

MIKE FUENTES/THE BATTALION

Aggies tame Wildcats, 79-74

A&M men's team limits turnovers to 11 in fourth Big 12 win

BY AL LAZARUS
The Battalion

The Texas A&M Football Team was in the building last night. And again, Kansas State University lost.

Following the lead of the Big 12 Champion Aggie football team, which was honored during a halftime ceremony at the game, the Texas A&M Men's Basketball Team defeated the Wildcats, 79-74, in front of 4,434 Reed Arena fans Wednesday night.

The Aggies (11-10, 4-7 in Big 12) turned the ball over only 11 times on the way to surprising the Wildcats, who saw their already doubtful NCAA tournament hopes take a crushing blow.

"That was a good sign," A&M coach Melvin Watkins said of his team's low turnover total. "We just focused in and concentrated a little harder."

Clifton Cook scored 17 points for the Aggies and turned the ball over just three times.

Leading 38-31 at halftime, the Aggies took their biggest lead of the game, 58-45, after a pair of Chris Clayton three-pointers with 11:02 remaining.

Clayton, who finished with 11 points, said Watkins made his expectations clear during an earlier timeout.

"Coach looked at me and told me I had to make them," Clayton said.

Despite Clayton's treys, the Wildcats did not fold, capping off an 11-2 run with a thunderous dunk from senior swingman Ayome "Paco" May to cut the Aggies' lead to 60-56 with 6:53 remaining.

The two teams then traded baskets until a Cook three-pointer gave the Aggies a 70-60 lead with 3:48 remaining.

After a KSU turnover with 3:39 left, the Aggies had what may have been their most effective possession of the game without even scoring any points.

Two Wildcat fouls and an offensive rebound from A&M freshman center Joe White ran the clock down to 2:05 before Kansas State got the ball back.

The Aggies then made nine of 10 free throws down the stretch to put the Wildcats away.

Watkins, whose team has already equaled its conference win total over the last two years, spoke of the importance of hitting from the charity stripe.

A&M Men's Game Leaders

Points leader:
Shanne Jones (18)

Rebound leader:
Shanne Jones (5)
Clifton Cook (5)

Assists leader:
Clifton Cook (7)

"In order to close games out when you've got a lead," he said, "you've got to hit those free throws." The Aggies will take their winning streak on the road Saturday for a televised 12:45 p.m. matchup against the University of Oklahoma.

Women fall to Texas Tech on road

BY AARON COHAN
The Battalion

For the second time all season, Texas A&M Women's Basketball Team was able to oust its opponent under the boards.

But it was not enough to win, as Texas Tech University handed the Aggies their sixth straight loss, 74-52. The Red Raiders were just too much for the Aggies down the stretch, outscoring A&M by 18 points in the second half.

Tech was led once again by junior forward Angie Brazziel, who scored 10 of her 25 points during the 21-7 run to help put the Aggies away.

"We played with them in the

first half," A&M coach Peggie Gillom said. "We could have played with them, but Tech turned it up a notch in the second, and we could just not stand the pressure."

Turnovers again were a problem for A&M. The Aggies turned the ball over 25 times, compared to 11 by the Red Raiders. The difference proved to be the deciding factor, as all other aspects of A&M's game were firing.

"The final score was not indicative of how we played," Gillom said. "We just threw the ball away."

The Aggies also had problems guarding the perimeter, as senior guard Rene Hanebutt knocked down five three-pointers on the way to 20 points.

"The girls just did not do what we told them," Gillom said. "We stayed with her (Hanebutt), but she was just 'QuickDraw McGraw.'"

Although the Aggies had their problems, they did again have an outstanding shooting performance from the field. For the second straight game, A&M was able to connect on more than 45 percent of their shots.

The Aggies were led by junior forwards Prissy Sharpe and Kera Alexander. A 17-point, 11-rebound showing by Alexander led the way for the Aggies. Sharpe had an off night with just 11 points, but also grabbed seven rebounds.

The Aggies record falls to 7-14 overall, and 2-8 in Big 12 play.

A&M Women's Game Leaders

Points leader:
Kera Alexander (17)

Rebound leader:
Kera Alexander (11)

Assists leader:
Kim Tarkington (5)

The next game for A&M is in Waco Saturday at the Ferrell Center where they meet in-state rival Baylor University.



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Kerrie Patterson (far right) shot a perfect 3-for-3 from the field in the Aggies' 74-52 loss to Texas Tech University Wednesday.

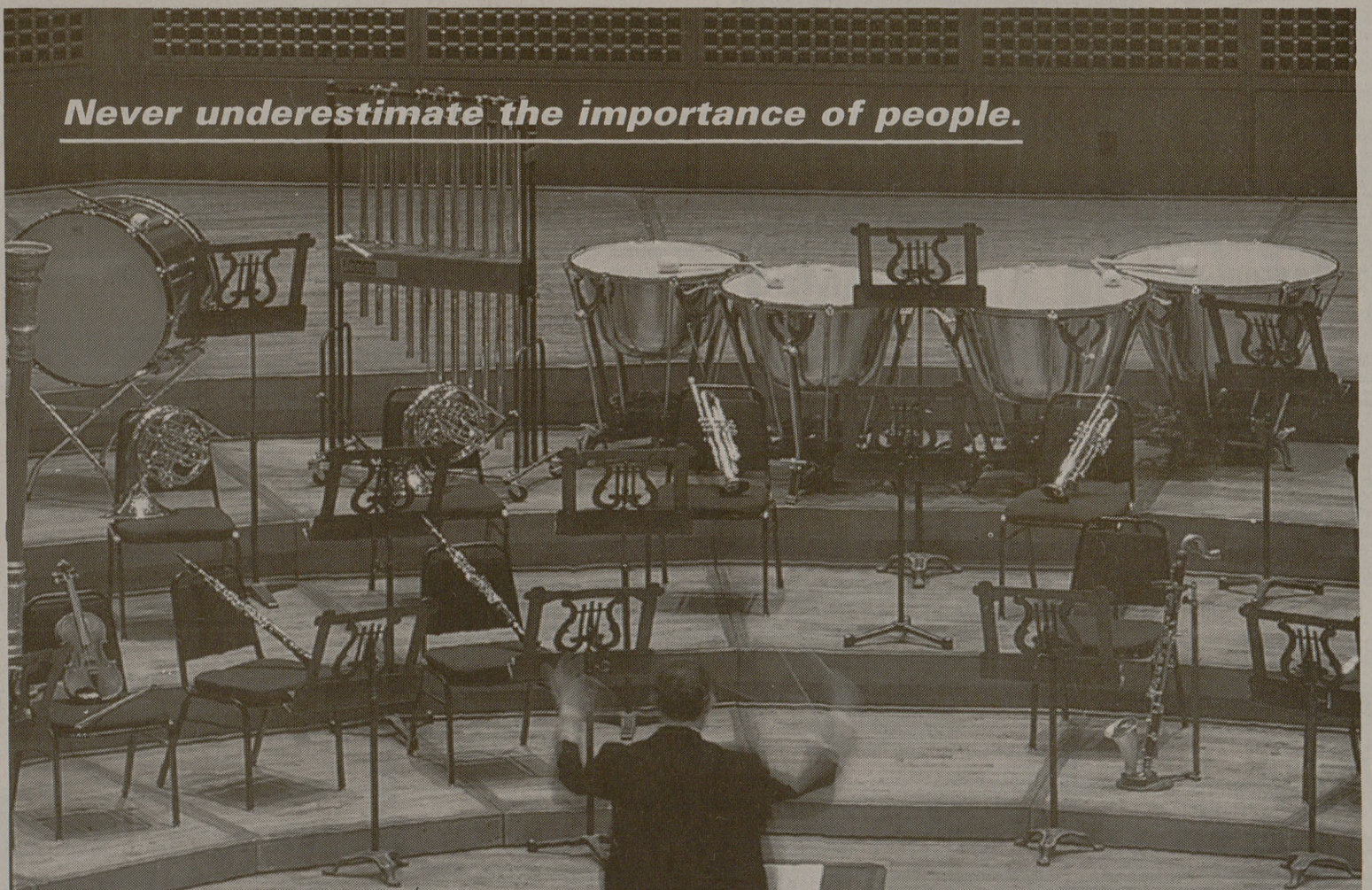
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