

SPORTS

THE BATTALION

Page 5 • Wednesday, February 25, 2004

Aggies search for first win

By Troy Miller
THE BATTALION

When Baylor University comes to Reed Arena 7 p.m. Wednesday to face the Texas A&M men's basketball team, one of the teams will get a first.

Either A&M (7-16, 0-12 Big 12) will finally win its first conference game of the season or Baylor (7-18, 2-10) will win its first road game.

"On the road it's tough to win anywhere," said Baylor head coach Scott Drew. "We've played well in spurts on the road, but we haven't put together a full game on the road. Obviously, A&M is looking to get that first win, and we're looking to get that first road win, so something's got to give."

Coming into the 2003-04 season, A&M was supposed to make a run at the top tier of the Big 12 conference. Instead, the Aggies have gone winless and will not make the postseason for the 11th straight season unless a miracle happens and they win the Big 12 tournament in March. For that to happen, they would have to win a game — something an A&M team has never done in the tournament.

Aggie Basketball

Who: A&M against Baylor

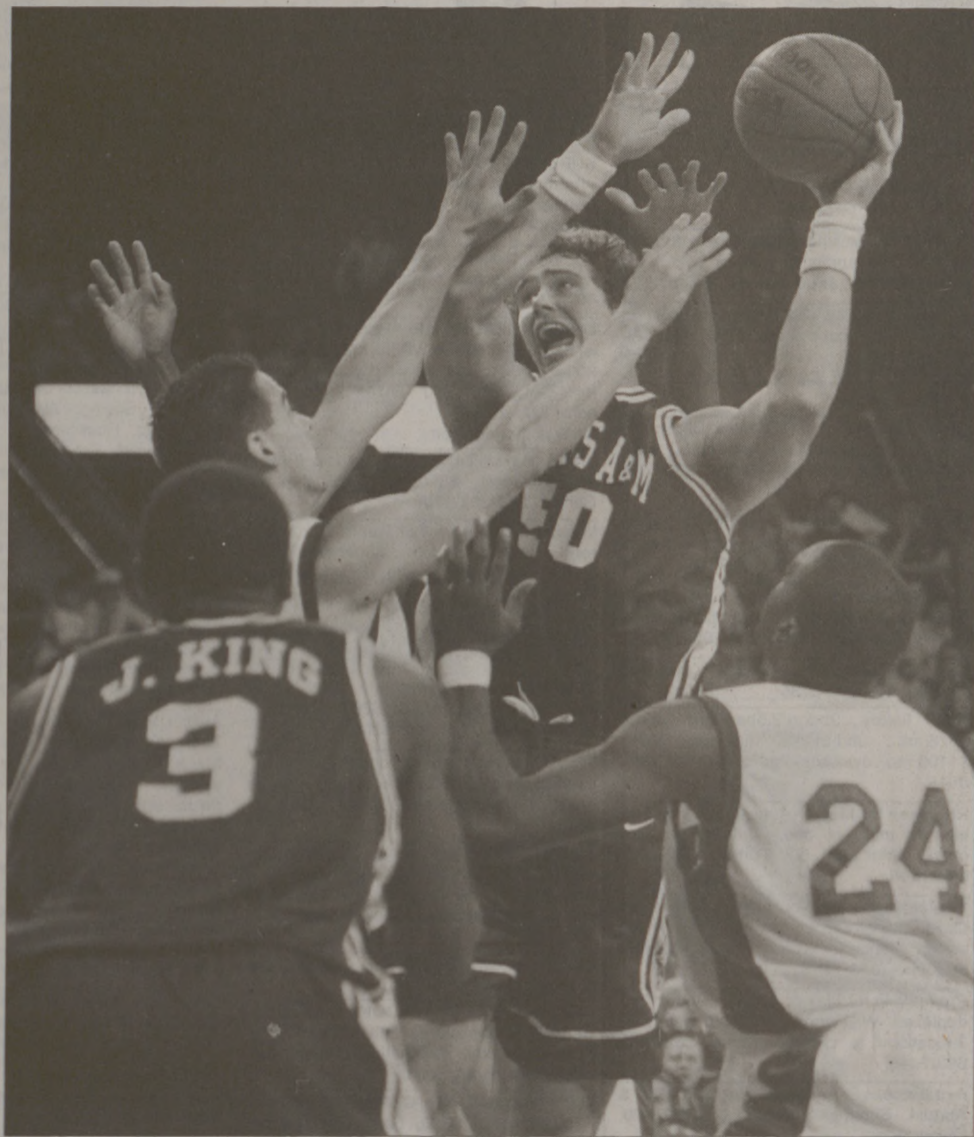
Where: Reed Arena

When: 7 p.m. Wednesday

"Obviously, coming into the year I had some high hopes for the things we could accomplish," said A&M head coach Melvin Watkins. "Still, you evaluate your program, and there are things here that we feel good about. We've lost a few of those close ones that could've easily gone the other way, and then it mushrooms. I think had we gotten those wins, it probably would've propelled us to a few more."

Baylor wasn't supposed to have much of a season in 2003-04 after facing probation by the NCAA when scandals rocked the program after the death of player Patrick Dennehy.

A new coach and several transfers later,



JP BEATO III • THE BATTALION

Senior center **Andy Slocum** tries shoot over defenders during A&M's Feb. 7 loss to Baylor in Waco.

the Bears had a team that could not play in any postseason event, including the conference tournament. With only six scholarship players, Drew has engineered two conference wins this season, in arguably the toughest conference in college basketball, making him a Big 12 Coach of the Year candidate.

"The first rule in coaching is that you have to change what you do," Drew said. "Every week you're looking for new motivation and new ways to keep your team focused, inspired and playing well."

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Swimming teams head to Big 12 finals in Austin

By Jordan Meserole
THE BATTALION

Redemption and victory could be the words that summarize the weekend for No. 14 Texas A&M men's and women's swimming and diving teams as they travel to Austin to compete in the Big 12 championships beginning Wednesday.

Since 1980, Texas has been the conference champion.

In the men's competition, all eyes will be on A&M (8-2) and UT (5-1) swimmers. In every men's Big 12 event this season, the top five finishers were either Aggies or Longhorns.

At a Feb. 6 meet in College Station between the two teams, many career and season best career- and season-high times were set, including a top-five NCAA time in the 50-yard freestyle by UT senior Ian Crocker.

A&M senior Matt Rose, who finished a close second to Crocker, said he is ready to face Crocker again.

"It's not the only thing I'm going out to do, but it would be a nice bonus to beat him," Rose said. "This would have to be the most excited I've been for Big 12s."

Competition in the diving events will be just as fierce as in the pool.

The three-meter men's diving contest will be

between the top sophomores in the conference. The top three-meter dives in Big 12 competition this season were by Missouri University sophomore Evan Watters, followed by UT sophomore Mark Sahttuck and A&M sophomore Christian Picard.

Aggie senior Adam Morgan will attempt to finish his career on a high note with a win in the one-meter diving event.

"All I can hope to do is put out my best performance," Morgan said. "We will definitely see who the top dog is this weekend."

A&M men's head coach Mel Nash said the atmosphere and the excitement could help boost times, but the best results come from working hard the week before.

"You could compare it to a week before a football game," Nash said. "You start to train real hard at the beginning, then towards the end of the week you taper off little by little."

Nash said many of the swimmers are looking good going into the meet, but he thinks the men are still not at the top level.

"They look real good right now," Nash said. "And it's ever more promising to a coach to see athletes performing at a higher level than normal and know they

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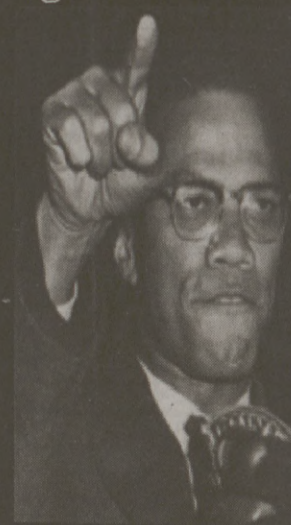
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Wehner 159

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