

Men open Reed Arena schedule with victory

By JASON LINCOLN
The Battalion

Poor rebounding, poor free-throw shooting and poor concentration plagued the Texas A&M men's basketball team's home opener against North Texas. Fortunately for the Aggies, a last-minute surge on both ends of the floor would be enough to down the Mean Green, 77-74.

UNT (0-2) overcame A&M (1-1) by the same three-point margin last season in Denton. A&M coach Melvin Watkins was grateful to escape with the win.

"That's a good sign that we can be in a dog battle and come out with a win," Watkins said.

A&M turned to its two veterans in the back court, sophomores Bernard King and Jamaal Gilchrist, for the clutch play down the stretch. Both King and Gilchrist could convert only one of their two free throws in the final minute, but they did their work on the floor.

King sealed the win by grabbing a rebound, taking it the length of the floor and laying it into the net. The basket put the Aggies up by four, a deficit UNT could not overcome in the final seconds. Keith Bean rejected Josh Richardson's last-second shot for his only block of the night.

"It was just a tough basketball game," said UNT coach Vic Trilli. "A bounce here, a bounce there — it goes the other way."

For the first time in his career, King did not start. Watkins benched A&M's leading point scorer after he drew a technical in the season opener against George Washington, forcing him to wait several minutes into each half before entering the contest. King took the message and

played through a side injury that affected his outside shot. He led A&M with 17 points.

"This should not have been a close game," Gilchrist said. "A lot of mental mistakes caused it."

Gilchrist was three-for-three performance from the field and six points from the line, giving him 12 on the evening.

Two other Aggies scored in double

"This should not have been a close game. A lot of mental mistakes caused it. ... It's nothing that will carry over the rest of the year"

— Jamaal Gilchrist
Texas A&M guard

figures. Carlton Brown posted 14 and Nick Anderson added 11 with a team-high eight rebounds.

The Mean Green were led by Chris Davis, who scored 23, and Bryan Lucas, who had a career-high 18 points and nine rebounds.

Mistakes were common among the Aggies, who, thanks to injuries and foul trouble, were at times forced to play all three walk-ons at once. But most of the

errors were inside, where the Aggies, despite having an improved front court, often failed to keep up with UNT on the glass. Half of the Mean Green's 38 rebounds came offensively.

The Aggies finished with 19 offensive boards and a slight margin in the category, but drop-offs allowed North Texas to stay in the game until the finish.

"The rebounding — I don't even want to talk about that," Watkins said. "We need to go practice right now, except the NCAA won't let us."

The match became a battle on the free-throw line as the squads combined for 48 fouls under the NCAA's toughened guidelines for the '00-01 season.

King and Gilchrist, two of A&M's best at the charity stripe, were able to sink only 6 of 12 and 6 of 10. As a team, the Aggies shot just 59.1 percent from the line. Fortunately for the Aggies, UNT was equally ineffective on its free throws, posting the same percentage on 13 fewer attempts.

A&M's other noticeable blemish was turnovers. Twenty UNT turnovers were a bonus, but 20 by A&M, several of which were the result of mental mistakes and bad passes, was the worst part of it for Watkins.

"That's just lack of concentration," Watkins said. "No excuse. I did get frustrated. At one point, I thought we were helping North Texas. But we got through it and we got a win."

The Aggies are confident their mistakes will not be common this season.

"It was just this game," Gilchrist said. "It's nothing that will carry over the rest of the year."



Aggie forward Aaron Jack posts up against UNT forward Josh Richardson in Reed Arena

Monday night. The Aggies won their regular season home opener against the Eagles, 77-74.

Astros sign Yanks' shortstop Vizcaino

HOUSTON (AP) — Jose Vizcaino, whose 12th-inning hit won the World Series opener for the New York Yankees, agreed Monday to a \$1.5 million, one-year contract with the Houston Astros.

The 32-year-old infielder is joining his seventh team. He began last season with the Los Angeles Dodgers and was traded to the Yankees on June 21.

He slumped early in the season but hit .276 over 64 games with the Yankees, who won their third straight World Series. He reached the 1,000-hit plateau on July 14 against the Florida Marlins.

"Jose gives us a solid veteran player to stabilize the middle of

our infield," said Astros general manager Gerry Hunsicker. "Being a switch-hitter and having the versatility to play all infield positions makes Jose a perfect fit for our 2001 club."

The Astros have infield uncertainty going into the 2001 season. Starting second baseman Craig Biggio underwent knee surgery Aug. 10 and missed the last two months of the season. Tim Lincecum went into last season as the club's starting shortstop but only hit .207 in 304 at-bats. The Astros also declined to exercise their option on third baseman Ken Caminiti.

See VIZCAINO on Page 8.

Aggie Harriers grab best-ever NCAA finish

STAFF AND WIRE

AMES, Iowa — Bitter cold temperatures and a fierce North wind could not stop the 16th-ranked Texas A&M women's cross country team from making history Monday as the Aggies finished a school-best 18th at the 2000 NCAA Championships in Ames, Iowa.

Paced by All-American performances from the junior duo of Andrea Bookout and Melissa Gulli, the Aggie women burst onto the national cross country scene with 447 points to grab the 18th spot in their first-ever appearance at an NCAA Championships event, finishing ahead of perennial powers Arizona, Villanova, Duke and Oregon.

"The girls performed with the poise, strength and confidence they've shown all season long," said third-year head coach Dave Hartman.

"To compete in their first national championship race ever with these freezing conditions, we turned in a great performance."

"It would have been easy to lay down and quit considering the weather. However, they came through with an 18th-place finish. It's a tremendous feat and something to build on for the future," he said.

Big 12 Champion Colorado won the women's crown behind Kara Gargas-Wheeler's individual win, edging Brigham Young by a 117-167 tally. Stanford was third (198).

Fighting snow flurries and a wind chill reading hovering at minus 20 degrees, Gulli and Bookout hung near the front of the middle pack for the first half of the 6,000-meter race. With less than two miles to go, the juniors made their move up to the top 30 runners, gradually passing more than 25 competitors and solidifying their status as A&M's first female cross country All-Americans.

Gulli clocked a 21:17.2 on the hilly Iowa State Cross Country Course to finish 22nd in a field of over 250 of the best collegiate female runners in the country. She, along with Bookout, eclipsed the school's previous best individual performance by a female at a national meet of 55th by Melissa Weaver in 1991.

Bookout was right in Gulli's heels, finishing 26th with a time of 21:49.2. Both runners closed out the most successful season in school history earning All-Region and All-America accolades, another first for the school.

"Gulli and Bookout are special athletes," said Hartman, who was named South Central Region Coach of the Year at the Sunday night banquet. "Mentally and physically, they proved they are two of the best runners in the country."

"Those two showed today that when the pressure is on, they can step up and get the job done. No one expected us to have individual threats, but they proved everybody wrong with their All-American performances today."

Senior Brooke Edwards capped off a memorable senior season, placing 132nd with a 22:15.3 clocking.

Junior Jennifer Whatley and redshirt freshman Sarah Steadman rounded out the top five scorers for the Aggies, finishing 190th (22:47.0) and 191st (22:47.3), respectively.

"Today's race arguably caps off Texas A&M's best season in history. All season long, this group overcame every obstacle they were faced with to burst onto the national scene. I don't want to underestimate today's awesome performance, however I believe our best years are ahead of us. This team is ready to be a top 10 contender within the next year."

Here's to you,
t.u.!



AGGIELAND
OUTFITTERS

Aggie Fashions for the entire family.

POST OAK MALL 979-764-4445



HASSLE FREE
from
VARSITY FORD
www.varsityfordlincolnercury.com

COLLEGE GRAD PROGRAM
HIGH REBATES
LOW INTEREST RATES
MUSTANGS, RANGERS
& FOCUS SPECIALS!
(Questions? - e-mail us at
newcar@varsityflm.com)

STUDENT
TRAVEL

Change
YOUR
World!



800.777.0112

STA TRAVEL

Book your tickets online @
www.statravel.com