

Aggies Could Have Used One More Replay

By ROBERT ELLER
Sports Editor

For the third straight year, North Carolina A&T cruised through the Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference regular season, won the league's postseason tournament and stalked the NCAA playoffs, hoping to snare their first win there.

So, what else is new?

Well, this time around, the Aggies had an honest-to-goodness shot at winning. Though they were trounced by West Virginia in '82 and humbled by Princeton in '83, Don Corbett's players were hungry and confident in '84.

This year's Aggies arrived in Dayton, Ohio, for their preliminary-round game with Morehead State of Kentucky on a roll, riding the crest of a nine-game winning streak and having lost only one MEAC regular season game.

Corbett, his players now seasoned in playoff action, and having played the likes of defending NCAA champ North Carolina State and eventual NIT champ Michigan during the regular season, felt his Aggies were ready in '84, and so did they.

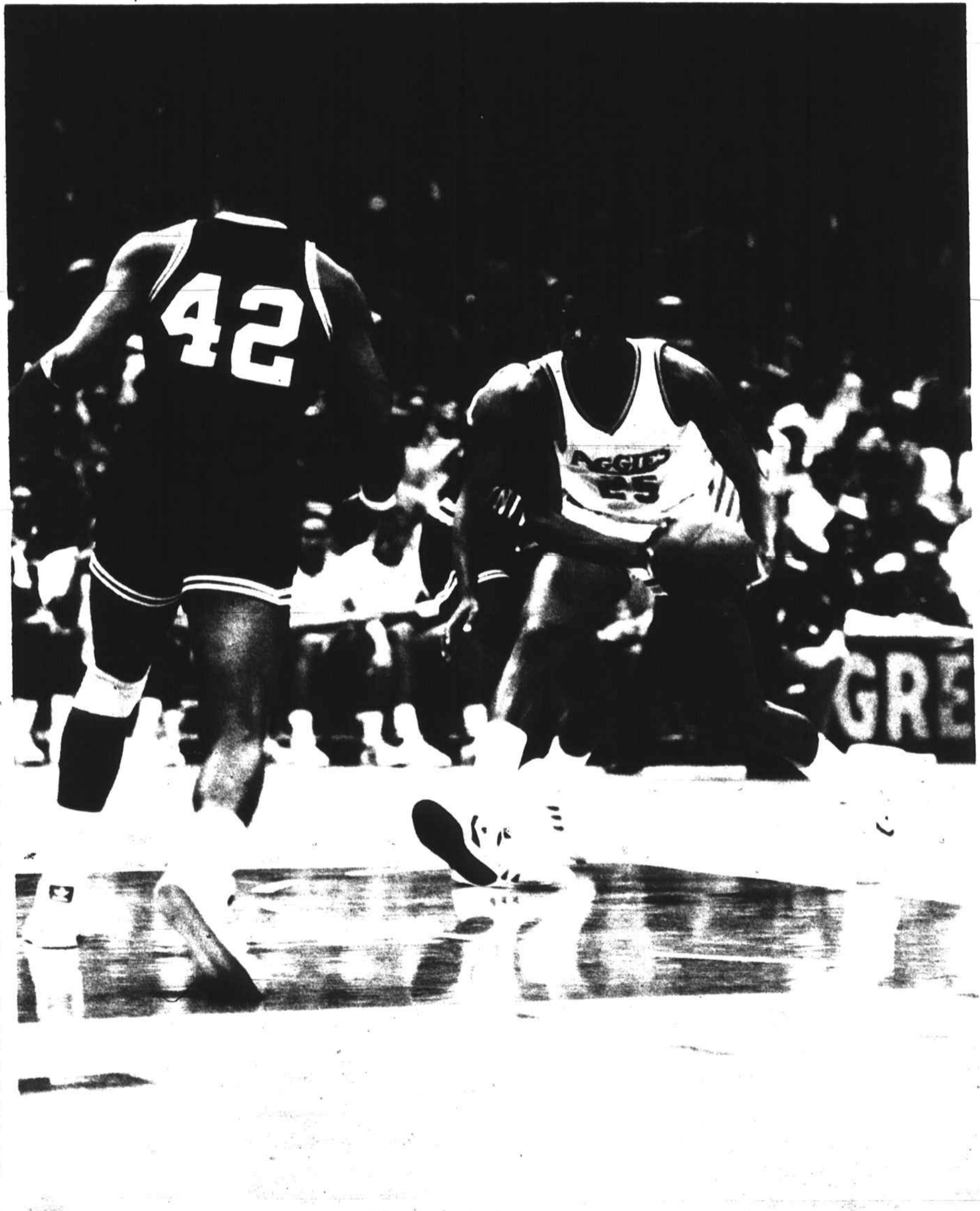
"We are better prepared to go into the NAAs this year," said forward Joe Binion, who paced the league in both scoring and rebounding during the season. "In the past, we were a little awed by playing the big-name schools that we had seen on TV, but this year we are going in with a positive attitude and we are going to play our game rather than try to react to what the other team does."

Binion also promised a better performance than his 10-point, 11-rebound effort in the MEAC title game.

Eric Boyd, who captured his second straight MEAC tourney MVP award, was upbeat, too. "In the past two years, we have not played well in the NCAA," he said. "Maybe we were nervous, but, for some reason, our shots just weren't falling. I don't expect that to happen this year. Personally, I'm a lot more confident this year than ever before."

Added Corbett, who has never been one to boast: "We have more experience and determination this season. And we have played some tough Division I competition on the road this year."

"We have accomplished three of our goals for the season," Corbett said following A&T's win over Howard in the MEAC championship game. "We have won 20 games, the regular season title and the tournament. Now we want to destroy the stigma attached to black colleges. They say we can't win the big one. I can't guarantee you that we will win but I can guarantee you that we



The Tournament Blues

Though he huffed and puffed, Binion scored a total of only 20 points in the MEAC championship game and the NCAA playoffs (photo by Joe Daniels).

will give it our best shot."

Corbett made good on that promise as the Aggies gave it their best shot against Morehead State right down to Eric Boyd's 20-footer at the buzzer.

The Aggies came out hot, showing no signs of the NCAA jitters that had

plagued them the past two seasons. Even with Binion having a sub-par first half, A&T grabbed an early lead and held a 38-35 halftime advantage due mainly to the play of guards Boyd and Jim Brown.

Boyd, who earlier had claimed his

second straight MEAC tourney MVP award, scored 15 of his game-high 23 points in the first half. Brown, son of the NFL's all-time leading rusher, Jim Brown, wound up with 16 points, most of them on shots from the key.

The Aggies continued to have things
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