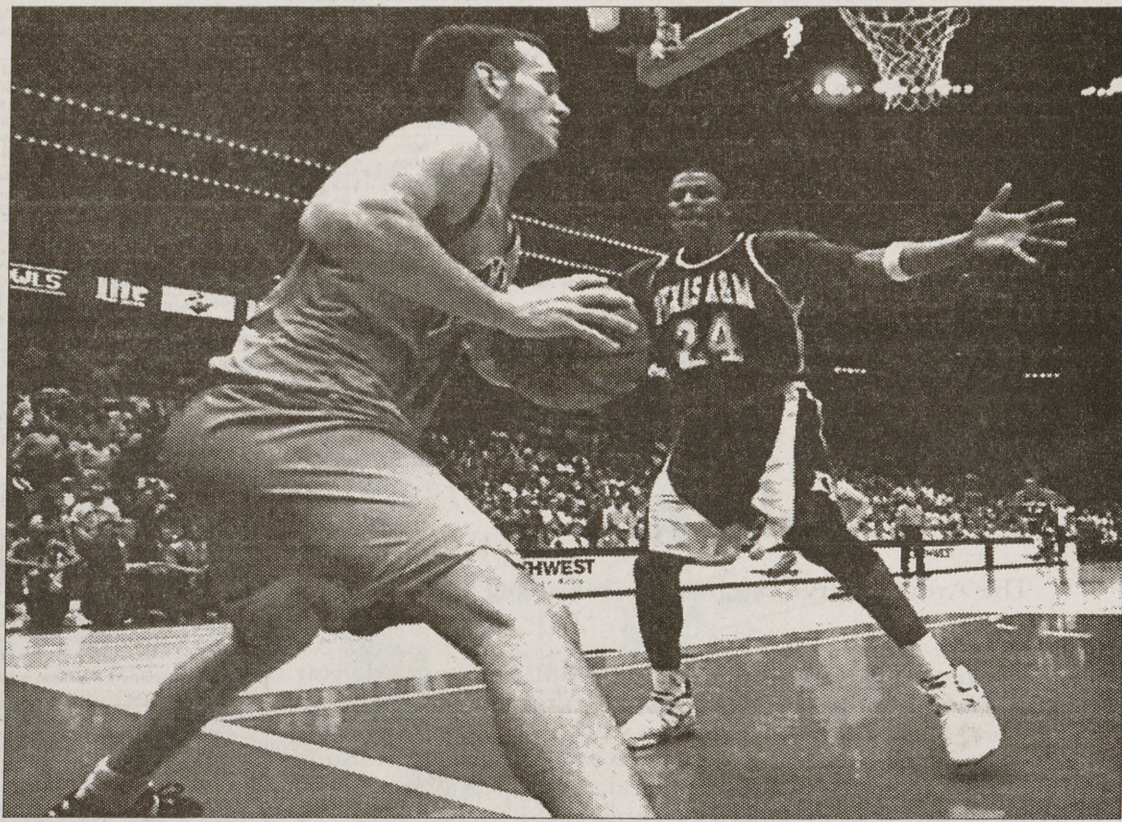
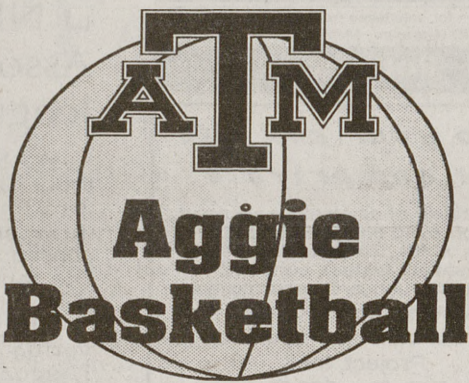
"They have a very tal-

ented team with a few good players," Barone said.

A&M is coming off a 66-62 loss to Rice last Tuesday in which Wilbert scored a game-high 33 points. Wilbert is currently averaging 22.1 points and 8.1 rebounds a contest. Senior forward Tony McGinnis follows with 14.4 points a game.

"For us to win this game we have to play hard and compete the whole time," McGinnis said. "We have a lot of young guys this year and they need to go out there and play hard the whole 40 minutes."

Texas A&M is currently tied for third place in the SWC.



Stew Milne/THE BATTALION

Senior forward Joe Wilbert tries to prevent Rice from inboundng the ball Tuesday.

Fortune, fame should not lure athletes into draft

By Kristina Buffin
THE BATTALION

To declare or not to declare, that is the question. After all the hoopla about who should win the national championship, Nebraska or Penn State, died down, the new debate in college football has become which underclassmen will enter the NFL draft on April 15 and whether or not they will be drafted.

Ever since underclassmen have been eligible to enter the NFL draft, the months of January through April have been filled with press conferences of such and such player declaring himself to the lure of the NFL or to say that they will stay in school, and receive their diploma. Unfortunately, the trend lately has been towards the former rather than the latter.

So far 33 underclassmen have declared themselves eligible for the draft. Prominent underclassmen such as Penn State's Ki-Jana Carter and Heisman Trophy winner Rashaan Salaam have already declared themselves eligible and



KRISTINA BUFFIN

SPORTSWRITER

are expected to be top ten picks. Carter's reasoning is that he will receive his diploma in May and that there is no real reason to remain at Penn State to play out his last year of eligibility when he can move on to the NFL.

Salaam, on the other hand, has decided that he has achieved all that he can in the NFL, winning the Heisman, rushing for 2,000 yards in one season and various other accolades. Obviously the lure of a multi-million dollar contract and endorsements outweighs the lure of a measly diploma from the University of Colorado.

Unfortunately this is not always true for all top prospects. 1994 top pick Dan "Big Daddy" Wilkinson was drafted as a junior out of Ohio State by the Cincinnati Bengals and was expected to create a big impact on the team. However, "Big Daddy" hasn't been very big at all this year. Instead of creating the impact of a meteor hitting the Earth, the impact has been more comparable to a pebble.

While some players have bombed in the pros (i.e. Miami's Gino Toretta, USC's Todd Marinovich), others have been extremely successful. For example, the Miami Dolphin's backup quarterback Bernie Kosar. Kosar won the national championship for the University of Miami but opted to not finish his extra two years of eligibility and become eligible for the draft. The difference between Kosar and other underclassmen who declare early is that he graduated.

The NFL draft is like playing the state lottery, you never know if your number will come up. The odds are against you, star or not. If you don't be-

lieve me just ask Heisman winner Charlie Ward. I have to admit though the idea of making beaucoup bucks playing a game for a living is much more enticing than staying in school and working for a diploma. The odds are better that you'll get a job with a diploma than being drafted in the NFL.

But nothing in life is guaranteed. The worst thing that could happen is that you don't get drafted and you have an actual education to fall back on. Imagine that. Underclassmen need to take a step back and look at the real world. Instead of letting money and endorsements determine their choices they should ask what if? What if I'm not drafted? What if you are drafted and then cut? Players need something to fall back on.

Even though college players receive scholarships for their athletic abilities they should take advantage of the opportunity that has been given to them. Get an education while you can because you never know when your number will be called, if it is ever called.

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