

# Aggies try to stop losing skid against No. 1 Jayhawks

By MATT MITCHELL  
THE BATTALION

This week, the Texas A&M Men's Basketball Team will be looking out for No. 1 — the Kansas Jayhawks. The Aggies will also be looking for their first conference win tonight when they travel to Lawrence, Kan., for the long-awaited matchup with their top-ranked, Big 12 foe. This game has been circled on the schedules of players and coaches alike since the start of the season.

"We're extremely excited about going there," A&M Head Coach Tony Barone said. "It's a challenge and it's an opportunity. I think it's going to be another learning experience. These whole first four games for our kids in the Big 12 have been a learning experience."

The Aggies (6-8, 0-4) had better learn in a hurry against the undefeated Jayhawks, who lead the Big 12 in scoring, field goal percentage and rebounding margin. Kansas returns all five starters from last season and boasts an 18-0 record that includes impressive wins over such basketball powers as the University of Cincinnati, the University of California, Louisiana State University, George Washington University, the University of Connecticut, and the University of Texas.

When an opposing team faces the Jayhawks at home, however, winning is especially tough. Aside from being an excellent team and routinely playing in front of over 16,000 people, Kansas has the mystique of almost a century of basketball tradition and some of the greatest players and coaches the college game has ever known.

"There's two issues about Kansas," Barone said. "No. 1 is it's a total basketball environment when you go there—the tradition, Allen Fieldhouse, Phog Allen and all that stuff.

"(No. 2) they have great chemistry, and they have great players, and they're wonderfully coached. So that's a nice combination to have."

Kansas returns all five starters from last season's 29-5 Elite Eight team and has the kind of veteran leadership that college coaches drool over. Their chemistry and cohesiveness as a team are the main reasons they are picked by many to be the last team standing at the Big Dance.



Stew Milne, THE BATTALION

See **AGGIES**, Page 8 Sophomore **Calvin Davis** tries to regain possession of the ball amongst Georgia Southern defenders.

## "Mr. Hustle" improving skills both on and off the basketball court

By CHRIS FERRELL  
THE BATTALION

Shanne Jones is coming into his own.

Jones, a sophomore small forward for the Texas A&M Men's Basketball Team, has made great strides, both on the court and in the classroom. He is on his way to becoming one of the team's top scoring threats.

A&M Head Coach Tony Barone said since transferring from Stetson following the 1994-95 season, Jones has played an important role for A&M.

"Last year he sat out (because of an NCAA rule that calls for players to miss a year when transferring from one Division I school to another) and was Mr. Hustle of the team," Barone said. "Shanne has a really good work ethic."

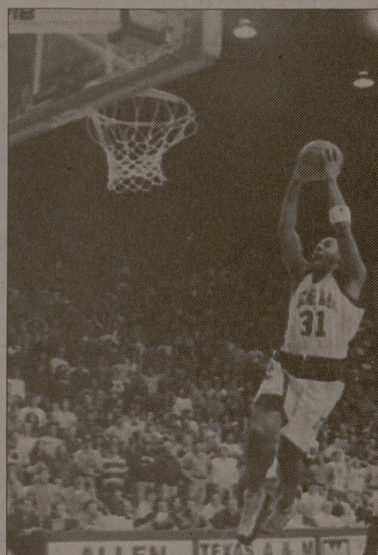
Barone added that Jones' strength and toughness have been major attributes for the Aggies this season.

So far, the hard work and dedication appear to be paying off.

Jones has taken his game to a higher level in Big 12 play, leading the team in scoring with a 14.3 points per game average. He has scored in double figures in five straight games, including a team-high 16 in the Aggie's overtime loss to the University of Texas. Through 14 games, he has already established new career highs in points, rebounds and assists.

Jones has also played an important role defensively for the Aggies.

Against Texas, Jones split time with freshman Jerald Brown guarding All-



Ryan Rogers, THE BATTALION

Sophomore **Shanne Jones** goes for the slam dunk against Texas.

American guard Reggie Freeman. Taking advantage of his strength and physical style, Jones held Freeman scoreless for the first eleven minutes of the game.

"We thought that being a little more physical on Reggie was a good idea, and he (Jones) did a good job," Barone said. "He got tired, which is a little normal, and as he gets older and a little stronger and his body catches up he'll really be a good player."

Barone has been proud of Jones' commitment to his schoolwork as well.

See **JONES**, Page 8

# Lady Aggies look to extend conference streak to two

By JAMIE BURCH  
THE BATTALION

The Kansas University Lady Jayhawks may not boast a No. 1 ranking or the likes of Raef LaFrentz and Jacque Vaughn, but the Texas A&M Women's Basketball Team (7-8 overall, 0-4 in Big 12) will have their hands full when they battle Kansas (12-3, 3-1) at G. Rollie White Coliseum tonight at 7.

Fresh off a 75-72 victory over Oklahoma State University, the Lady Aggies will look to build on their first-ever Big 12 victory.

A&M Head Coach Candi Harvey said the win against OSU eases the burden of losing their first two Big 12 games.

"It takes a tremendous amount of pressure off our backs," Harvey

said. "All these young ladies are very competitive and have come from winning programs. Nobody involved in this situation likes to lose."

**"Texas was able to keep Kansas in a halfcourt game. If we can do that, we should be able to get them bored with a slower tempo."**

Candi Harvey  
A&M Head Coach

Halting a three-game skid which included a 100-63 shellacking by the University of Texas, A&M will once again try to reach the ever-elusive .500 mark.

Harvey said the collapse against the Lady Longhorns was due in part to the environment created by fans at the Frank Irwin Center.

"I think what happened happens to a lot of teams in Austin," Harvey said. "You're in the game, doing the right things, and they all of a sudden make a run."

"Seven thousand frenzied fans get involved and unless you're a very disciplined, experienced basketball team

which runs, it becomes a really long run. We lost our concentration, our focus, and got a little rattled."

The Lady Jayhawks, fourth in the Big 12, will try to rebound from a 82-72 loss to Texas on Saturday night. Senior guard Tamecka Dixon poses the Lady Ags' biggest concern.

Harvey compared Dixon to former A&M standout Lisa Branch.

"She's a great player," Harvey said. "She's the total package player. She's going to get her points. It's just like everybody for the last four years having to defend against Branch."

"What you want to keep a great guard from doing is not only scoring, but from creating a lot of offense for their teammates."

Harvey said Kansas' strength lies in their ability to run the court and maintain a fast-paced game for the full 40 minutes.

"They love to run," Harvey said. "Texas was able to keep Kansas in a halfcourt game. If we can do that, we should be able to get them bored with a slower tempo."



Stew Milne, THE BATTALION

Freshman **Jennifer Burrows** battles Nebraska defenders Jan. 11.

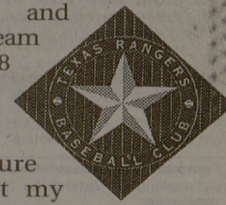
## Rangers stop in College Station

The Texas Ranger Caravan rolled through College Station yesterday afternoon to talk to the local media and sign autographs for local kids at the Texas A&M Student Recreation Center.

Members of the Rangers spoke about recent off-season acquisitions and hopes for the team in the 1997-98 season.

"That's (worrying about future signings) not my job," outfielder Rusty Greer said. "Whatever team (General Manager Doug Melvin and management) put on field, that's the team I'm going to play with."

See full story in tomorrow's Battalion



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