

A&M gymnastic teams take second place at Nationals

Staff and Wire Reports

After a disappointing start of the season, the Texas A&M Men's and Women's Gymnastic Teams tumbled into success two weeks ago when they captured second place at the NAIGC Collegiate National Championships.

The women's team placed behind Miami by only 1.3 points with

a score of 139.65, beating the University of Texas by 2.05 points. A&M's Denise Bean, who was the 1995 national vaulting champion, walked away with the title on the uneven parallel bars.

A&M Gymnastics coach Steve Waples said the second place team finish was very emotional because of an early injury by Bean.

On the night before the competi-

tion, Bean sprained her right knee during practice and was expected not to be able to participate in the meet. Although Bean had trouble even walking on the knee, she altered her routines so that all weight would be placed on her left leg.

Waples said Bean showed her endurance when she completed a perfect dismount off the bars, a front 1 and 1/2 with a 1/2 twist. He said a

landing of that difficulty with a sprained knee was almost impossible.

The A&M men's team, which was not expected to be a factor in the team results, also walked away with a second place finish. Team Captain John Sides placed sixth the all-around and fifth on the vault and pommel horse, and Kevin Lally had a fifth place finish on both the floor exercise and the parallel bars.

Hawks take 2-1 series lead, Blazers stay alive with win

ATLANTA (AP) — Steve Smith scored 26 points, including a critical 3-pointer with 1:31 remaining, and the Atlanta Hawks took command of their Eastern Conference series with Indiana, beating the Pacers 90-83 Monday night.

Christian Laettner, appearing in the NBA playoffs for the first time, outplayed Indiana center Rik Smits, adding 24 points as the Hawks took a 2-1 edge in the best-of-5 series. Atlanta is trying to advance to the second round for only the second time in eight years.

Atlanta went nearly four minutes without scoring until Laettner put the Hawks ahead for good, backing in against three defenders and putting in a shot that made it 81-80 with 3:06 remaining.

Then, after Indiana missed two straight 3-pointers, Smith fired in a shot from at least 5 feet behind the stripe as the 24-second clock expired to push Atlanta's lead to 84-80.

Haywoode Workman hit a 3-pointer for Indiana with 57 seconds to go, but that was the last

basket for the Pacers, who eliminated Atlanta from the playoffs the last two years.

Blazers 94, Jazz 91, OK

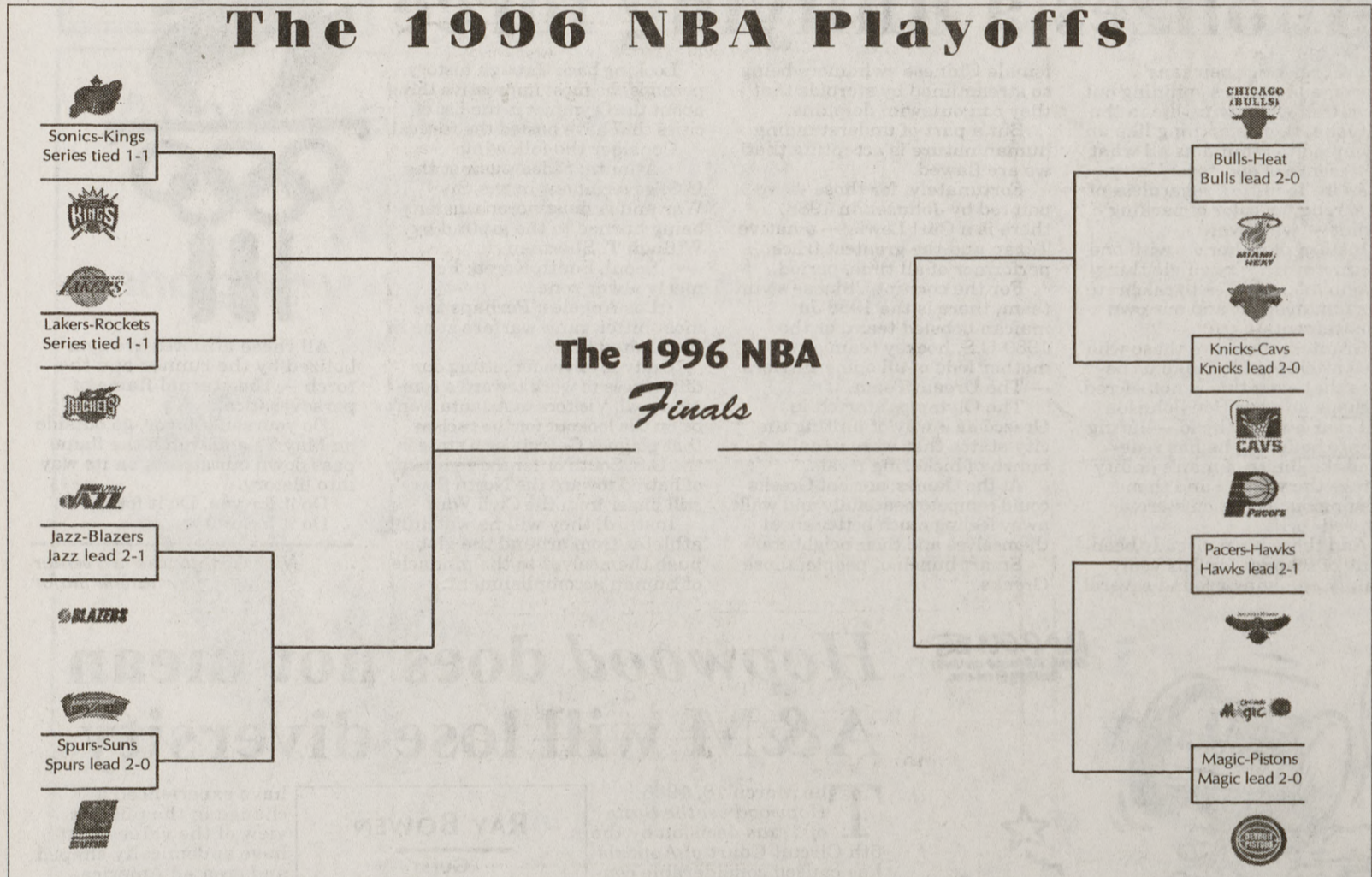
PORTLAND, Ore. (AP) — Buck Williams scored the go-ahead basket on an offensive rebound with 14.1 seconds left in overtime, and Portland overcame poor free-throw shooting to beat Utah 94-91 Monday night and stay alive in their first round playoff series.

Utah still leads the best-of-6 series 2-1, with Game 4 Wednesday night in Portland's Rose Garden.

Williams grabbed a rebound of Arvydas Sabonis' missed shot and put back a layup to give the Trail Blazers a 93-91 lead. It was only Williams' second field goal of the game.

Utah had a chance to tie the game but John Stockton missed a 15-foot jumper and Portland's Davey Grant grabbed the rebound with 3.5 seconds remaining.

Rod Strickland, who scored 19 of his 19 points after halftime, was fouled and made one free throw with 2.7 seconds left.



Texas

Continued from Page 11

tournaments. In the conference, the Aggies are currently fifth with a 9-12 record. They must finish among the top four teams to earn a spot in the SWC Tournament in Lubbock next month.

The only teams A&M can still catch in conference play are Baylor (11-10) and Texas Christian University (8-9). The Aggies play their final three regular-season games

against Baylor this weekend in Waco and could move into third place in the SWC with a sweep.

TCU finishes its season with four games against Texas — two in Fort Worth and two at The Ballpark at Arlington. The Aggies swept TCU earlier this season and would have the tiebreaker if the two teams tied for fourth place.

The NCAA is a different story. Many observers believe a bid for a team, and the Aggies are currently 33-19 on the season with three games to play.

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