

## Texas A&M basketball teams have winning weekend

• Aggie women off to best start since '94-95 with fourth victory

BY BLAINE DIONNE  
The Battalion

In one of its most impressive performances of the season, the Texas A&M Women's Basketball Team dominated the University of Texas-San Antonio Roadrunners, 78-48, Friday night at Reed Arena. The win pushed the Aggies' record to 4-0, their best start since the 1994-1995 season, when they went on to win the postseason National Women's Invitational Tournament. Only two other teams in the Big 12 conference currently are undefeated.

Senior forward Prissy Sharpe, who led the scoring for the Aggies in her first game back in the lineup after an early-season injury, said she was pleased with her return performance.

"I felt fine out there," she said. "It was nice to be back at full speed."

While she was pleased with most of her performance, Sharpe said she was not content with her early shooting performance.

"You don't ever want to miss little chip shots like that," she said. "You mess up an assist for one of your teammates, and it's kind of frustrating when you do that. But you can't dwell on things, you have to get over it and go play defense."

That defense was impressive for the Aggies, who set a new record for blocked shots in a home game with 11. Leading the defensive charge for the Aggies was junior forward Jaynetta Saunders with four blocked shots.

Junior guard Brandy Jones also had a crucial role in the Aggies' defensive night with four steals in crucial situations, keeping UTSA from mounting an effective comeback.

"I like playing defense," Jones said. "I'm working on getting into the passing lanes more to disrupt their passing; it seemed to work tonight."

Even with the impressive defensive performance, assistant coach Liz Galloway-McQuitter said the Aggies' offense has consistently been more effective this season.

"We have a lot of people that can score," Galloway-McQuitter said. "It gives us a lot of options, anybody can be leading scorer on any given night."

The Aggies are going to need all those weapons as the conference schedule looms.

The Big 12 is one of the top conferences in the nation in women's basketball, a fact Galloway-McQuitter said she is aware of.

"We're happy with the 30-point win," she said. "But I don't know if our new players really know what the Big 12 is like. It is a top-to-bottom good conference, so it's our job to make sure they take this season one game at a time."



Tina Jones drives past a defender during a game against Sam Houston State on Tues. Nov. 23 at Reed Arena.

• Aggie men come from 17 points down to post second straight win, 75-59, over Virginia Commonwealth

BY AL LAZARUS  
The Battalion

Jamaal Gilchrist smiled as he looked over the stat sheet. The Texas A&M freshman point guard was fresh off a 16-point performance — including a 7-of-7 effort from the free-throw line — in the Aggies' 75-59 victory over Virginia Commonwealth University Sunday afternoon at Reed Arena.

"This was fun," Gilchrist said. "My first game I played good, but we didn't win. I didn't dream that my first college game would end like that."

Speaking of unexpected endings, few thought the Aggies (2-2) would win — much less by double figures — against VCU (3-2) after they fell behind the Rams, 23-6, halfway through the first half of Sunday's game.

A nine-point run pulled the Aggies within eight, but they could not further trim the lead by halftime and entered intermission trailing, 37-29.

"We left that one team in the locker room," A&M men's basketball coach Melvin Watkins joked about the Aggies' first-half performance, "and brought out a whole new team."

That "whole new team" outscored the Rams, 46-22, in the second half and completed the Aggies' trip from one end of a blowout to the other. A&M connected on 21 of 25 free throws in the second half to pull away down the stretch.

Gilchrist's backcourt teammate, freshman shooting guard Bernard King, scored 17 points and hit 9 of 10 free throws. As a team, the Aggies made 31 of 39 free throws — a 79.5-percent effort.

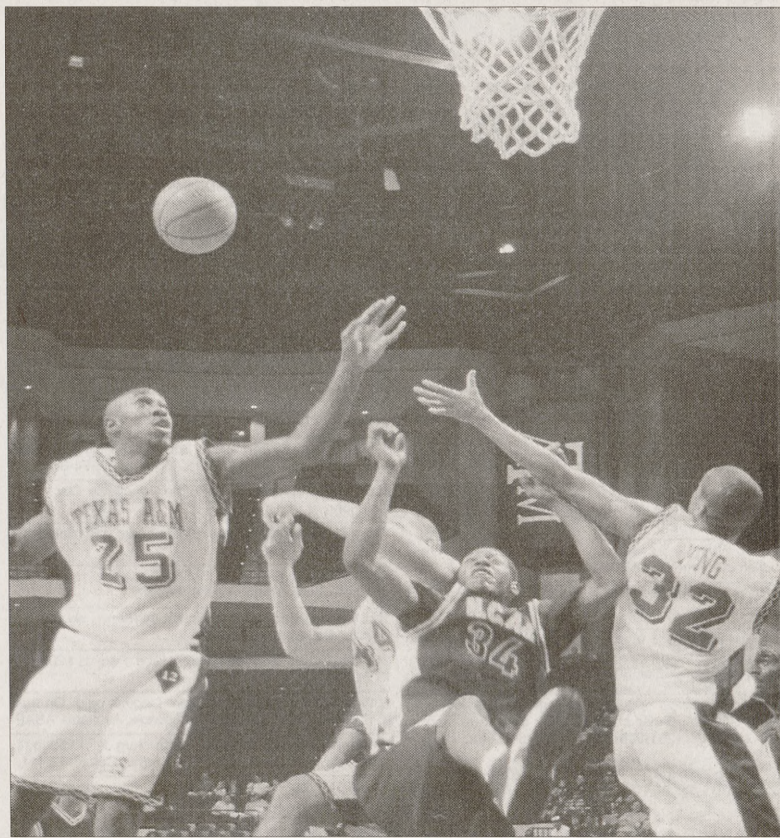
"That's something you've got to do to close games out," Watkins said. "You've got to hit those free throws."

The Aggies received a boost from the return of senior forward Jerald Brown, who missed A&M's first three games with a fractured orbit bone near his right eye. Brown finished with seven points and five rebounds, but Watkins said not all of Brown's contributions could be measured.

"What Jerald brings to us is his ability to keep us together when we want to pull apart," he said. "That's something that doesn't show up on the stat sheet."

In trailing throughout the first half, the Aggies made just 8 of 24 shots from the field and turned the ball over 13 times.

"We just didn't come out playing hard," King said. "In the second half we came out and played hard and played more together. We're a young team, but we're coming more together each game that goes by. We're getting better each game."



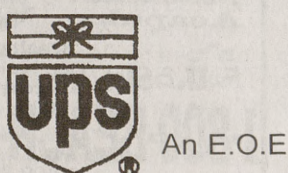
A&M freshman forward Larry Scott (25) and freshman guard Bernard King (32) go after a rebound in the Aggies' game against North Carolina A&T University Nov. 27 at Reed Arena.

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