

SPORTS

THE BATTALION

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A&M basketball looks for success at Reed

Men hope to stop the bleeding against Oklahoma Blair looking for second Big 12 win against Tech

By Troy Miller
THE BATTALION

After losing nine straight games in Big 12 conference play, Band-Aids aren't going to be enough to stop Texas A&M men's basketball team from bleeding. Right now A&M needs about 10 pounds of gauze and stitches to mend their wounds.

The Aggies (7-13, 0-9 Big 12) will try to cut the gushing down to a drip as they take on the University of Oklahoma (15-5-4) Saturday at 12:30 p.m. at Reed Arena.

"It's attitude," said A&M freshman guard Acie Law IV. "Every game our opponents shoot about 50 percent, and sometimes they have like 37 free throws. We can't win playing defense like that."

After going undefeated until its last game before starting its Big 12 conference slate, Oklahoma was poised to break into the top 5.

After a blowout loss to then-No. 1 Connecticut, the Sooners began a slide that saw them lose four straight. After finally getting its first win over a ranked opponent in Big 12 play against No. 18 Texas Tech, 63-48, on Saturday, Oklahoma seems to be finally hitting its stride.

"I actually told my teammates that I don't want to play in the NIT (tournament)," said Oklahoma sophomore guard De'Angelo Alexander. "I want to play in the

the NCAA (tournament)."

While the Sooners are finally breaking out of their slump, A&M is doing the exact opposite. "We're fouling too much," said A&M head coach Melvin Watkins. "We're not defending as well as we should be, and then our execution has gone down."

Frustration is clearly on the face of every player and coach as A&M has gone from a team that nearly beat Big 12 powers Kansas and Missouri to a squad that is getting outplayed and outthrustled by Big 12 bottom feeders Baylor and Nebraska.

In the Aggies most recent loss, an 83-77 decision at Reed Arena to Nebraska, Watkins sat sophomore guard/forward Antoine Wright on the bench after Wright went zero-for-eight from the field in 15 minutes of play.

A&M senior guard Kevin Turner, the Aggies' leading scorer in their 72-64 loss to Baylor last Saturday, didn't even get off the bench against Nebraska.

"I want these kids to understand that no one has the right to play if they're not going to play hard," Watkins said. "We've had some guys think they're going to play no matter what, and that's just not going to happen."

The Aggies' offense, once the bright spot of the team's play this season, is sputtering - to say the least. Help isn't coming as A&M will face a 2-3 zone against Oklahoma, the same zone the University of Texas played against A&M earlier this season.



JP BEATO III • THE BATTALION

A&M senior forward Jesse King dunks on a Nebraska defender in the Aggies' 83-77 loss to Nebraska Wednesday night at Reed Arena.

Against Texas' zone the Aggies failed to score a field goal for the last 12:42 of the game.

"We're really active," said Oklahoma head coach Kelvin Sampson. "People tend to stereotype a zone because they think it's not aggressive. Our

quickness and athleticism help make our zone aggressive."

If the Aggies want to mend their wounds, they will have to learn quickly how to beat the zone. Otherwise, they might have better luck at the emergency room of St. Joseph Hospital.

By Brad Bennett
THE BATTALION

Texas A&M women's basketball (8-14, 1-10 Big 12) will face a stiff challenge Saturday - not to find Valentine's dates but to host No. 7 Texas Tech (20-4, 6-4) in Reed Arena at 7 p.m.

The Aggies are hoping the home crowd will help turn the tide after they lost two games on the road following their only conference win at home, Feb. 4 to Oklahoma State.

"What a difference home court makes," said A&M head coach Gary Blair.

The last time these teams met was Jan. 28 in Lubbock. The Aggies lost that meeting, 56-65, but Tech has maintained its prowess as sophomore guard Chesley Dabbs has stepped up her game, said Tech head coach Marsha Sharp.

"Everything about Chesley is confidence, and the more confidence she plays with, the better player she is," Sharp said.

Chesley had the go-ahead basket with less than a minute left against Baylor University last Sunday in Waco, and that has helped her gain the confidence she needs to step up her offensive game, Sharp said.

Sharp said Chesley will continue to be primarily a defensive player.

Blair said Tech has several great players besides Chesley. "They have tremendous depth," Blair said.

While the Aggies have been struggling in Big 12 play this season, Tech has been struggling on the road with only one road win against Baylor by just three points.

Sharp said the win helped give the team the confidence it needs to overcome mental blocks it faces on the road.

"That (win) really set the tone for the team," Sharp said. "I thought it was a major hurdle we finally jumped over on Sunday."

The Aggies cleared another hurdle last week with their first Big 12 victory.

A single win wouldn't give the Aggies momentum, but his team already had momentum from how close it played against high-ranked opponents.

"We've had momentum all year because of how hard we have played," Blair said.

The Aggies will again be led by senior guard Toccarra Williams, who set the Big 12 steals record on Feb. 7 against the Oklahoma Sooners.

Williams said after the OSU game that the win was a major hurdle.

"Definitely a confidence

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Is your Professor Using the Classroom as a Political Soapbox? This Is a Violation of Your Academic Rights.

According to the American Association Of University Professors, the use of classrooms for political indoctrination is a violation of academic freedom.

The 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure declared: "Teachers are entitled to freedom in the classroom in discussing their subject, but they should be careful not to introduce into their teaching controversial matter which has no relation to their subject." (This clause was reaffirmed in 1970.)

If you are not taking a course whose subject is the war in Iraq, your professor should not be making statements about the war in class. Or about George Bush, if the class is not on contemporary American presidents, presidential administrations or some similar subject.

We do not expect our doctors to impose their political opinions on us when we go to them for treatment. We should likewise not be assaulted by the political prejudices of professors when we pay them for an education.

If your professor is abusing his or her teaching privilege or is confused about the professional obligations of an educator please contact us.

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Texas A&M Campus Coordinator: Mark McCaig
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