Will the big man ever play football again?

You've heard of the \$64,000 Question? Well, as with everything in our modern-day industrial society, inflation has hit and the \$64,000 Question is now the Multi-Million-Dollar Question.

And the Multi-Million-Dollar Question is this: Will George Woodard ever play football again? Woodard, Texas A&M's famed

fullback who has gained more yards rushing in three years than any other Aggie has in four, fractured the tibia of his left leg last June in a softball game. A senior in eligibility, he was red-shirted for the 1978 sea-

Ever since that summer afternoon, the big question when discussing Texas A&M football has been "Will Big George be back next year?" Countless numbers of football fans have pondered the topic, as have coaches, players and sportswriters. And certainly the question has crossed George's

Now, eight months later, the big fullback from Van Vleck is beginning to work out an answer to the Multi-Million-Dollar Question, which is actually two questions in one. First, will Woodard's leg be in shape to play football? And second, will he loose enough pounds to achieve a desirable playing weight?

Woodard is presently on a work-out program designed to answer both questions at once. Under the direction of weight training coach Emil Mamaliga, he runs on a treadmill in 10-second intervals equaling a distance of 40 yards with



insight

By DAVID BOGGAN **Battalion Sports Editor**

20-second rest periods between each interval

"He is to the point now where he can run 100 bouts," Mamaliga said. That is the equivalent of 4,000 yards in 50 minutes at a gait which a sweating Woodard describes as "the

same steps I would usually take on Kyle Field." Mamaliga also has Woodard on a program working with free weights.
"He has been faithful in reporting

for his workouts," the weight coach said. Woodard usually works out from two to three hours every day, including weekends, unless swelling of his leg or illness prevents it.

"I feel strong on the leg," Woodard said. "I just haven't got it strong enough to support my weight at full speed.

leg is healthy. X-rays show that the fracture site is healed," Texas A&M trainer Billy Pickard said. "They plan to leave the three screws (placed in the tibia after the accident) in there for the foreseeable future.

man even before that fateful day on the softball diamond. In 1977, when he was mentioned in the same breath with the Heisman Trophy, Woodard was listed in the program as weighing 265 pounds. But he was known to tip the scales closer to 280. A variety of diets was prescribed, but none of them, for whatever reason, worked very long. And with Woodard unable to work out after he injured his leg, his weight continued to be a problem.

According to Pickard, Woodard weighed a maximum of 303 pounds last fall. Needless to say, that far ex-ceeded Coach Tom Wilson's requirements concerning Woodard's

"George's weight is coming down," said Wilson, who wants the But doctors' reports show that the fullback to weigh between 250-260 pounds. "He wants to play. His attitude is super. We are giving him every benefit of training.

> "I can't sit here and not eat and expect George to lose weight. He has to do it on his own.

The question concerning He is not presently on a diet, but Woodard's weight plagued the big with his running program, Woodard

is giving it the proverbial college

Right now I weigh 285," he said Wednesday during one of his 20-second breaks on the treadmill. "I've lost about 15 or 17 pounds since school started from Christmas

"People call up from all over the nation asking how much George Woodard weighs because they've heard so many lies. I heard that an Austin television station said I weighed 310 pounds the other night. Well, just let them say what they want to say. When it comes time for me to get out there and do my job, I'll do it. People say I can't lose weight. I'm going to prove to everybody that I can do it."

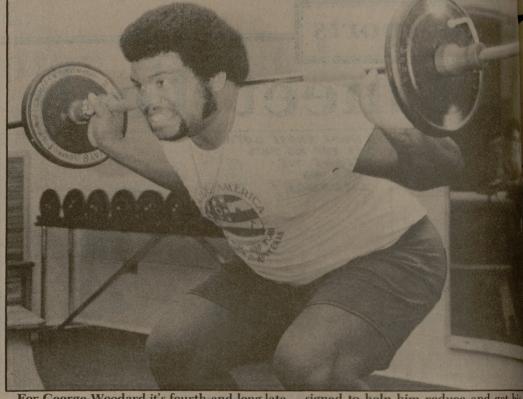
That, friends, is where the multi-million-dollar part of the Multi-Million-Dollar Question

'Pro scouts have told me that if I show I can lose weight, then that's a big plus on my side," Woodard said. Man, I see money every time I stand on this thing (the treadmill). Every step I take means money. Every pound I lose is worth \$1,000.

As I run, I can see myself playing pro ball. That's my dream; that's my vision. I'm going to play pro ball be-cause I want to play pro ball. A lot of how I'm going to live when I get out of A&M depends on right now."

But, as Woodard himself admits, he cannot dream away his excess pounds overnight and time is a scarce resource.

"I am going to need some time



For George Woodard it's fourth-and-long late in the game. The big fullback presently weighs 285 pounds and is working to reach a playing weight of 250-260 pounds. Woodard is on a running and weights workout program de-

signed to help him reduce and get his shape before football season. Weight tr coach Emil Mamaliga, seen in the mirror that he feels Woodard will return to the

and hard work," he said. "At the rate I'm going, I don't think I'll be ready for spring training. But I guarantee I'll be ready for two-adays. I'm going to try to be ready for

spring training. Somewhere along the line we're going to have to say if he can or he can't play," Pickard said. "Our job is to rehabilitate him and get him in shape to play. At that point, the doctors will decide if he is in physical condition to play

The ordeal of the past eight months has been no low-calorie picnic for Woodard, who rushed for 2,846 yards in his first three seasons at Texas A&M.

"It has been tough," he said, "but I can cope with it. I don't feel like nobody can say anything to bring

me down now. But what exactly are people saying about Woodard and his attempt to come back in 1979? Wilson, Pickard and Mamaliga each have differing opinions on the subject.

"I'll be as honest as I can be," Wilson said. "I don't know if George Woodard will play or not. I would love to have George back, but I'm setting my plans to go without him because I just don't know if he can come back.

'He will not come back and be given a place. He will have to earn

Wilson said Woodard would have this matter belongs to no trouble adjusting to the I-formation or a split-back forma-

"George Woodard is a great athlete," the Aggie coach said. You've seen George run outside before and if he gets his weight down I'm sure he can run outside again (from the split-back forma-

Pickard expressed some doubt as to Woodard's ability to return.

'His future is clouded right now, I'd think," the trainer said. "He's a senior in college now; it's time for him to do something. We've given him every opportunity we can. We've given him all the tools to work with.

Mamaliga, who is probably Woodard's closest contact with the athletic staff at this time, said that his man will be on the football field

Absolutely, no doubt about it. I've had too many with this similar situation that have come back to think that George can't," Mamaliga said, citing former quarterback David Shipman as an example. Shipman missed his freshman season with a knee injury, but returned and became a three-year letterman for the Aggies.

But the most important opinion in it.

whose sweat graces ther of the treadmill.

I will be. I will Woodard said empha stepped off the machin want anybody to think I'm for nothing.
"I know I can go back

and play some ball. I'm n can go back out there an than I was before this ha feel like I've got a good who knows that but the G If he'll just give me the st

keep on going, I'm going
That is a very determin
for someone who is figh
and the odds. But then, d tion is what this thing is George Woodard must mined to prove wrong the and the rumors of others. be determined to lose 3 and get his leg in shape. determined to learn the sp new coach.

I hope he does it, but me sake of Texas A&M footble coaches or the team or the the press. For the sake of Woodard, I hope George can answer "Yes" to the Million-Dollar Question. As Coach Wilson said, with on

very interesting to see if

Aggie notes

Dickey goes to the Garden

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Texas A&M's Curtis Dickey will compete tonight in the Melrose Games in New York's Madison Square Garden. Dickey will participate in the 60-yard dash against national speedsters Houston McTear, Harvey Glance and Jerome Deal.

Texas A&M's men's and women's track teams will be in Oklahoma Saturday to compete in the Oklahoma Indoor Classic at the

Dickey won a special 60-yard dash in Los Angeles last Friday night with a 6.29 clocking. University of Texas' Johnny "Lam" Jones was second at 6.32, Kevin Williams was second at 6.32, Kevin Williams of USC and James Owens of UCLA were both timed at 6.35.

The Texas A&M women's swimming team hosts Arizona and LSU in a match tonight at 7, while the men will compete against Arizona and TCU at 2 p.m. tomorrow.

The Aggies lost to Texas Tech Sunday 67-46. The A&M winners were Bob Leland, John Oberto, Hugo Cuenca and the 400 medley team of George Dallam, Leland, Ed Kahil and Thad Putnam. The A&M men, last Friday,

posted a pair of victories over College of Pacific, 62-33 and California-Davis, 64-67, at California-Davis, 64-67, at Stockton, Calif. The women split a 74-29 and losing to Pacific, 61-47. On Saturday, in Palo Alto, Calif.

the men lost to Stanford, 79-16 while the women lost to Oregon, 77-54 and Stanford, 106-36.

Roger Lien and Leland were double winners for A&M Friday A&M record in the 200-yard breaststroke with a time of 2:14.02.

The Texas A&M women's gymnastics team will open its spring season tomorrow with the third annual A&M Invitational Meet at 3 p.m. in

G. Rollie White Coliseum.

Monterrey, Mexico, this weekend.

The other four Aggies in the G. Rollie White Coliseum.

Force Academy and TCU

Dave Ogrin, a junior from and Doug Ward.
Waukegan, Ill., who won the Jim
Deaton Intercollegiate tournament
Jim Deaton mee Sunday at Houston Atascocita Country Club, will lead a five-man Texas A&M golf squad into the Pan-American Invitational in

Teams entered include Southwest meet, which runs Thursday, Friday Texas State, Oral Roberts, LSU, Air and Saturday, include Jay Kent, Steve Bowman, Richard Cromwell

Houston won the team title at the

Jim Deaton meet with a 728. A&M had 740, Texas 754 and TCU 787.

The Texas A&M men's tennis team will host St. Edward's tomorrow at 1:30 p.m. at Briarcrest Country Club in Bryan.

The Aggies are 2-0 this season after beating North Texas State and Rice in the Lamar Invitational Tournament in Beaumont last weekend. A&M and Houston emerged co-champions of the tournament when rain washed out the



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