

SPORTS

THE BATTALION

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A&M men's basketball team crushed in Austin Longhorns get revenge with 89-61 rout of Aggies

By Dallas Shipp
THE BATTALION

AUSTIN — Sophomore Longhorns guard T.J. Ford showed the Aggies and everyone in attendance Saturday night that dynamite does in fact come in small packages.

The 5'10" guard from Houston lit up the Aggies (9-5, 1-2 Big 12) with a career high 25 points and led the No. 4 Longhorns (12-2, 3-0 Big 12) to an 89-61 thumping in front of a crowd of 15,060.

"When he starts making shots," said Texas coach Rick Barnes, "we're a hard team to guard."

Ford did more than just put points on the score board; he got the rest of the team involved in the game even though he had only two assists.

With less than eight minutes remaining in the game, Ford put an exclamation point on the Horn's victory with a steal on defense and brought it home. Ordinarily, Ford would look to dish the ball off to one of his teammates, but this time, he was all alone and slammed the ball with unbelievable elevation.

Ford wasn't done yet. Instead of celebrat-

ing under his own basket, he ran to the other end of the court, blocking junior guard Kevin Turner's shot.

A&M senior guard Bradley Jackson covered Ford defensively for much of the night and said that Ford's biggest advantage was his speed.

"(Ford's) a very good player and he's quick," Jackson said. "He did a good job of getting his guys the ball and they were hitting their shots. That just gets everybody going."

While Ford was hitting his shots, the Aggies couldn't have put forth a worse offensive performance.

A&M senior guard Bernard King led the Aggies with 16 points against the Longhorns, while freshman forward Antoine Wright added 11 points in the losing effort.

King's 16 points were nothing compared to his season high 30-point performance this past year in Austin when A&M upset Texas 80-74. Things didn't work out that way this time around for the Aggies.

The Aggies continued their poor shooting against Texas, shooting just 30 percent from the floor.

"We had a tough go at it," said A&M

head coach Melvin Watkins. "We couldn't buy a bucket. They did a good job defensively, and they made sure that every time (King) made a cut there was someone there to guard him."

The Aggies have shot less than 40 percent in their last five halves against Texas, Nebraska and Oklahoma State. Prior to Big 12 play, the Aggies shot less than 40 percent in only four halves in their first 11 games of the season.

"Tonight they were the better team," King said. "Sometimes you just have games like that; last year we split 1-1 with them. This game is over, now we'll have to take care of business back home."

Watkins said that despite the loss he was not disappointed with his team and that the Aggies still have a lot to prove this year.

"I'm not really upset with our kids because, No. 1, I thought our effort was there, and No. 2, we had some good looks and just didn't knock our shots down."

The lone bright spot for the Aggies came at the end of the first half when King launched a shot from half court off the backboard and in at the buzzer.

The Aggies' next action will come on Saturday, as they host Kansas State.



J.P. BEATO III • THE BATTALION

Aggies guard Leandro Garcia-Morales is blocked by Longhorn guard T.J. Ford during Saturday's game at the Frank Erwin Center in Austin.

Aggies travel to Baylor following two straight losses

By Troy Miller
THE BATTALION

Texas A&M women's basketball head coach Peggie Gillom is having a tough time keeping up with the competition. The two worst rebounding performances in A&M history have taken place the Aggies' past two home games, while poor shooting and defense have also contributed to the Aggies' dismal start in Big 12 play.

In their 77-39 loss to No. 23 Oklahoma, the Aggies (8-7, 1-3 Big 12)

shot just 25 percent from the field.

"We just didn't hit our shots," Gillom said. "We had open looks but the shooting percentage speaks for itself."

In their 74-47 home loss to the University of Texas, the Aggies shot only 35.7 percent, continuing to struggle offensively.

The nail in the coffin was A&M's poor rebounding. They were out-rebounded 50-26 during the course of the game.

"I think when you double up a team in rebounding that's another stat that sticks out in my mind," said Longhorn

head coach Jody Conradt after the game against A&M. "When you do that, it gives you more opportunities."

The 24-rebound margin matched the worst in Aggie history set just seven days earlier in a 77-56 loss to No. 8 Texas Tech. A&M was out-rebounded 52-28 in the game.

"We have to go back to the drawing board," Gillom said after the loss to Texas. "I thought we had (rebounding) fixed after the Texas Tech game."

In their three Big 12 losses this season, the Aggies have been out-rebound-

ed by 24, 24 and 14. They have shot no better than 38.1 percent in the losses.

The keys to winning seem to be simple: shoot better and rebound better. For A&M, the road gets a little easier as they do not have to face another nationally ranked opponent in their next two games.

First up is Baylor (12-3, 1-2) who is currently receiving one vote in the ESPN-USA Today poll. The Bears are coming off consecutive losses to Texas Tech and Texas.

Sophomore Stephanie Blackmon, who is averaging 19.3 points per game

as well as 8.1 rebounds per game, leads the Lady Bears.

Baylor also averages a plus-4 rebound margin against opponents this season.

If Baylor has an Achilles heel, it is inexperience. Nine of the 13 Lady Bears are sophomores or freshmen.

"I coach this team the same way I've coached the last two years," said Baylor head coach Kim Mulkey-Robertson. "I can't do one thing about maturity and inexperience, time takes care of that."

The Aggies and the Bears face off Wednesday at 7 p.m. in Waco.

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Rock Climbing 101	Jan. 21-Feb. 18	Feb. 22
Women's Rock 101	Jan. 21-Feb. 18	Feb. 23
Backpacking Trip	Jan. 21-Feb. 18	Feb. 22-23
Rock Climbing Day Trip	Jan. 21-Feb. 25	March 1
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