

TEXAS A&M vs. MISSOURI

A&M bound to rebound against Big 8, Missouri

By Matthew J. Rush

THE BATTALION

After receiving a 44-14 wake-up call last Saturday against the Oklahoma Sooners, the 16th-ranked Texas A&M Aggies will try to regroup as they take on the University of Missouri on Saturday.

The A&M-Missouri series is not deep in tradition, but what the series has historically shown is good news for the Aggies.

In three games against the Tigers, A&M owns a perfect 3-0 record, including a 26-13 victory last season. The Aggies have only played host to Missouri once, beating the Tigers 12-0 in 1958. Missouri has not won a non-league road game since 1981.

The biggest question that has come out of the Aggies' 1-1 start is concerning Corey Pullig's play. A&M head coach R.C. Slocum quickly silenced any suspicions that there might be competition for the quarterback job.

There will never be a quarterback controversy as long as I'm here, Slocum said. "I make the decisions and he (Corey) is the one I've chosen."

Slocum also said that he thinks Pullig may be feeling the pressure from the fans and the coaching staff.

"We need to get him to relax. I get the impression from talking to him that he's feeling the pressure and I may have put some pressure on him myself."

Pullig will not have an easy time against Missouri as he will have to stare at the Tigers' eight-man defensive front. The eight man front uses four down linemen, two inside linebackers and a "Rover" and "Whip," which are defensive back-type players positioned at the outside linebacker slots. This front gives the defense added quickness for pass-rushing and covering running plays around the corners, but exposes the secondary which has two cornerbacks and only one safety.

Last year, Pullig saw no action against the Tigers since starting quarterback Jeff Granger played the entire game.

Pullig and the Aggies will be coming off the game with Oklahoma that was rid-

dled with errors on both offense and defense.

Senior defensive tackle Eric England said the players would use these mistakes and try to make the team stronger for future games.

"We know the mistakes we made and we know the corrections we'll have to make," England said. "I think it has made us more focused to win the Southwest Conference and has made us realize we need to be better prepared for each game."

"The loss won't hurt us because we've matured as a team. In order to be a great winner, you have to be a great loser, too."

Junior tailback Rodney Thomas, who rushed for 106 yards on 22 carries against Oklahoma, said he agrees with England and sees two ways of dealing with the recent loss.

"There are two kinds of teams, winning teams and championship teams," Thomas said. "A winning team just wants to win again and a championship team is able to bounce back and regain its focus. I think we're a championship team."

Despite Thomas' performance in Saturday's loss, the Aggies only gained 172 yards total, breaking the team's seven-game streak of rushing for over 200 yards.

Missouri head coach Bob Stull, who, along with Slocum, got his start in coaching Kansas State in 1970, said that regardless of A&M's loss, he is preparing for a very fired-up team.

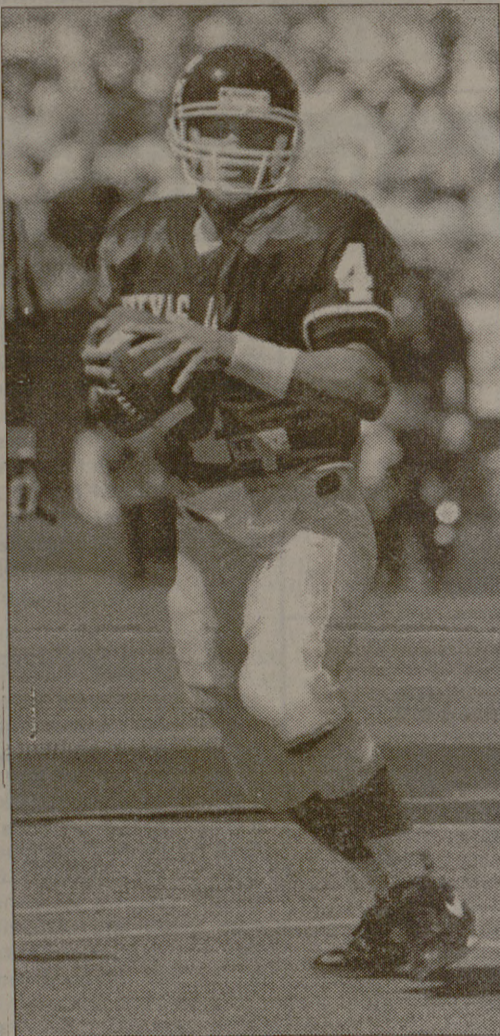
"A&M has a tremendous team and a tremendous defense," Stull said. "We realize that we're going to have to play extremely well, especially playing at A&M."

"They are, in my mind, still one of the top 10 teams in the country and they're not going to play the way they did against Oklahoma every game."

The Tigers are still considered to be a young team and Stull said he knows that the Missouri offense needs to keep the Aggies guessing on defense, which they were successful with a year ago.

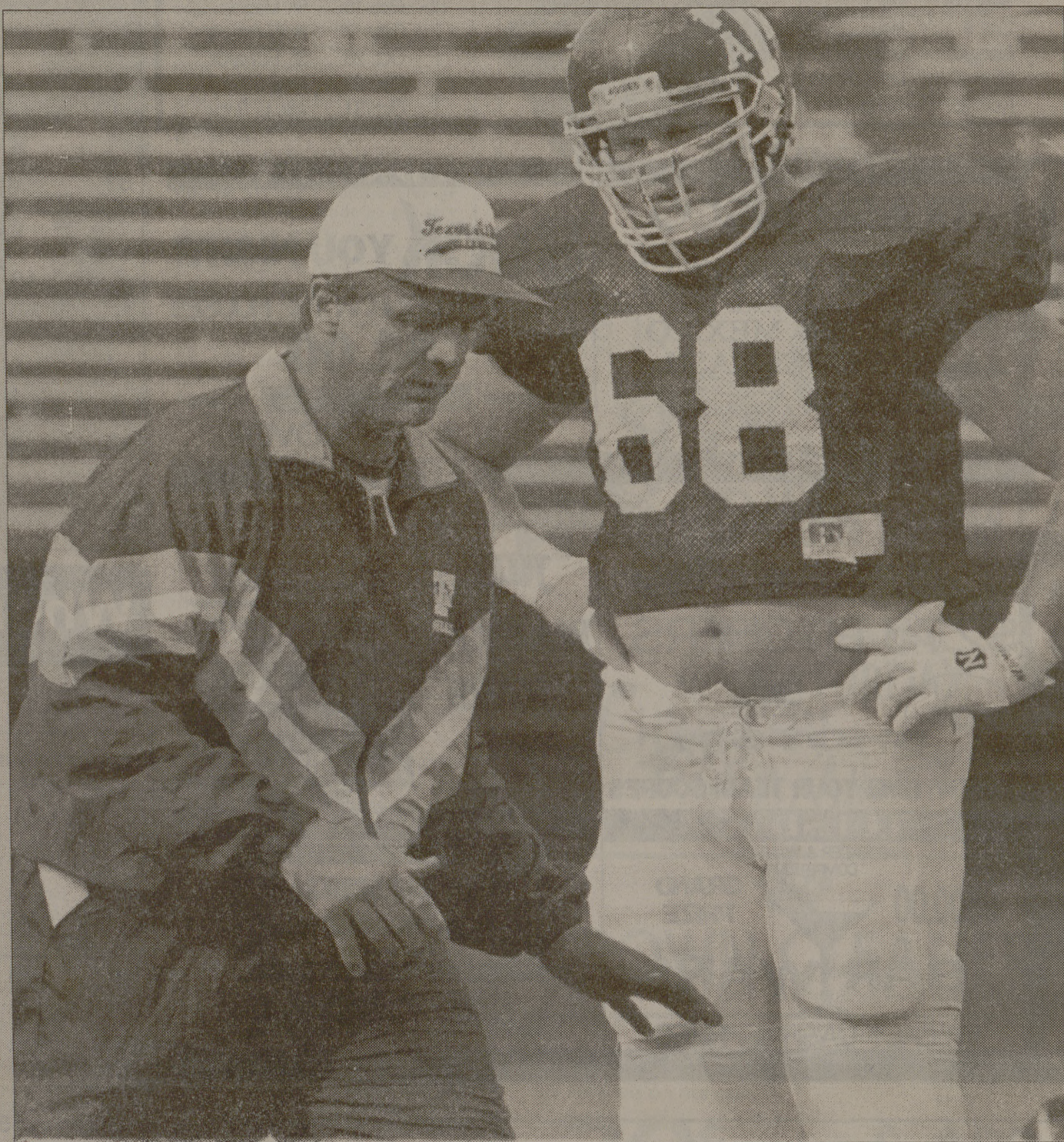
"We're always trying to keep the defense off balance," Stull said. "We need to

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Darrin Hill/The Battalion

A&M quarterback Corey Pullig (4) could not get on track against Oklahoma last week and will feel the heat again this week against Missouri's eight-man front.



Kyle Burnett/The Battalion

Texas A&M senior center Chris Dausin listens intently as offensive line coach Mike Sherman makes his point at a recent practice. Dausin and the rest of the offensive line hope to get the Aggies' running game going against Missouri.

Dausin holds down line at center

By Julie Chelkowsky

THE BATTALION

When center Chris Dausin came to play football at Texas A&M, he wasn't offensive line material. He was undersized for a line that averages about 280 pounds.

But now, in his senior year, Dausin carries a lot of weight. "When I came here, I was about 220 pounds and it was kind of a joke," Dausin said. "I was an offensive lineman and everyone was like 'Oh my God, that is unheard of.'"

"So they put me on the scout team and my first goal was to just fight my ass off, basically, and go into the weight room."

"And put on some weight."

But "some" does not quite describe Dausin's accomplishments in the weight room. Now, at 285 pounds, Dausin is no joke.

"I came a long way doing that (working out)," he said. "I'll keep wanting to get better, and I'll keep that attitude."

Dausin, a senior, has earned A&M's starting center position for the third year and has collected numerous honors such as All-Southwest Conference recognition and is currently an All-American and Outland Trophy candidate.

In the past four years that Dausin has been with A&M, he has had to adjust to the changes of offensive schemes with dif-

ferent quarterbacks Bucky Richardson, Jeff Granger, and currently, Corey Pullig.

But learning the different offenses has done him nothing but good, Dausin said. "I think this makes me a well-rounded player when (we) have this type of offense - where you can both run and pass in both situations," he said. "In the past spring I really worked on my passing situation."

"I think I got a lot better, and I really focused and worked on it - and I still have my running game."

Offensive line coach Mike Sherman said Dausin has exceeded all of his expectations and gone beyond the call of duty, developing into a solid lineman and a team leader.

"He's worked hard in the weight room - gotten a lot stronger and became a tremendous leader of not only our offense, but of our football team," he said. "He's a vocal leader and he leads by example."

"He's not just one who's saying it; (he's) doing it."

Sherman said that part of Dausin's key to success is his total absorption in the game.

"He's an emotional kid who puts everything into the game that he possibly can," he said. "You see that by the way he plays and by how he acts."

Dausin, however, said he believes there is room for

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Q and A with A&M head coach R.C. Slocum

Selected questions and answers from A&M head coach R.C. Slocum's Tuesday press conference.

Q How will your team react to losing?

A We don't have much experience dealing with it. Last year, we didn't lose a game in the regular season. The year before that, you have to go back to the first of the (1991 season). But we won all those games because we had character.

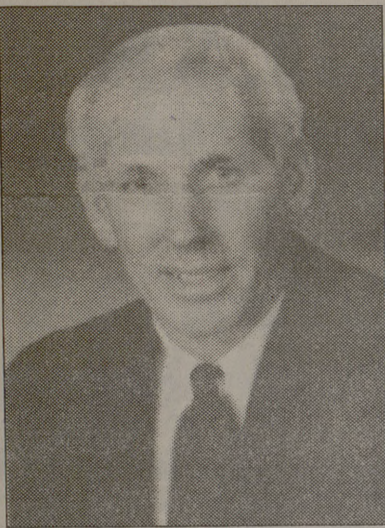
Character allows you to bounce back when something goes wrong and get over it. I have no questions about the character of this team and our ability to get over it.

Q How do you feel about your quarterback situation given Corey Pullig's recent performances?

A I talked to Corey, and he's very much aware he's not playing well. I get the impression from talking to him that he's feeling the pressure. I may have (pressured) him some myself. I've talked a lot about Corey, and I've talked a lot about our need to be better in the passing game.

Q What can he do to improve?

A I think he's gotten on a track where he's short-circuited his ability some by being overly concerned about



Slocum

negative outcomes. You've got to go out there expecting positive outcomes and free-wheeling it a little bit.

I told him, "We have confidence in you. You don't have to win the world championship by yourself. We have got other players on this team. We just need you to execute the plays that you can execute."

Q How did the defense play against Oklahoma?

A By and large, our defense came to play. At the critical stages of the game, if we could have kept the ball on some drives and gone back and fourth with the football, we could have played well enough on defense to have a chance to win.

Q Did the timing of Friday's NCAA announcement affect your team?

A I'm not a complainer or excuse-maker. Who knows how much it affected the players. That's a hypothetical thing. I would guess it affected different people in different ways.

Q How did the team react?

A I would say with extreme disappointment. We thought we had a fair, equitable punishment. The NCAA saw it differently than what we did. I probably should not say anything more than that.

Adams presents huge obstacle for Missouri

By David Winder

THE BATTALION

When Sam Adams signed a letter of intent to play at Texas A&M, he was touted as possibly the best defensive lineman to ever come to College Station. Now, after two years as a starting defensive end, the potential of Adams seems to be catching up with him.

Critics are starting to say that Adams will always be the perennial underachiever. From the claims that he takes "plays off" to "he's just biding his time till the National Football League".

But what do the critics really know about Sam Adams?

"Sam has always had to fight expectation but he's always been a fine football player for us," defensive line coach Bill Johnson said. "Sam is not a failure."

"He always plays hard; he never takes

a series off. I think his critics are being harsh."

Adams does not know if his naysayers are justified in their bashing, but he has never paid any attention to them.

"They all expected me to be Superman," Adams said. "All I can do is evaluate my performance and correct my mistakes for the next game."

Adams father, Sam Sr., also helps his son critique himself. The older Adams played college football at Prairie View A&M and went on to star with the New England Patriots in the NFL.

"My father makes me be my worst critic," Adams said. "He makes me realize that if I know I didn't do my best how can I expect other people to know it. If I'm not satisfied with my play, I can't expect other people to be."

Adams did satisfy enough people to be named a consensus first-team All-Southwest Conference performance. As a freshman, he earned SWC Defensive Newcomer of the Year and was named to several freshman All-American teams.



Adams

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