

SPORTS
BRIEFS

Aggies fall to North Texas Eagles, 84-78

DENTON — The Texas A&M Men's Basketball Team's season-opening winning streak snapped Thursday night, as the North Texas Eagles came back to beat the Aggies 84-78. A&M jumped out to a 50-42 advantage at halftime, but watched the Eagles outscore them by 14 in the second half.

"I thought we wore ourselves out in the first half," A&M Head Coach Tony Barone said. "I'm a little disappointed in that. The score was OK, but our shot selection was too quick."

The Aggies were paced by sophomore forward Calvin Davis' 20-point, six-rebound performance, while junior Tracy Anderson and freshman Gerald Brown chipped in 18 points apiece.

"It was a tough game," Barone said. "I thought we played well at moments. They made it tough on us with their traps and presses in the second half."

The Aggies return to action against Southeastern Louisiana at G. Rollie White Coliseum Saturday at 7 p.m.

Swimmers, divers have busy weekend

The Texas A&M Men's and Women's Swimming and Diving teams will split up this weekend as the women's swimming team and the diving squad travel to Austin, while the men's swimming team heads to San Antonio.

Both diving squads, along with the women's swimming team, will compete at the Texas Invitational Friday through Sunday. The men's swimmers will complete their competition at the U.S. Open Saturday and Sunday.

Women's Head Coach Don Wagner said his 25th-ranked squad is looking to have a good time at the meet.

"This should be a fun meet," he said. "We'll challenge a lot of people and I think we will perform well." In San Antonio, the men's swimming team will be racing against a stiff field.

"This is an excellent opportunity for our team to get some racing in against very good competition," Men's Head Coach Mel Nash said. "Some of the top swimmers in the country, including some post-graduate swimmers, will be in the pool."

A&M signs seven Texas prospects

Texas A&M Baseball Head Coach Mark Johnson announced the early signings of seven Texas prospects Wednesday.

The recruits will all be freshmen in the 1997-98 season except pitcher Kyle Holle, who is a junior college transfer. Among the freshmen are pitchers Clancy Fossum from Waco and Chris Scarcella from League City, outfielder Daylan Holt from Mesquite, catcher/infielder Brent Howell from Boerne, infielder Brady Minyard from Beaumont, and outfielder Dustin Trimmier from San Antonio.

"This is a good start to our recruiting," Johnson said. "All of these young men are outstanding people as well as good baseball players. We're pleased they have signed in the early period, and of course, we will have to wait and see on the major league draft next summer."



Davis

Youthful Ags ready to take giant leap

By MATT MITCHELL
THE BATTALION

Youth and athleticism can be an explosive mix on the basketball court, and that is something Tony Barone is counting on. He's got a lot of both on his hands as the Texas A&M Men's Basketball Team enters the 1996-97 season.

Head Coach Barone and his charges are gearing up for what could be a breakthrough year for a program that has been frustrated in recent years by uneven play and the absence of consistent scoring. The Aggies will look to capitalize on several key additions, as well as more experienced veterans, to take the next step towards becoming a major college basketball program.

Barone has landed one of the top



Freshman **Shanne Jones** and junior **Tracey Anderson** swarm an Illinois-Chicago guard at G. Rollie White.

recruiting classes in school history for the second straight year, and while the faces have changed, the talent level has undoubtedly risen.

Senior Tracey Anderson takes over point guard duties for the departed Kyle Kessel, who left the team to concentrate on his professional baseball career with the New York Mets. Anderson is the team's top returning scorer this year, and brings quickness and defensive abilities to the team's quarterback position.

Also returning at guard is the small but explosive senior Derrick Hart, who shot a team-leading 38 percent from 3-point range last year, connecting on a school-record 74 bombs.

Incoming freshmen Steve Houston and Brian Barone have also made an immediate impact at the guard position, providing quality minutes off the bench. Houston is a physical player who can bang inside and defend taller players on the perimeter.

A&M's front court is solid as well, with big, physical players able to roam the paint at will. Junior Dario Quesada brings a feather-soft shooting touch and strong rebounding skills to the table, and will team up with sophomores Calvin Davis and Brad Stricker to form a formidable inside game for the Aggies. Davis is a fearsome shot blocker and intimidating defensive presence, while Quesada can score from virtually anywhere, from the baseline to beyond the arc.

A&M's forward rotation may be among the most talented in the Big 12. Newcomers Jerald Brown, Larry Thompson and Shanne Jones have already played major minutes this season and look to be a major factor in the Aggies' success.

Brown not only has the ability to play any position on the floor, but a deft shooting touch and ability to create off the dribble

which could create headaches for opposing teams. Jones and Thompson are do-everything, workhorse players with a lot of intensity and emotion.

"I think our backcourt has made plays when they had to make plays," Barone said. "I think our frontcourt has been about the same. We have not put together the front and backcourt yet, and once we do that, we'll be a much better basketball team."

"We just want to get better every day, and that's been really pleasing with this team — they've gotten better every practice and every game."

Improvement is the key, and is indeed necessary for the Aggies to compete with the upper-echelon teams they will face this season. Games against Clemson, Texas-El Paso and Princeton loom before the new year, and the Big 12 Conference is loaded with talent. In addition to home and away contests against their fellow South Division members, the Aggies will venture to Kansas on Jan. 22 to meet Jacque Vaughn and the Jayhawks, the current No. 1 team in the country.

"It's a tough league," Barone said. "I think we know what we're getting into and the players know what they're getting into. I don't think there's any question that it's the highest level of basketball you can play."

A&M is still a relatively young team and will rely on several newcomers to provide quality minutes. Their crunch-time execution must improve, as evidenced by their losing seven of their final 11 games last season in the final 30 seconds. But the aforementioned youth will be an asset as well, as the Aggies boast a much more physical lineup than last year and should be vastly improved in the rebounding and perimeter shooting departments.

This time, youth may indeed be served.



Freshman **Steve Houston** brings the ball upcourt in the Aggies' game against Illinois-Chicago at G. Rollie White.

Volleyball ready for round two

By SARA DUESING
THE BATTALION

After a roller coaster regular season with more than its share of ups and downs, the 15th-ranked Texas A&M Volleyball Team now finds itself in a steady, successful rhythm as it works its way toward its goal — the elite eight.

Coming off a victory against the University of Arkansas-Little Rock Wednesday night, A&M advances to the second round of the NCAA Tournament where it faces No. 7 Michigan State University Saturday at 6 p.m. in East Lansing, Mich.

The Spartans (24-6 overall, 18-2 in the Big 10 Conference), who were given a first-round bye, are entering their third Big Dance with a six-game winning streak and a .288 hitting percentage.

"I know they [MSU] have a very well-trained team, both offensively and defensively," Head Coach Laurie Corbelli said. "Their weakness is the pressure they have on them. They can't lose since they're trying to repeat a Final Four performance."

The goal the Lady Aggies set at the beginning of the season was to go further in the NCAA tournament than last year, when they reached the Sweet 16 before falling to the University of Florida in three games.

"Our goal is to make it to the elite eight," junior setter Farah Mensik said. "We're very capable of that, especially because of the way we played [against UALR]."

In the two teams' last face-off, the Lady Aggies eliminated the Spartans in the first round of the 1994 NCAA Tournament, 3-1, in College Station.

Maintaining the same game strategies, Corbelli said the team needs a peak performance to defeat MSU this time, with accurate passing and defense, deceptive setting and strong attacks. Excitement



Ryan Rogers, THE BATTALION

Junior **Kristie Smedsrud** prepares for a dig in the first round of the NCAA Tournament at G. Rollie White.

and energy will no doubt also help.

"It felt really good to win Wednesday," junior middle blocker Cindy VanderWoude said. "I'm real excited because we came off strong after playing Nebraska and really played well as a team."

"We had questioned ourselves for a little bit and now we're playing to win rather than playing and being afraid to lose."

With a victory Saturday, A&M would roll into the third round and face the winner of the Minnesota-Long Beach State matchup Dec. 12.

Lady Ags hope to end losing streak

By JAMIE BURCH
THE BATTALION

The Texas A&M Women's Basketball Team (1-2) will head east this weekend to compete in the Brown Classic, a four-team, double-elimination tournament, in Providence, R.I. The Lady Aggies play Marshall University (2-2) Saturday at 2 p.m.

With a win, A&M would play in the championship match against the winner of the Brown-Bucknell game on Sunday at 2 p.m. A loss would vault the Lady Aggies into the consolation game Sunday at noon.

The Lady Aggies are coming off a 74-71 loss to Southern Methodist University Wednesday night. Although A&M never

led in the game and trailed by as many as 18 points for much of the second half, the Lady Aggies cut the double-digit deficit to two points with just under one minute remaining. But A&M sophomore guard Kerrie Patterson missed a desperation 35-foot shot at the buzzer which would have sent the game into overtime.

Head Coach Candi Harvey said she was impressed with her team's resilience.

"We're disappointed that we didn't

win the game," Harvey said. "But being 18 down with four freshmen and a sophomore on the floor and coming back to make the run we did was a tremendous statement for this young team."

A&M's Saturday opponent, the Thundering Heard of Marshall, is led by sophomore forward Kristina Behnfeldt's 18 points and 10.8 rebounds per game. Marshall, fresh off a 67-52 victory over Moorhead State, is shooting 85 percent from the charity stripe.

The Bucknell Bisons (4-2), riding a two-game winning streak, are led by sophomore forward Kim Delfs. Delfs is averaging 17.2 points and 7.8 rebounds per game.

The host, Brown University (2-3), supplies quite an offensive threat.

Sophomore guard Vita Redding leads the Lady Bears with a 23.2 scoring average. Brown fortifies its attack with junior forward Liz Turner, who leads the team with 7.8 rebounds and 18.4 points per game.

Harvey said she's looking for the Lady Aggies to continue their progress.

"We just need to learn from [Wednesday] night's experience," Harvey said. "If we consistently improve, than we're going to be a



The Battalion's 1996 Staff Picks

The Match-Ups	Tom Day	Kristina Buffin	Jamie Burch	Sara Duesing	Jeremy Furtick	Colby Gaines	Ross Hecox	Matt Mitchell	Dennis Ramirez	Nicki Smith	Consensus
#3 Nebraska vs. Texas	Nebraska	Nebraska	Nebraska	Nebraska	Nebraska	Nebraska	Nebraska	Nebraska	Nebraska	Nebraska	Neb: Horns learn how they play up North
#4 Florida vs. #15 Alabama	Florida	Florida	Florida	Florida	Florida	Florida	Florida	Florida	Florida	Florida	Florida: No goodbye present for Stallings
#6 BYU vs. #20 Wyoming	BYU	BYU	Wyoming	BYU	BYU	BYU	Wyoming	BYU	BYU	BYU	BYU: Cowboys get WAC-ed.
#22 Army vs. Navy	Navy	Navy	Army	Army	Navy	Army	Navy	Army	Army	Army	Army: Cadets all they can be
Cowboys at Arizona	Cowboys	Arizona	Cowboys	Cowboys	Cowboys	Cowboys	Cowboys	Cowboys	Cowboys	Cowboys	Cowboys: Buffin loves 'lectric Leeland
Jacksonville at Oilers	Oilers	Oilers	Jacksonville	Oilers	Oilers	Oilers	Oilers	Oilers	Oilers	Oilers	Oilers: Houston feels right at 'home'
Denver at Green Bay	Green Bay	Denver	Green Bay	Green Bay	Green Bay	Green Bay	Denver	Green Bay	Green Bay	Denver	Green Bay: Broncos slip on frozen tundra
Carolina at San Francisco	San Francisco	San Francisco	San Francisco	San Francisco	Carolina	San Francisco	San Francisco	San Francisco	San Francisco	San Francisco	49ers: Panthers show true expansion colors
San Diego at Pittsburgh	Pittsburgh	Pittsburgh	Pittsburgh	Pittsburgh	Pittsburgh	Pittsburgh	Pittsburgh	Pittsburgh	Pittsburgh	Pittsburgh	Pittsburgh: Chargers need jump start
Philadelphia at Indianapolis	Philadelphia	Philadelphia	Philadelphia	Philadelphia	Philadelphia	Philadelphia	Philadelphia	Philadelphia	Philadelphia	Philadelphia	Philadelphia: Shows how smart we are
Kansas City at Oakland	Kansas City	Oakland	Kansas City	Kansas City	Oakland	Kansas City	Kansas City	Kansas City	Kansas City	Kansas City	Kansas City: Raiders, Davis need new city
Minnesota at Detroit	Minnesota	Minnesota	Minnesota	Detroit	Minnesota	Minnesota	Detroit	Detroit	Minnesota	Detroit	Minnesota: Norris division lowdown
Last Week	7-5	7-5	8-4	8-4	8-4	6-6	7-5	8-4	7-5	7-5	73-47: Title up for grabs with 2 weeks left
Cumulative	105-51	96-60	95-61	103-53	101-55	100-56	100-56	99-57	99-57	98-58	996-564: Burch, Buffin locked in duel