

## Transition game

### Coach Peggie Gillom continues rookie year against Kansas State

BY TRAVIS HARSCH  
The Battalion

For any coach who takes a new job, there is a transition period. Getting settled into a position, implementing an offense and a defense of choice and meeting new faces can cause anxiety for just about any coach, no matter the number of moves he or she has made in the past.

But for A&M women's basketball coach Peggie Gillom, there were a lot more butterflies because Gillom had never had a head coaching position before coming to College Station at the start of this season. "I was nervous at the start," Gillom said. "You've been an assistant all your life, and all of a sudden, you've got your own program."

Although Gillom had never occupied the seat on the bench, she was by no means inexperienced. In her collegiate career from 1977 to 1980 at the University of Mississippi, Gillom set scoring and rebounding records which no Rebel, male or female has surpassed. She joined the staff in Oxford in 1981 and remained there until 1997, when she left to take an assistant's job with the Houston Comets of the Women's National Basketball Association (WNBA).

With the Comets, Gillom won WNBA Championships in 1997 and 1998 before leaving to take the head coaching position at A&M. Gillom said she has gotten stronger as a person since taking the job.

"It wasn't as hard as I thought it was going to be, and it has made me grow," Gillom said. "I needed that experience, here you are, calling the shots, instead of someone else; it's been a challenge, but I like it here."

Gillom's first season as a head coach had an interesting opening with the Aggies getting off to a 5-5 start in non-conference play and now taking a deceptive 6-0 record (1-5, Big 12) into Manhattan this weekend to play Kansas State (11-6, 4-3) at 7 p.m. tonight. Six of those 10 losses have been by five points or less, including last weekend's 70-69 loss to Oklahoma State, when A&M rallied after trailing by 17.

"There were some games, especially in the preseason, that we didn't take care of our business," Gillom



KATHY STEMPIEN/THE BATTALION

Junior forward **Kera Alexander** and the A&M Women's Basketball Team will face Kansas State Wednesday in Manhattan, Kan.

## Aggies ready for revenge

### Rematch with Texas Tech offers chance to avenge loss

BY SANTOSH VENKATARAMAN  
The Battalion

The Texas A&M Men's Basketball Team returns to Reed Arena tonight for a Big 12 Conference game against the Texas Tech Red Raiders. The Aggies (8-8, 1-5 in Big 12) will have an opportunity to tie Tech in the Big 12 standings with a 2-4 conference mark. The Aggies also are looking for their first Big 12 victory in Reed Arena.

A&M is coming off a last-second 57-56 win at Baylor on Saturday. In a play shown on highlight shows across the nation, freshman center Joe White's full-court inbound pass was tipped by junior guard Jerald Brown to senior shooting guard Chris Clayton.

Clayton, standing at the left wing, stroked the game-winning three-pointer at the buzzer.

The win snapped the Aggies' 25-game road conference losing streak and gave Coach Melvin Watkins his first Big 12 victory. The victory also marked Watkins' 50th win as a collegiate head coach.

Texas Tech (10-9 overall), who has lost four of its last five games, is led by 5-foot-11 guard Rayford Young. Young is averaging 14.6 points per game and is one of the top free-throw shooters in the nation, connecting at a rate of 85.2 percent.

Tech also will get some help in forward Cliff Owens, who is expected back for tonight's contest after missing the Red Raiders' last game, a 70-62 loss at Iowa State on Saturday, with a sprained ankle.

Tech is the second-highest scoring team in the Big 12 and leads the conference in three-point accuracy at 40 percent.

A&M and Tech last met two weeks ago in Lubbock in a 82-68 Tech victory. A&M led by 11 midway through the first half, but Young scored 10 straight points to fuel a Red Raider comeback. Tech led by five at the half and



GUY ROGERS/THE BATTALION

Junior guard **Jerald Brown** and the Texas A&M Men's Basketball Team will look for their first home conference win when they take on the Texas Tech Red Raiders Wednesday at Reed Arena

stretched the lead to as many as 18 in the second half to secure the victory. Young finished with a game-high 22 points, and freshman forward Andy Ellis added 14 points and nine rebounds for Tech.

Junior guard Clifton Cook scored 17 points for the Aggies, and senior forward Shanne Jones tallied 15 points in the loss.

A&M, which trails the all-time series against Tech 52-45, has lost nine straight games to the Red Raiders.

The last Aggie victory over Tech was the 1994-95 Southwest Conference opener for both teams, in which A&M came up with a 90-80 victory at G. Rollie White Coliseum. The Red Raiders have beaten A&M in four out of their last five visits to College Station.

### Kansas State



Points leader:  
**Nicky Ramage**  
(15.1)

Rebound leader:  
**Nicky Ramage**  
(6.7)

Assists leader:  
**Essence Perry**  
(5.4)

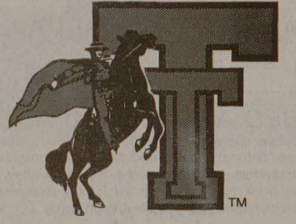
said.

"We could easily be 5-1 in this conference, we've just got to get over the hump."

Gillom said the series of close losses, especially in

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### Texas Tech

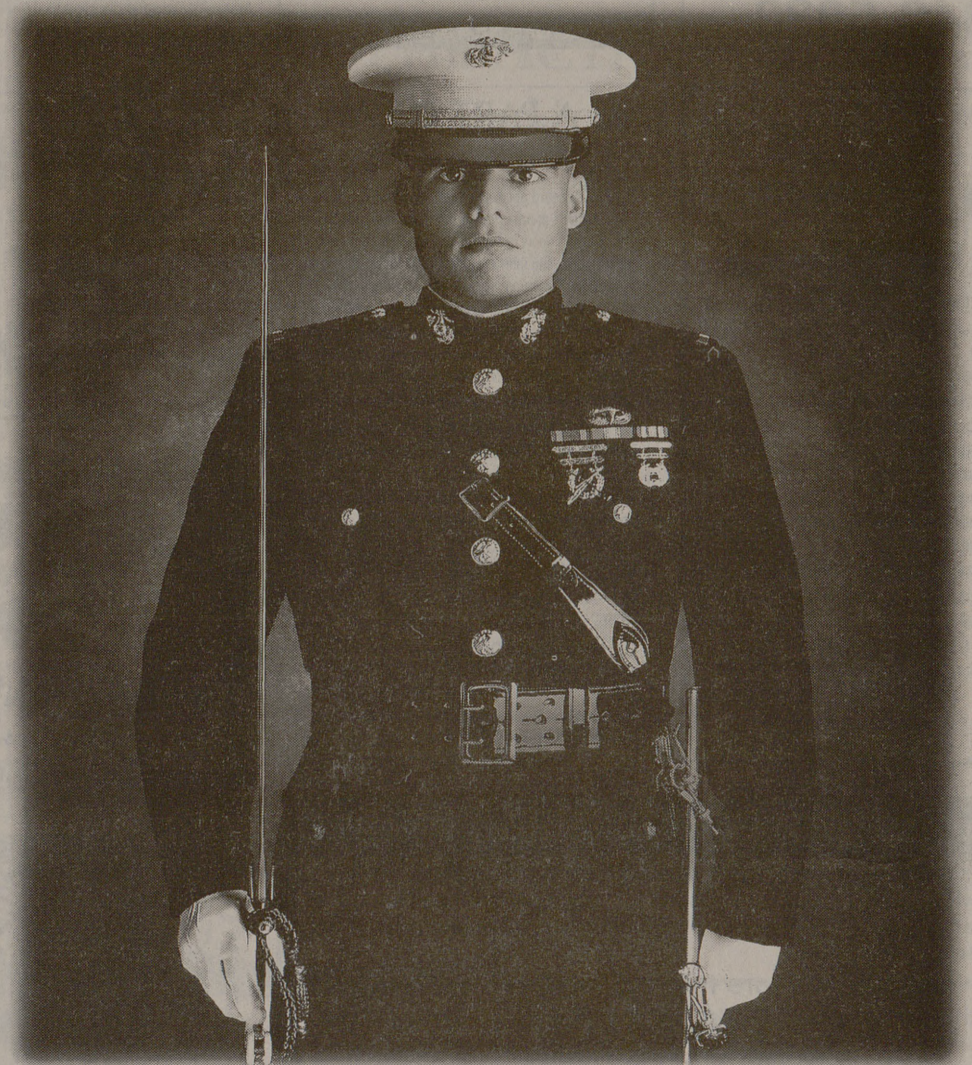


Points leader:  
**Rayford Young** (14.6)

Rebound leader:  
**Cliff Owens** (7.8)

Assists leader:  
**Stan Bonewitz** (4.4)

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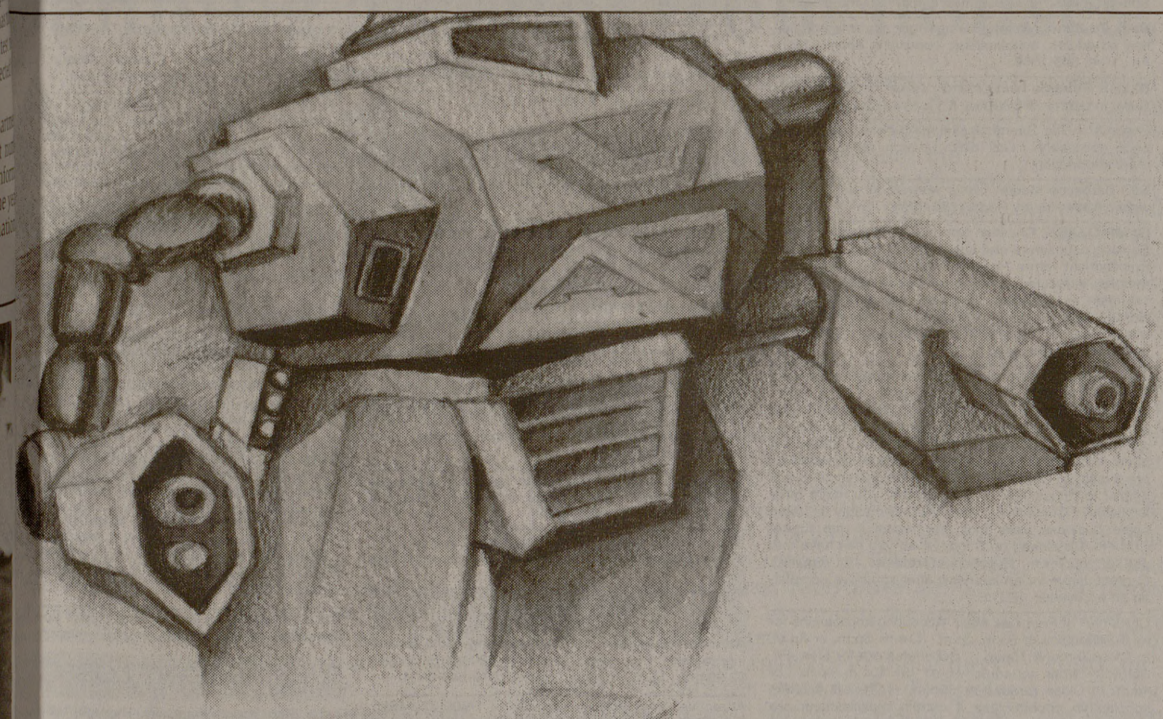


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