

Aggies enter contest with 2-game streak

By Gary Livingston
THE BATTALION

The Texas A&M women's basketball team will try to extend its two-game winning streak when it hosts the Prairie View A&M Panthers tonight at Reed Arena at 7.

After losing their season and home opener to Northwestern State on Nov. 25, the Aggies have gone on a two-game winning streak in which they have beaten their opponents by at least 20 points each. The two victories over IUPUI Fort Wayne and Santa Clara enabled the Aggies to win the Whataburger Aggie women's basketball classic on Sunday.

Junior guard Toccara Williams was named MVP as she matched a career-best 22 points in the tournament final against Santa Clara. Junior Janae Derrick and sophomore Sabrina Mitchell were also named to the all-tournament team.

Prairie View A&M enters the game 0-1 after losing on the road to Auburn, 74-47. The Aggies lead the all-time series against the Panthers 11-2 and A&M won 72-45 the last time the two squads met in December 1998. A&M has also won 10 straight against the Panthers.

Panthers' head coach Bob Atkins has spent his 17-year head coaching career at the helm of the Panthers. During those 17 years he amassed a 118-366 record. The Panthers will have four starters and seven lettermen returning from a squad that went 6-21 last year.

The Aggies have done a complete turnaround since their loss to Northwestern State. In their victory this past Saturday over IUPUI Fort Wayne, four Aggies scored in double figures, including freshman Natasha Summerville, who scored a game-high 22 points in the Aggies 82-46 blowout win.

In addition to Williams' 22-point effort in the finals of the tournament against Santa Clara, Mitchell had a career day as she scored a career-best 15 points. In addition to great plays from these two, Derrick, sophomore Mindy Garrison and junior Lynn Classen each scored nine points.

After the game, A&M head coach Peggie Gillom had positive comments for her team's effort. "This was a great win against a very good team," said Gillom. "I thought we came out with a lot of intensity. We had the get up and go and we played as a team. This was a good win for us."

Coach Gillom also had some positive comments about her team's leader Williams and the play of freshman Summerville.

"Toccara is a very smart defensive player," said Gillom. "She's always there at the right time. Natasha is a very good shooter and when she's feel comfortable she's going to take her shots."

The women's basketball team will play two home games this week, including tonight's game, before its first road game of the season next Tuesday, when it travels to Dayton, Ohio to battle Wright State.

Much sought hitter agrees to 6-year Phillies contract

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — Jim Thome hit a lot of home runs and helped the Cleveland Indians sell out Jacobs Field for several years. The Philadelphia Phillies hope he does the same at their new stadium.



THOME

Thome, the most coveted hitter in the free-agent market, agreed Monday to a six-year contract with the Phillies, two baseball officials said. He accepted a deal worth about \$7.5 million, one of the officials said on the condition of anonymity.

For the deal to become final, the 32-year-old first baseman must pass a physical.

The Phillies are aggressively trying to improve as they prepare to move into their new ballpark in 2004.

Philadelphia agreed to a \$17 million, four-year contract with third baseman David Bell on Nov. 24. The Phillies also have a \$30 million, three-year offer out to left-hander Tom Glavine, a two-time NL Cy Young award winner.

Phillies general manager Ed Wade wouldn't discuss whether Thome had signed. He said negotiations with Glavine are in the "critical stage."

Thome, who hit a club-record 52 homers for the Indians last season, turned down a \$60 million, five-year offer from the only team he has played for

since he was a 13th-round pick in the 1989 amateur draft. The left-hand slugger has a .287 batting average, 334 homers and 927 RBIs in a 12-year major league career.

Thome hit .304 with 118 RBIs, 122 walks and a .445 on-base percentage last season. He has hit at least 30 homers seven straight years and has driven in more than 100 runs in six of the last seven seasons.

While Bell takes over at third base from All-star Scott Rolen, traded to St. Louis last summer, Thome replaces Rolen's power in the middle of a lineup that includes Bobby Abreu and Pat Burrell.

The Indians won six division titles and went to the World Series twice during Thome's tenure. The Phillies, meanwhile, are coming off their 14th losing season in 16 years.

Thome began his career as a third baseman, but moved to first when the Indians acquired Matt Williams before the 1997 season. Thome hit 40 homers in 1997, 49 in 2001. Though he has had some back trouble, Thome has played at least 146 games in six of the last seven seasons.

Thome's departure leaves a big hole in the Indians' lineup and another one in the heart of Cleveland fans.

He was one of the most popular players in club history, and was recently given the Roberto Clemente Award, presented by the commissioner's office for charity work and community service.

Basketball

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King, one of two senior starters for A&M, finished the night with nine points and led A&M with seven assists. "Bernard will make a play," said A&M head coach Melvin Watkins. "He may not shoot the ball so we told our guys that they better have their hands up. Being a senior, you expect him to do things like that. He's strong enough now that he can handle that."

The win also affirmed Watkins' belief that this season's team is farther along than last year's. "We're still building," Watkins said. "We're not there

yet, but I've always said this team has potential. We got the win this time, and last year I would say we would have lost this game probably by a double figure margin. This year, we dug down and found a way to win in the closing moments."

The Aggies have finished their final three games with exciting finishes.

In their meeting with Miami last week the Aggies lost a one point lead in the final minute of play.

A&M bounced back on Saturday to beat LSU 79-72 at the 2002 Space City Hoops Classic in the final minute of play with key drives from King.

The Aggies square off against Tennessee Wednesday at Reed Arena.

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Spring 2003

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Application forms should be picked up and returned to Dell Bomnskie, Student Media business coordinator, in room 011A Reed McDonald Building. Deadline for submitting application: noon Tuesday, Dec. 3, 2002. Applicants will be interviewed during the Student Media Board Meeting beginning at 10 a.m. Friday, Dec. 6, in room 221F Reed McDonald.

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