

He's the Sultan of 'SWAC'

Alcorn State University's Head Coach Dave Whitney was very worried about his center spot before the season started, that position being held by Belzoni, Miss., Junior Eddie "Sultan of SWAC" Baker, a 6'9, 215 pounder. The Braves, since losing to Miss. State 83-80 three weeks ago, have bounced back to take victories over North Carolina A&T 108-86, Howard 95-

48, both on the road, Arkansas-Little Rock 95-55 and South Carolina State 103-68, both in Scarping Grounds, and 87-67 over Florida A&M in Tallahassee. During that time, ASU has outscored opponents 488 to 325 for an average of 97.6 to 64.8. Whitney's defending SWAC Champions, inspired to play harder because no one picked them to win the crown this

season, has six players averaging in double figures. In the double digit category are Larry "Mr. Mean" Smith of Hollandale, Baker, E.J. Bell. Clint "Spacetalker" Wyatt, Bill "Socks" Howard and Joe "The Rifle" Jenkins. Since the season has started, Baker has been Whitney's most pleasant surprise. He is scoring 13 points a game, hauling

eight rebounds and rejecting 2.5 shots a contest. The big guy is also averaging 28 minutes a game. Baker is called the "Sultan of SWAC" because he loves to block shots. The mobile guy can get to fast guards because of his mobility, leading to his slapping balls to his teammates or up into the stands. Last season he scored only 123 points, but alrea-

dy has 94 this season. Of course he played behind Alfredo Monroe, now in Holland, last year. Says Baker: "I knew I'd be ready this season. I have the confidence and playing regularly increases it. I'm glad Coach Whitney has confidence in me to start me in all of our games thus far." At one time in the pre-season, it seemed as if Whitney would use Bill

Howard at center, transferring him from the forward spot. But the injury to Larry "Mr. Mean" Smith changed all of that, forcing Whitney to start Howard at forward. Baker playing center has not been disappointing. The big guy's main goal is to be SWAC's All-Conference center. "Every one only talks about Jackson State's Audie Norris. I believe I'm the best."



and best wishes for a New Year of Happiness in a world of peace.

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Aggies Rebuild Surprisingly Well

By Joe Faust
A&T News Bureau

It's supposed to be a rebuilding year for the N.C. A&T Aggies—one which features a new coach, three freshmen starters, and an ambitious NCAA Division I schedule of competition.

Yet, three games into the 1979-80 basketball season A&T finds itself with a 2-1 record against traditionally strong Alcorn State, Jackson State and Tennessee State on the road.

There were few who believed A&T, winners of six Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference tournament titles, would fare that well against that competition. But first year head coach don Corbett has made full use of his bench and his highly touted freshman have come on strong in their starting assignment. "Quite frankly, I didn't know what to expect going into the season, there were times when we exe-

cuted well during practice and other times not so well," said Corbett, whose Aggies have had long rest going into the Aggie Holiday Classic Dec. 28-29 in the Corbett Sports Center. "I was really impressed with the way our young players pulled together against Tennessee State and Jackson State."

"We've been playing nine men and each of them has been contributing. So far, it's been a great team effort."

Unlike A&T teams of the past featuring a big scorer with a talented supporting cast, this year's team has a different personality.

Although guard Joe Brawner, the 1979 "Player of the Year" in the MEAC is averaging 26.3 ppg through the first three outings, it is clear that on any given night any of the players can have a big scoring night. In the 81-76 over Jackson, it was 6-5 swingman

James Horace, a freshman from Seale, Alabama, who zipped the nets for 23 points and had seven rebounds. Harold Royster, a silky smooth junior from Yonkers, New York, is averaging 15 points and six rebounds per outing.

"Joe (Brawner) decided he was just going to pass and play defense in the Jackson game," Corbett said. "He passed up a number of open shots to give it to a teammate who has possibly a higher per-

centage opportunity. He's a competitor, a leader and the catalyst of our attack. He sets the tempo."

Probably the biggest and most pleasant development for Corbett has been the play of freshmen Joe Lopez, 6-7 Kenny Boddie, 6-4, and Horace.

"Lopez is from Dakar, Senegal and has really come on strong in recent weeks," Corbett said. "He's an aggressive individual and his board work will determine how suc-

cessful we'll be throughout the remainder of our schedule.

"Boddie and Hoarace have come along much faster than anticipated. Boddie has made the transition from a high school forward to big guard where we can use his height and defensive skills.

"Horace made the game winning tip against Tennessee State and did an outstanding job on the boards against an experienced Jackson State.



Brawner



Corbett



Here's hoping that the readers of this column had a most enjoyable Christmas, and much more that St. Nick filled your socks with enough goodies in the fishing line that you can't wait for spring to arrive.

If you get too impatient you can always break the ice and make a go of it. Believe it or not some of the biggest fish caught have been caught during the cold weather. If you are interested in quantity now is the time to go after the crappie; the largest ones are quite accommodating.

Lunkers weighing up to

seven pounds have been taken at the Salem Lake during cold weather. Bruce Alderman and a friend were up there on an early afternoon and the friend landed a seven pounder plus. The very next day Bruce went out and removed a twin to the bass that his friend had taken.


I have seen Bruce and his father break their way to their favorite crappie holes. On such trips out they catch crappies in the near and over one pound sizes.

It's possible to fish even when ice forms on your line, but I don't recom-

mend that unless you are a hard-core fisherman. The funny thing about fishing when the weather is inclement is that you are not really cold until you finish fishing, then you are almost too stiff to stand up.

This discomfort of near chilling to death can be alleviated if you take along a couple of pocket warmers and strap a kidney warmer to your back. The kidney warmer warms the circulating blood, thus keeping the entire body comfortable.

If you got new fishing gear, give it a twirl.



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