

# Cage Practice Starts

Despite the loss of all of last year's height and the departure of three of the top four scorers, A&M's new head coach presents an optimistic outlook for the 1963-64 basketball season.

Shelby Metcalf, elevated from Aggie frosh coach to succeed Bob Rogers when the latter resigned last spring, says: "I suppose all basketball coaches are optimistic at this stage of the season. I think we'll have a better basketball club at A&M this season but we still may not have as good a record." Last season the Aggies tied Rice for second place in the SWC with a 9-5 league mark.

THE MAIN reason for Metcalf's early optimism is the presence of 6-2 senior guard Bennie Lennox, the SWC "Player of the Year" last season and the league's co-scoring champion. He and Rice's Ken Rhine tied with a 25.1

average for 14 games. "I feel that Lennox is the finest basketball player in the Southwest and is a bonafide All-America candidate," Metcalf declared.

The Aggies return six of 11 lettermen but only one true starter in Lennox. The key to the Aggies success this year depends on three talented sophomores and two junior college transfers.

THE LETTERMEN, in addition to Lennox, are seniors Cliff Hankins and Bill Robinette and juniors Cecil Ferguson, Paul Timmins and Lynn Merritt. Robinette and Timmins are the most experienced of those five. Ferguson is the squad's top defensive hand.

As practice opened here Tuesday, Metcalf said the Aggies would retain the aggressive defensive tactics employed under Rogers and that the offense would be accelerated.

The three talented sophomores who could give their more experienced mates hot battles for starting positions are John Beasley, 6-8, of Kildare; Dick Stringfellow, 6-4, of Paris and Tim Timmerman, 6-7, of Houston Austin. Timmerman was a red shirt last year while Beasley and Stringfellow made the all-SWC frosh team. Beasley ranks right behind Lennox as the squad's best shooter.

THE TWO JUNIOR college transfers, both from Lon Morris, are Bill Gasway, 6-6, of Burkeville and Ken Norman, 6-6, of Dallas Samuel. They were key cogs in great clubs at Lon Morris the past two years. In their freshman season Lon Morris went to the national JC tourney finals and last year the club won 25 games.

"Outside of Lennox, there will be a continual scramble for starting berths and the lineup may change, game-by-game, all season," Metcalf predicts. "Timmins and Robinette have playing experience to go along with Lennox and we'll have more balanced depth this year. We'll have eight or nine boys of fairly equal ability and will be able to substitute more freely without weakening our team."

Top losses from last year's squad were Jerry Windham, Lee Walker and Gerald Woodard, the squad's second, third and fourth leading scorers and Lewis Qualls, the 7-0 rebounder. Windham was 6-7 and Walker 6-8, so the height is gone.

Metcalf, a fast guy with a quip, says he has two pair of size 14 shoes and one pair of size 17 shoes waiting to be filled. "It would help if the boys who fill them are more than six feet tall."

### 1963-64 Schedule

- Dec. 5 Houston here, 8 p.m.
- Dec. 10 At Utah State.
- Dec. 11 At Utah University
- Dec. 16 Sam Houston here, 8 p.m.
- Dec. 19-20 At Houston Classic
- Dec. 26-27-28 At All-College (Oklahoma City)
- Jan. 4 At SMU, 8 p.m.
- Jan. 7 TCU here, 8 p.m.
- Jan. 11 At Texas, 2 p.m.
- Jan. 28 At Houston, 8 p.m.
- Feb. 1 At Rice, 8 p.m.
- Feb. 4 Baylor here, 8 p.m.
- Feb. 8 Arkansas here, 8 p.m.
- Feb. 11 At Texas Tech, 8 p.m.
- Feb. 15 Rice here, 8 p.m.
- Feb. 18 At Baylor, 8 p.m.
- Feb. 22 At Arkansas, 2 p.m.
- Feb. 25 Texas Tech here, 8 p.m.
- Feb. 28 SMU here, 8 p.m.
- March 3 At TCU, 8 p.m.
- March 5 Texas here, 8 p.m.
- \*SWC games.



**Horned Frog Terror**

Jim Fox, 208-pound senior, will be starting at the right tackle slot for TCU against the Aggies in Ft. Worth Saturday afternoon. Fox's biggest job will be stopping a hometown buddy—Aggie halfback Budgie Ford. Both are from Taylor.

## Craig Wants Back Starting Line Slot

How does a senior letterman feel after a sophomore beats him out of his starting position?

Determined. That's how James Craig, 6-4, 213-pound tackle for the Aggies feels. Sophomore Bill Ward of Austin moved ahead of him at right tackle and started the Houston game last Saturday.

"I SLOWED down and Bill speeded up so he got the starting nod. I'm going to give him a run for his money. I want that starting position back," Craig declared. Both alternated at the position against Houston and there wasn't a lot of difference in their performances.

Craig was honorable mention for all-state in his senior year at Jasper high school. He also won the most valuable player award his

senior year and was all-district two years.

WHILE IN high school, playing tackle, he scored several touchdowns and extra points with the "tackle eligible" pass play.

Craig's parents are Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Craig of Jasper. He has four brothers, Dale, Chris, Olen and Kenneth. Dale and Chris also are attending A&M.

AGGIE GUARD Mike Swan says Craig "is real aggressive and gives 100 per cent all the time."

Halfback Mike Pitman says, "I like to play behind Craig on defense. I know that I can depend on him to be at the right place at the right time."

Craig's idea of the "right place at the right time" right now is the right tackle slot on the first team. He's gonna fight for that.

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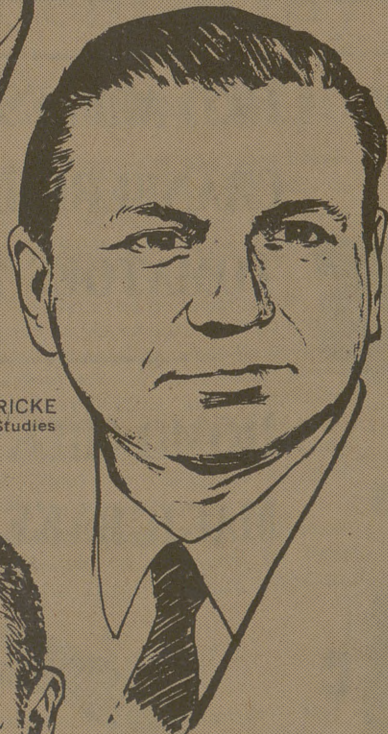
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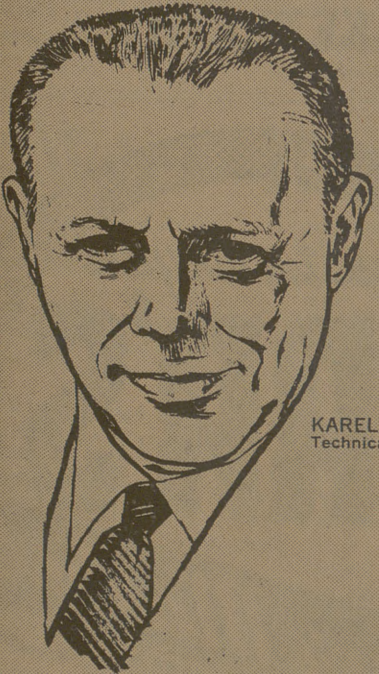
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FROM THE

## Sidelines

By JIM BUTLER

Last Saturday (known to football predictors as "Black Saturday" and a disaster comparable only to the stock market crash, the fall of the Roman Empire and the enlistment of Elizabeth Taylor in the Peace Corps) was enough to make the most hard-hearted bookie join the Foreign Legion.

Form charts have now become as popular as Joseph Valachi with the Cosa Nostra.

So, with the point spreads on the decline and in honor of all the prognosticators who have turned into gibbering idiots, we humbly dedicate this week's predictions to Richard Nixon, the Edsel and Joe Don Looney.

"Twas brillig and the slithy toves did gyre and gimble in the wabes. All mimsy were the borogoves and the momegraths outgrabe . . ."

Tulane 2, Mississippi 0: The Green Wave returns to the glory of its undefeated season in 1900.

Wake Forest 2, Army 0: With all the bookies in its ranks, the Cadets don't stand a chance.

Tennessee 2, Alabama 0: Mallon Faircloth, the Volunteers' "Disappointment of the Year" in '62, returns to his all-America form.

Kansas 2, Oklahoma 0: Looney-less Sooners are all at the polls voting for Senator Wilkinson and forfeit the game.

Oklahoma St. 2, Missouri 0: The downtrodden Cowboys rise up against a sea of troubles and by opposing end them.

Vanderbilt 2, Florida 0: The Commodores and Gators put on a tremendous offensive show unfortunately marred by offsetting penalties.

All seriousness aside, the Southwest Conference should run pretty true to form.

Texas Tech 2, Baylor 0: Don Trull gets a kink in his arm calling the flip of the coin and throws every pass into the stands.

SMU 2, Rice 0: Hi Yo Perumie, away, to the Cotton Bowl on New Year's Day.

Arkansas 2, Texas 0: "We were No. 1!" "We were No. 1!"

A&M 2, TCU 0: Scoring is determined by the number of Horned Frogs each team has in its possession at game-time.

Our object in making the above forecasts is to support an assertion that has been brought to the fore by two of the most successful football coaches in the business—Darrell Royal of Texas and Bud Wilkinson of Oklahoma. These two, in their ramblings among the upper echelons of football's elite, have recently revived criticism of grid forecasts and particularly the selection of a "Top 10."

In these days of an abundance of good coaches and players, football predictions are barely more than guesses and in the majority of cases not even educated guesses. And to say that one team can not be beaten by any one of the more than 500 other teams is like picking the Yankees to go undefeated. There are just too many unknown factors.

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