

PATRIC SCHNEIDER/THE BATTALION

junior Keith From hits a forehand against his opponent from Trinity College Jan. 27. From and the Aggies will face the University of Texas today in Houston.

Men's tennis to face off with 'Horns in Texas Cup

TRUE BROWN

The Texas A&M men's tennis team will take the court against Big 12 rival University of Texas in the inaugural Texas Cup today at the Westside Tennis Club in Houston. The non-conference meet, which will be an annual event, marks the first time two teams have met for a dual match in Houston. The Aggies (4-0) and Longhorns (2-0) met in individual competition in January at the Rice Invitational Indoor Tournament in Houston. The Aggies posted a 4-1 record in singles and a 1-0 record in doubles against Longhorns. A&M will enter the contest No. 6 in the LongspanBank.com poll, the highest ranked team in Texas. UT is currently No. 17. A&M started the season fifth, but slipped a notch despite winning four matches in 10 days. The Longhorns moved up three spots from their initial ranking of 20th after

posting wins in their first two contests. Last season, A&M dominated the Longhorns, winning 6-1 in Austin and 4-0 in the semifinals of the Big 12 Championships in Kansas City, Mo. The Aggies went on to defeat Baylor in the finals to claim the Big 12 title. The Aggies have also won three of the last five meetings between the two schools. A&M men's coach Tim Cass is downplaying the Aggies' recent domination as well as both teams' rankings, noting that A&M has only won seven of the last 84 dual matches against its counterparts from Austin. "Even though the tables may be turned a little, at this point in the season the rankings are meaningless," Cass said. "This tournament will be more for the spirit of the rivalry and the competition." The first four matches of the Aggies' season, all played outdoors, were plagued with high winds and overcast skies, something

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Bears travel to Reed to face Ags

Aggies search for first Big 12 win

By JASON LINCOLN
The Battalion

The Texas A&M men's basketball team will look for its first conference win when it plays Baylor tonight at 7:30 at Reed Arena. Baylor (14-5, 3-5 in Big 12) is the first team with a losing conference record that the Aggies (6-15, 0-9) have faced in the last eight games.

A&M is coming off an improved performance against No. 24 Oklahoma on Saturday. But the only fact that will matter tonight is the Aggies finally get to play a team they can match up with.

"If you can remember, they beat us twice last year, so we're going to have our work cut out for us," said A&M men's basketball coach Melvin Watkins.

Baylor went 11-0 in non-conference action under the leadership of second-year coach Dave Bliss. Since then, the Bears have suffered five losses with just three wins in conference action.

"Dave Bliss came into Baylor with a game plan for the way he wanted to do it," Watkins said. "Some people have criticized their early schedule, but it gave them some confidence. They have some really good players mixed in with some young talent."

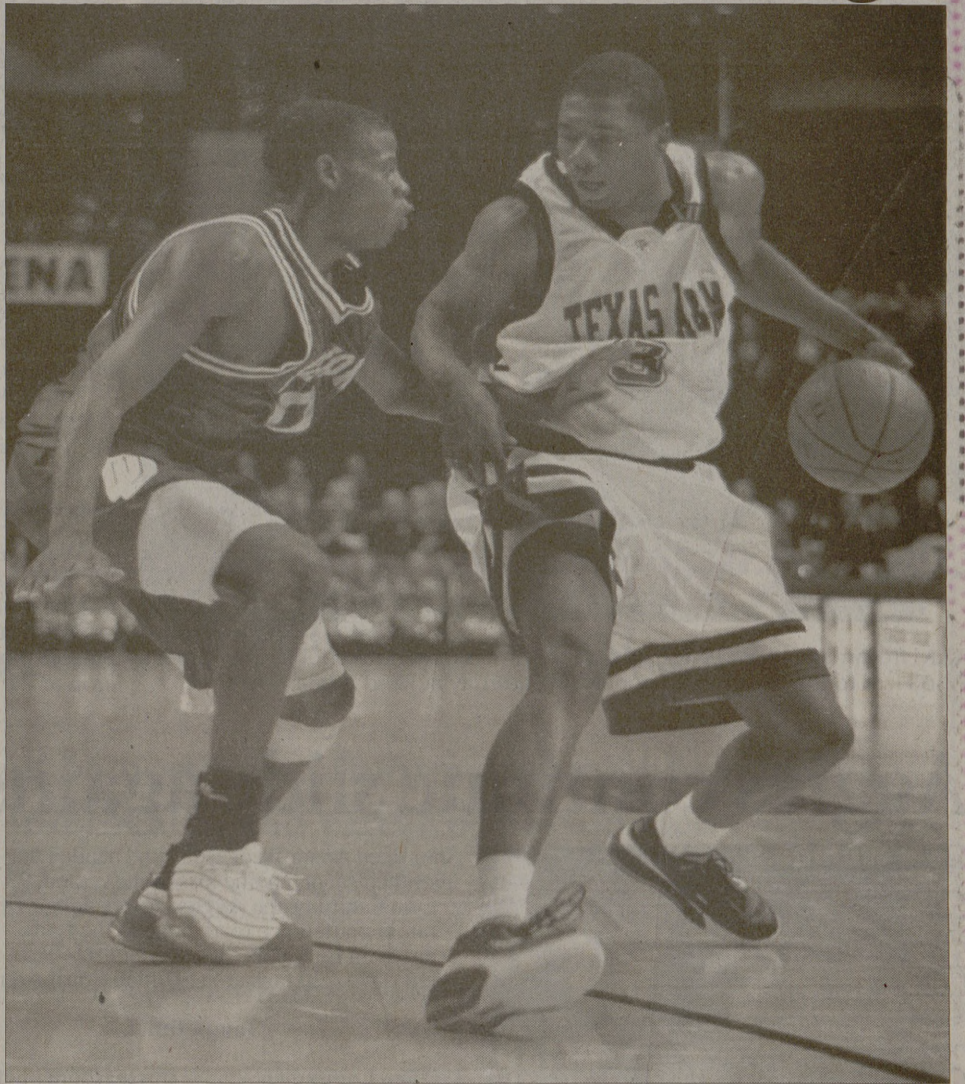
At the same time, A&M's young group, with just two upperclassmen remaining, is looking for its first conference win after playing all but one league game against teams in the 2000 postseason.

Only three of the Aggies' last 15 games have been against teams that did not make an appearance in the NIT or NCAA tournament last season.

The Aggies opened the stretch Dec. 12 against No. 12 North Carolina, a Final Four team last season.

The Aggies shot 47 percent against Oklahoma after consistently posting performances in the mid-30s during league play. A&M will look to keep up the accuracy against the Bears.

Part of that philosophy will involve giving more inside touches to the Aggies' three big



BERNARDO GARZA/THE BATTALION

A&M freshman forward Jesse King receives pressure from Oklahoma guard Hollis Price in the Aggies' 72-63 loss to the Sooners on Saturday at Reed Arena.

men—Nick Anderson, Keith Bean and Nolan Butterfras.

Butterfras made his first career start in place of Bean on Saturday, as Watkins looked to keep Bean and Anderson out of early foul trouble.

While Anderson fouled out after scoring 10 points, Bean came off the bench to have one of

his best games. He scored 10 points and a team-high six rebounds and only two fouls.

Against Baylor, Watkins wants to take advantage of the improved post play.

"We've got to get better guard play," Watkins said. "We're not getting the ball inside. If we can get some post touches, that can get our perimeter game going as well."

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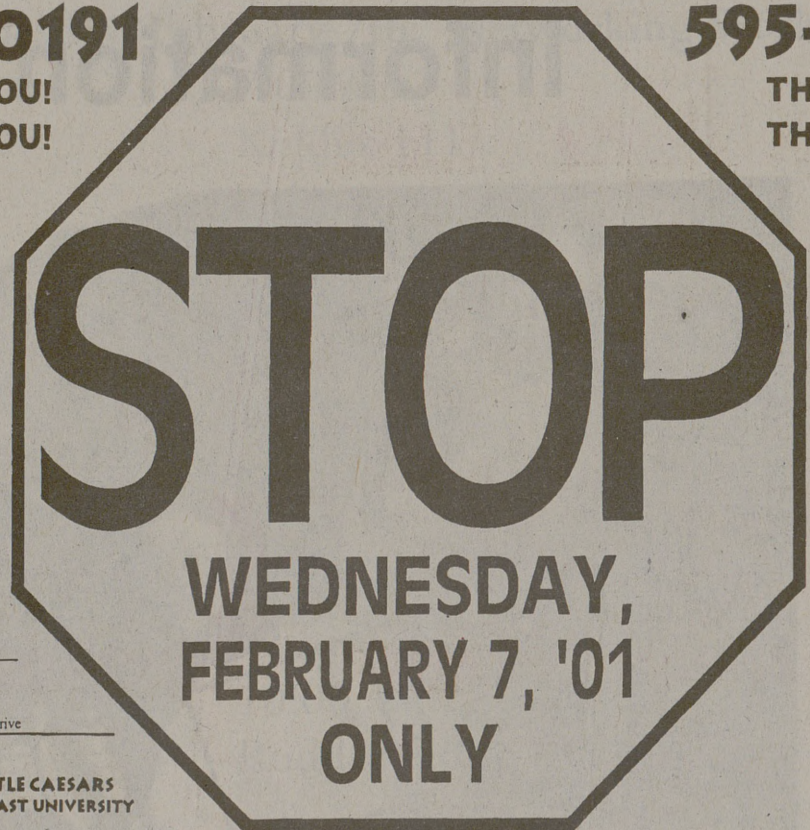
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