

## Longhorns beat Aggies in College Station

Written by Administrator

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COLLEGE STATION (AP) — Moments after No. 3 Texas wrapped up its 69-49 victory over No. 16 Texas A&M on Monday night, Aggies coach Mark Turgeon delivered a message to winning coach Rick Barnes.

"I told Rick if they keep improving and stay healthy they can win a national championship," Turgeon said. "I haven't said that about many teams. I said that about Kansas the year they won it. I've been doing this 24 years and I haven't seen many teams as good as Texas."

Jordan Hamilton scored 20 points to help the Longhorns to their first victory in College Station since 2004.

Texas never trailed and built a 25-point lead by halftime thanks to hot shooting and their trademark stifling defense. The Aggies outscored the Longhorns by five points in the second half, but the dominant first half kept Texas (19-3, 7-0) undefeated in the Big 12.

Texas outscored the Aggies 14-4 on fast breaks and Texas A&M seemed to have trouble keeping up with the Longhorns' pace of play.

"We want to run," Barnes said. "We want to get out in transition. We wanted to have that mindset, to push it."

The Longhorns are still looking for more on defense despite the strong performance.

"We can still get better," guard Dogus Balbay said. "We still make mistakes. We've got to eliminate those. We can always get better on defense."

The Aggies (17-4, 4-3) have lost three of four in a skid that began when Texas beat them 81-60 in Austin less than two weeks ago to snap a 13-game winning streak.

Turgeon is worried about his team after an effort he called embarrassing. He believes his players got too high on themselves during their winning streak.

"I've got to get my team back," he said. "I don't like the way we're playing. I think we just got really caught up in ourselves and became a little bit uncoachable. I've felt this coming for a while and I just hope I can fix it by Saturday."

B.J. Holmes had 19 points for Texas A&M. He bruised his right knee late in the game and had to sit out, but Turgeon isn't sure if the injury will keep him out on Saturday against Baylor.

The Longhorns haven't lost since dropping an 82-81 overtime decision to Connecticut on Jan. 8 and are 7-0 in league play for the first time since 1977-78.

Texas made it look easy in this one and even some Texas A&M fans looked to be in awe when Hamilton hit a nifty hook shot from a tough angle that made it 60-36 with about 8 minutes left.

Texas harassed the Aggies into their worst shooting performance of the season at just under 31 percent and their 17 field goals were one off their season low. The Longhorns have held each of their Big 12 opponents to 63 points or fewer and two of the last three haven't reached 50.

Khris Middleton, who entered the game leading the Aggies in scoring at almost 16 points a game, was held scoreless on 0-of-9 shooting with Hamilton guarding him.

"On our scouting report, they were saying that he's one of the most improved players in the country," Hamilton said. "I told myself I'm just going to come out here and guard him the hardest that I've ever guarded before and that's what I did tonight."

Still Barnes and Hamilton know that shutting down Middleton took more than just one player. "One thing we've tried to do all year was take away the other team's leading scorer," Barnes said. "When you do that you're going to have to have a team effort."

Texas A&M had trouble on offense all night, but never was it more pronounced than when Kourtney Roberson tried for a dunk only to see it fall into the net and then pop back out. It was so close to being a basket that the official statistics initially credited A&M with a field goal.