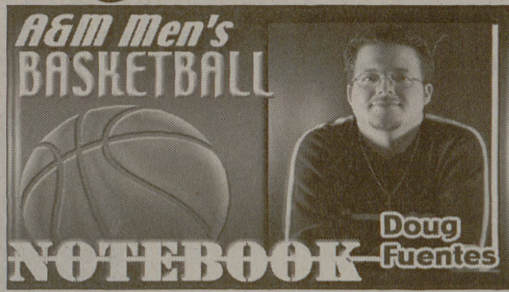


A&M freshman forward Nick Anderson throws up a hook shot in the Aggies' 72-63 loss to the Oklahoma Sooners on Saturday at Reed Arena.

Ags leave tough part of schedule



The Texas A&M men's basketball team's slide reached nine games last week as it dropped a pair of games. The Aggies (6-15, 0-9 in Big 12) fell to Texas, 81-61, on Tuesday in Austin, then were defeated by No. 21 Oklahoma, 72-63, on Saturday in Reed Arena. A&M will face Baylor tonight at Reed Arena, then travel to Lubbock to face Texas Tech on Saturday.

Take a deep breath

With the 72-63 defeat at the hands of the Sooners, the Aggies brought to an end to their roughest stretch this season. A&M started Big 12 conference play 0-9, but that came at the hands of the cream of the crop of the conference.

Four of the seven teams the Aggies faced were ranked in the Top 25, and five of the seven had winning records in conference play. The overall record of those teams is 105-38, a .734 winning percentage.

The rest of A&M's Big 12 schedule promises to be a little less demanding. Only two of the five remaining teams have winning conference records.

The overall record of those teams, including a non-conference game with Texas-Pan American, is 68-49, a .581 winning percentage.

Another thing in the Aggies' favor is that five of the eight remaining games will be played at Reed Arena.

"Hopefully, our kids can come out with a little more confidence," said A&M men's basketball coach Melvin Watkins. "They may say, 'Well the hill isn't as big to climb,' but we have to make sure we don't have a letdown."

We're #12

Along with their poor record, the Aggies' horrendous start has put them at or near the bottom of most statistical categories in the Big 12.

In its nine Big 12 contests, A&M has been outscored by an average of a whopping 17.3 points. The next closest team in scoring margin is Texas Tech, who has been outscored by an average of only 6.7 points in Big 12 play.

In addition to scoring margin, the Aggies rank last in Big 12 play in scoring offense (10.1 points per game), field-goal percentage (47.8 percent), field-goal percentage defense (47.8 percent), 3-point field-goal percentage (24.3 percent), 3-point field-goal percentage defense (39.3 percent), blocked shots (2.22 per game) and assists (11.11 per game.)

In fact, the only category in the conference where the Aggies rank in the upper half is free throw percentage. A&M is fourth, hitting 71 percent of its free throws in conference play.

Butter and Bean

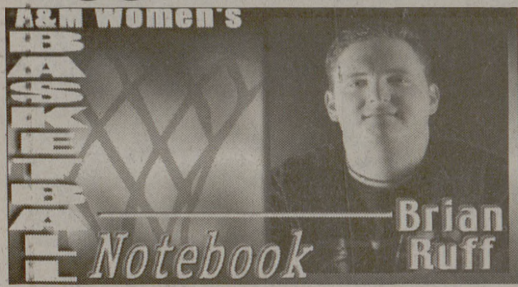
On Saturday against the Sooners, Watkins shook up his starting lineup, replacing sophomore forward Keith Bean with freshman center Nolan Butterfrass, who made his first start at A&M.

The decision was two-fold as Watkins was rewarding Butterfrass for his improved play and trying to keep Bean out of foul trouble.

The decision worked, as Bean, who has fouled out a team-high four times in conference play, recorded only two fouls in 22 minutes against Oklahoma. He scored 10 points and grabbed a team-high six rebounds against the Sooners.

See TOUGH on Page 3B

Aggies continue slide against ranked teams



The Texas A&M women's basketball team continues its bumpy road down the tough Big 12 schedule this week as the Aggies take on the No. 21 Texas Longhorns and the No. 20 Baylor Bears.

Last week was another tough week for the Aggies (12-8, 2-7 in Big 12), as the team dropped games to No. 10 Oklahoma and the No. 12 Texas Tech Lady Raiders. The Sooners came

into Reed Arena Wednesday and handed the Aggies their second home loss of the season, 93-70.

On Saturday, the Aggies dropped their fifth straight conference road game to the Lady Raiders in Lubbock, by a score of 92-79, in front of 14,220 fans at the United Spirit Arena.

Tough times

The Aggies, who began the season with the best 11-game record in team history at 10-1, have found the win column only twice since conference play started Jan. 3.

A&M's schedule has driven it through one of the roughest conferences in the country. The Big 12 now has six teams in the Associated Press Top 25. Iowa State, Oklahoma, Texas Tech, Texas, Baylor and Colorado have all cracked the Top 25 this season. The Aggies have faced ranked opponents in five of their last six matchups, including traveling to Lub-

bock, where the Lady Raiders have not lost on their home court in 42 games.

Rebound shy

The Aggies have been plagued by rebounding, or lack thereof, for most of the season. A&M ranks last in the Big 12 in rebounding defense and rebounding margin.

The Aggies are being outrebounded by their opponents by an average of 7.6 rebounds per game, a statistic that skyrockets the opposition's chance for all-important second-chance points.

The Aggies' defense makes up for the lack in rebounding with solid defense. Peggie Gillom's squad is second in the conference in blocked shots with 100 this season and leads the steals category with an average of 13.85 per game.

Brian Ruff is a sophomore journalism major.



A&M senior forward Jaynetta Saunders looks to take a shot against Texas Tech. The Aggies will host the Texas Longhorns on Wednesday.

KPMG Consulting

KPMG Consulting
invites all Texas A&M University
Computer Science and MIS juniors to an
Information Session & Reception



Wednesday, February 7th
5:30 pm

504 Rudder

Dress: Business Casual

Food and Drinks provided