

the sports

Nation's best defense

Aggies high in stats

Texas A&M was a dominant force in this week's national college football statistics. It has been many years since the Aggies were so well represented in both offensive and defensive statistics at the same time. The Aggies were third in total offense nationally, behind Oklahoma and Bowling Green. Texas A&M was also second in rushing offense and scoring in the nation.

Defensively, the Aggies currently are the country's best team, ranking first in total defense, third in rushing defense, fifth in passing defense and fourth in scoring defense.

Texas A&M also hogs Southwest Conference team statistics this week, while Aggie halfback Curtis Dickey and Arkansas halfback Ben Dawkins are doing some serious scrambling in the individual career rushing tables.

Texas A&M leads five of the six major statistical categories, as Dickey and Dawkins begin moving up on the top ten list of all-time rushers.

Dickey is seventh in the nation in rushing and tied for third nationally scoring with a 12-point average per game. He enjoyed the most productive game a SWC runner has had in this season with 167 yards in the 58-0 victory over Memphis State. That padded his season's SWC rushing lead to 433 yards and gave him 2,137 career yards.

He now stands 481 yards behind the 1954-56 TCU All-American who is currently in tenth place with 2,618 yards.

Dawkins started the season in sixth place and has added 307 yards to a career total of 2,871 to stand eighth on the all-time list. The Arkansas senior has eight more games and a virtual certainty to become the fourth 3,000-yard rusher in SWC history.

Teamwise, Texas A&M leads the SWC in total offense (474.3 yards a game), rushing offense (385.7 yards a game), total defense (117 yards a game), rushing defense (57.3 yards a game), and passing defense (59.7 yards a game). They also lead the league in scoring with 132 points per game, having allowed only 12 points. Their 615 total yards against Memphis State is the top single game output this year among SWC teams, as was their 523 yards rushing vs. Memphis State. Defensively, they allowed Memphis State only 53 yards total offense for their single-game best.

SMU held its lead in passing offense after taking the weekend off. SMU is passing for 259.7 yards a game.

Houston is second in both total offense and rushing offense, running for 295.7 yards a game, combined with 140.7 yards a game in passing for 436.3 yards total offense. Texas is second in total defense and rushing defense, allowing 62 yards a game on the ground and 172.7 total yards.

Individually, Baylor's Steve Smith continues to lead passers with 16.3 completions per game, followed by Mike Ford of SMU with 15.7. Sophomores are found eight time among the top five of the 10 individual stat charts, while a freshman, Thomas Brown of Arkansas, leads kickoff returners with 36.4 yards per return and freshman Maury Buford of Texas Tech leads punters with a 49.5 average.

Doug Cunningham of Rice is still the leader among SWC receivers with 5.7 catches a game, followed by TCU's Craig Richardson with five. While Baylor's Smith and SMU's Ford are one-two in passing, it reverses for individual total offense with Ford leading at 243.7 yards a game and Smith second at 223.3 yards a game.

SMU's D.K. Perry retained the lead in punt returns with 22.1 yards per runback. Baylor's Benny Goodwin is the SWC interception leader with three kickoffs in as many games.

Conference Quips: Can you beat a full house? Attendance at SWC home games is almost 9 percent ahead of the record set in 1977 after four home games Saturday drew 96.2 percent of stadium capacity. Home games at Arkansas, Rice, Texas A&M and Texas Tech drew 206,528 spectators, pushing the average for the 11 home games this season to 46,755. Top average attendance in SWC history was the 39,240 mark reached in 1976.

Texas Tech's retired athletic director, J.T. King, was called to mid-field before the Texas game Saturday night and given a new electric

golf cart, cart trailer and battery charged by friends. Along about halftime, J.T. discovered a hitch—he didn't have a trailer hitch on his car.

Out of the blocks: Fred Akers of Texas and Lou Holtz of Arkansas both now have 14-1 records as head coaches in the Southwest Conference. Akers' 14-0 regular-season record ties him with Matty Bell for a conference school. Bell won 14 regular-season games at SMU in 1935-36. The all-time leader is Dana X. Bible, who broke in at Texas A&M with 20 straight victories and a 24-0-1 record before his team was defeated. Not only that, but Bible's Aggie teams were not scored on in those 25 contests. The first team to score against a Bible team at Texas A&M was Texas when the Longhorns won a 7-3 decision in 1920 to end the strng. Bible achieved his mark in 1917 and 1919-20, taking of the 1918 season for military service.

Toughest defensive chore in the SWC this year? Going against Texas A&M in the second quarter. The Aggies are averaging 18.3 points in that period. Next best is SMU with 14 points in each second quarter, while Arkansas is winning them late—scoring at an 11-point clip in the fourth. Defensively, the Aggies are giving up an average of 3.3 points for the last three quarters and Texas is yielding 3.0 for the first three.

Louisiana hayride: Rice games in Houston continue to be a big draw for LSU fans, as Rice officials estimate some 300 RVs with Louisiana plates began filling up the parking lot as early as Friday afternoon. Rice coach Ray Alborn reports that he heard two LSU players talking during the pre-game warmups. "This is just like playing at home," one of the Tigers observed.

Back where he started: Saturday's meeting between Houston and Baylor will be Bill Yeoman's 176th game as a collegiate head coach—all with the Cougars. His first game was a 19-0 victory in 1962—against Baylor.

Water polo team ends California tour

The Texas A&M water polo team finished its California tour last week with wins over Santa Clara University and De Anza and a loss to Concord.

Steve Sampson scored four points

in the Aggies' 9-5 victory over Santa Clara. Sampson and Mike Newsom led Texas A&M over De Anza with three goals each in a 8-7 game. Sampson and George Dallam scored two points each as the Aggies fell to Concord 10-7.

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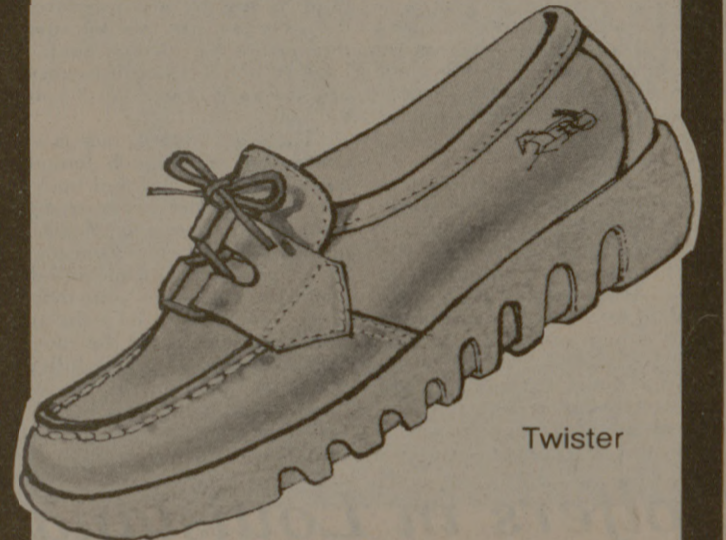
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