

Hawks overpower Aggies twice in one night

Lady Aggies fall to No. 15 Kansas, 79-63

By DENNIS RAMIREZ AND LARA L. ZUEHLKE
THE BATTALION

The Texas A&M Women's Basketball Team came up short on its quest for a second conference win against No. 15 Kansas University with a 79-63 loss before 2,373 at G. Rollie White Coliseum.

The Lady Aggs fell to 7-9, 1-5 in conference play, and the Lady Jayhawks proved why they are in the top 25 as they cruised to 13-3 overall and 4-1 in the Big 12.

After a strong first half, which found the Lady Aggs pulling within one point of the heavily favored Kansas squad, A&M failed to execute in the second half.

"Everything was clicking in the first half," A&M Head Coach Candi Harvey said. "The only thing I wasn't pleased with was rebounding. In the second half, I thought rebounding was the difference. We failed to make the open shots and we started rushing midway through the second half."

While shooting 47 percent (16-34) in the first half, the Lady Aggs broke down and shot 23 percent (8-35) in the second half. This provided the Jayhawks with an open forum to make key runs and take control of the momentum factor.

Jayhawk senior guard Tamecka Dixon ran rampant over the Aggie defense and racked up a game-high 29 points. More importantly with 7:13 left in the second half and the Lady Aggies down by only six, Dixon managed to strip away any hopes of an upset.

"It was obviously the Tamecka Dixon show in the second half and the only way to stop her was to get her off the floor," Harvey said. "By not getting the fifth foul on her, she was able to create a different game when she was on the floor."

Height was another factor the Lady Aggies had to battle.

A&M junior center Kim Linder, who recorded a career-high 18 points, said the Jayhawks used their height and speed to their advantage.

"We haven't seen anyone that is tall and athletic," Linder said. "We're usually the shorter team but we are the quicker team. Tonight, they were just as fast as us, stronger, had quickness and had great jumping ability."

This game marked a milestone for senior guard Lana Tucker, who reached the 1,000-point mark and became only the 12th player in school history to accomplish this feat.

Tucker faced another feat with guarding the prolific Dixon, which proved to be more difficult than getting the 16 points she needed to add her name to the history books.

"She (Dixon) is very quick and a great athlete," Tucker said. "She is hard to guard because she will shoot over you or if you step up to guard her, she has the ability to drive right past you. She is their go-to player and is what makes the team go."

Besides the fact that the Lady Aggs found themselves on the short end of the stick for the ninth time this season, Harvey stands by the team and said they are knocking on the door of a winning season.

"Tonight, we faced a very athletic team that is very well coached," Harvey said. "Like I have said before, we are right there and we need to elevate our game."

"This includes playing through runs and making a run back ourselves and we also need to quit giving them second chance points. I know everybody is tired of hearing it but we are right there, we just need to get smarter and learn how to finish."



Senior guard Lana Tucker goes up for her 1,000 career point, which was also the last point in the game in a loss to Kansas.

Kansas hands Aggies eighth consecutive loss, 89-60

STAFF AND WIRE REPORTS

LAWRENCE, KAN. — The Texas A&M Men's Basketball Team got its first taste of big time basketball last night when they travelled to Lawrence, Kan., to take on the nation's top-ranked team, the Kansas Jayhawks.

The Aggies lost their eighth game in a row, 89-60 in front of 16,300 at Allen Fieldhouse.

A&M Head Coach Tony Barone said Kansas' stifling defense was key in the game.

"They are relentless in their attack," Barone said. "They play aggressive the whole time, it's just a way of life with them. They play hard the whole 40 minutes and just pound you."

This was the first time the Aggies have played the No. 1 team since 1971, when A&M lost to UCLA 117-53 in Los Angeles.

Sophomore Calvin Davis said the Jayhawks dished out what the Aggies were expecting.

"It's exactly as we thought it would be," Davis said. "They're beatable, but it's hard to say what it's going to take a team to accomplish that."

Freshman Brian Barone said that a win would have taken 100-percent effort from everyone on the team.

"You have to keep your composure up at all times, and you can't get behind early or it's all over," Barone said.

Davis led all Aggie scorers with 17 points and Kansas' Paul Pierce led all scorers with 19. The Aggies held Jacque Vaughn to only seven points.

Kansas Head Coach Roy Williams said A&M's zone defense was a factor leading to the teams 46 percent field-goal percentage.

"We didn't shoot as well as I would have liked," Williams said. "We didn't have the shot selection. There at the end of the first half, we took some crazy shots but we got the shots that we wanted at the beginning of the second half."

Ranger off-season

Rangers fill void of free-agent exodus with farm system players

By JAMIE BURCH
THE BATTALION

For the first time in the team's 25-year history, the Texas Rangers advanced to the post-season. The defending American League West champions are now trying to repeat last season's success. In doing so, Rangers' management has spent the off-season trying to shore up some

weaknesses on both sides of the ball. The Rangers' bullpen stands at the top of the list. The relief spent much of last season on life support. Leading the league in blown saves, the Rangers lost nine games they led entering the ninth inning. The relievers were 15-25, the fewest wins of any bullpen. The relief corps, with an ERA of 4.32, converted just 43 of 60 save opportunities.

In an attempt to stop the bleeding, Ranger management acquired World Series MVP John Wetteland, who was 2-3 with a 2.83 ERA and 43 saves last season, as a free agent from the New York Yankees. Wetteland, who struck out 69 batters in 63.2 innings, will replace last season's closer Mike Henneman (0-7, 5.79 ERA, 31 saves).

Ranger General Manager Doug Melvin said Wetteland's acquisition puts the Rangers one step closer to the championship. "We felt that adding John to our club not only filled a hole," Melvin said, "but it brings some stature and a championship presence to the ball club. He's been in the post-season the last few years with the Yankees."

"When you add that kind of player, it sends a message that we want to continue to compete and that it's not just a one-year success story for the Texas Rangers."

Outfielder Rusty Greer said signing Wetteland shows the organization's desire to win. "It shows a big commitment on the Rangers' part," Greer said. "Obviously, it helps us as a ballclub. But we still have to have the lead in the ninth inning for him to do his job."

The front office also added some new faces to the middle relief. Righthander Xavier Hernandez, who was 5-5 with a 4.22 ERA last year, was obtained from the Houston Astros to replace depth lost to free agency with the departures of Mike Stanton and Dennis Cook. The Rangers also picked up right-hander Cory Bailey, who was 7-6 with a 4.05 ERA last season, from the Cincinnati Reds' farm system.

Melvin said he expects the latest additions to the bullpen to help with last season's shortcomings.

"You don't have to watch the runners close when you have him (Rodriguez) behind the plate."

Darren Oliver
Rangers pitcher

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From one of the oldest teams in the league, to one of the youngest

By JEREMY FURTICK
THE BATTALION

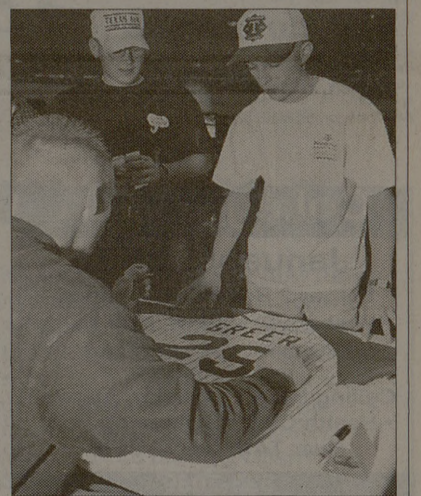
The 1996 American League Western Division champion Texas Rangers filled some vacant positions in its lineup by dipping into the fountain of youth this winter.

The Rangers, whose average age ranked among the oldest in the league last season, will open the 1997 with a younger look.

The Rangers' starting lineup will miss the presence of standout lead-off man and center fielder Darryl Hamilton, who finished with a .293 batting average, 94 runs and 15 stolen bases last season. Hamilton did not commit an error last season and compiled the highest first-inning on-base percentage in the American League.

However, Hamilton was considered expendable as the Rangers searched for a closer to patch their biggest wound.

Filling the gap in The Ballpark in Arlington's vast center field will be 26-year-old reserve outfielder Damon Buford, who had a .283 bat-



Amy Dunlap, THE BATTALION
Outfielder Rusty Greer signs junior Ben Young's jersey Tuesday.

ting average, 30 runs and eight stolen bases last season.

General Manager Doug Melvin said he is not concerned with Buford's lack of starting experience.

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Amy Dunlap, THE BATTALION
Kris Carothers, a freshman mechanical engineering major, hands his Rangers pennant to outfielder Rusty Greer to autograph.

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Tue.	1/28	227: 8-10pm Ch.3,4
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Thu.	1/30	227: 6-8pm Old Crow Tests

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