

AP's Choice: The Aggies

NEW YORK (AP) — The Thanksgiving football week-end and what store of goodies do we have for the teams still seeking bowl berths and improvement in the national rankings?

Well, there's a stick of cotton candy for Texas A&M, which should upset favored Texas; a fat pig with an apple in its mouth for Rose Bowl-bound Minnesota and a stuffed turkey for Penn State.

For the picker, a gizzard. Last week: 37-16, .703 Season 430-151, .740.

Texas A&M 25, Texas 20: You can almost hear bones rattle as the Aggies' Gene Stallings bids for a date against his old tutor, Bear Bryant, in the Cotton Bowl.

Oklahoma 20, Nebraska 10: The Sooners clinch the Big Eight title and set their sights on Tennessee at Miami.

Sports Aplenty
Aggies By Four
By GARY SHERER



Last week, an 8-2 mark gave new hope to this picker possibly making 70 per cent correct for a final season reading. The final two weeks will have to be pretty close to perfect as 52-28-2 is a little short of 70 per cent.

This week will produce some real donnybrooks as conference championships, bowl invitations and a lot of pride are riding on these games. Six conference races should be decided by this weekend. Five of the major conferences have already seen title-clinching.

In the past, upsets usually don't occur late in the season. The good teams have jelled completely by this point in the season and the upset possibility is lessened. Not so this year. No less than six upsets came about last week and a few rated teams escaped with victories and narrowly avoided a loss.

The Aggies aren't the only team to make a comeback this season. TCU has awakened after a five-loss start and have a chance to figure in the Southwest Conference finish.

A real cinderella story was turned in by the Wake Forest Deacons of the Atlantic Coast Conference. The South Carolina school had staggered through its first six games and had been generally man-handled. They finished the season Saturday with their fourth straight victory.

Because the year has been so unpredictable, one can plainly see that it has to be a tough task to pick the outcome of the games.

After that classic bit of rationalization, a bunch of guesses for this week is in order.

TEXAS A&M 21, TEXAS 17
Numbness will reign following this game.

MIAMI (FLA.) 28, NOTRE DAME 20
The Irish finish the year with a bad at-home record.

PURDUE 24, INDIANA 12
Boilermakers seal the Hoosiers fate and win an Oaken Bucket.

MINNESOTA 39, WISCONSIN 9
That smell of 'Roses' makes monsters out of the Gophers.

YALE 21, HARVARD 14
The oldest rivalry of them all should be a head-knocker.

OKLAHOMA 15, NEBRASKA 7
Sooners nail down the Big Eight title.

MISSOURI 14, KANSAS 6
Mizzou wants a bowl bid—anybody interested?

MEMPHIS STATE 20, NORTH TEXAS STATE 19
Mean Green run into somebody meaner.

SOUTH CAROLINA 12, CLEMSON 10
Paul Deitzel wins over Frank Howard in a coaching battle.

FLORIDA 22, FLORIDA STATE 20
Gator Bowl bid could be riding on this one.

This Thursday's game at Kyle Field should produce perhaps the most exciting game of the week. It already has caused a stir because of the debate over to televise or not to televise.

Regardless of TV coverage, the important thing is winning that game. The Aggies have come from a long way back to be where they are now and this talented group of footballers should be able to 'make something happen' Thursday afternoon.

A new Aggie joke should be in order as the 'Turkey Day' game approaches. "Hey, did you hear about the guy that thought the Aggies Are Back bumper stickers were just a joke?"



GRADY ALLEN



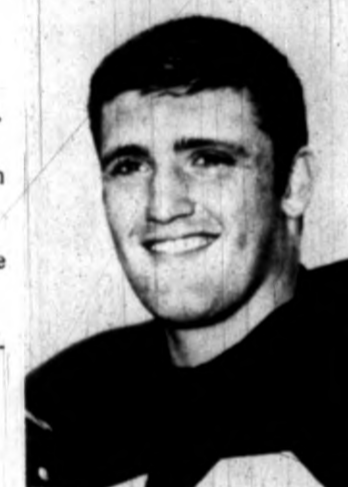
ROBERT CORTEZ



DAN SCHNEIDER



BILL SALLEE



MARK WEAVER

IN FINAL GAME
These five seniors will play their last game in Kyle Field on 'Turkey Day.'

Aggies-Longhorns Lead SWC Slate

By JERRY GRISHAM
Who will represent the Southwest Conference in the Cotton Bowl Jan. 1 against "Bear" Bryant's Alabama Crimson Tide?

That is the \$64,000 question and the Texas Aggies can answer the question once and for all tomorrow in Kyle Field. By now, everyone in the state of Texas knows that all the Cadets have to do is win or tie the Texas Longhorns to end up in tall cotton.

Tomorrow's 74th meeting of the blood rivals will pit Texas the infantry scoring leaders of the SWC, against the Aggies, the No. 1 producer of touchdowns by air.

Twenty of Texas' 25 touchdowns have been scored on the ground this season, with Tailback Chris Gilbert and Quarterback Bill Bradley sharing the team scoring leadership with nine touchdowns each.

A&M, already assured of a championship, has scored 14 of its 24 touchdowns through the air. Edd Hargett has thrown for 13 of those, and Wingback Bob Long has caught seven of the scoring aeriels.

GILBERT, who rushed for 202 yards in the upset loss to TCU, leads SWC ball carriers by a whopping margin with 948 yards. If he gains as much as 32 on Turkey Day, he will become the first SWC player in history to gain 1,000 or more twice in a career. He rushed for 1,080 last season.

For what it's worth the scoring of the two teams in conference and non-conference play has been remarkably close. After nine games the Longhorns have scored 179 points. The Aggies have notched 181 points. In league play against common foes Texas has rolled up 138 points and the Aggies have scored 137.

In points scored by the opposition there is a marked difference. Nine opponents of the Longhorns have scored 113 points against them while A&M's foes have scored 131. The trend, however, is reversed in SWC play with Texas opponents scoring 89 points while Aggie foes have scored 71.

IF THE AGGIES win or if they tie tomorrow the title race will be over and this Saturday's SWC games will be just so much window dressing. But should the Longhorns outscore the Aggies, two schools will go on the field this weekend thinking championship thoughts.

The remarkable TCU Horned Frogs, hotter than a Monte Carlo gambler, are riding a three-game winning streak, including last week's upset victory over Texas, and a Frog sweep of their last two games against Rice and SMU combined with an A&M defeat would make the Froggies co-champs.

And a Texas Tech win over Arkansas Saturday in Little Rock combined with an Aggie loss would give the Raiders a chunk of the championship pie.

Then it really gets confusing. Should Texas win, Tech win and TCU lose the Aggies, Horns, and Raiders would share the crown with Tech going bowling by virtue of having never represented the SWC in the Cotton Bowl.

BUT! If Texas wins, Tech loses and TCU comes through in the next two weeks, the Aggies, Texas and the Frogs tie for the title and since the Longhorns and TCU have both gone to the bowl since the Aggies last played there in 1942 it would be the AG's honor to celebrate New Year's in Dallas.

A Texas victory combined with losses by Tech and TCU would automatically give the Longhorns the bowl berth.

Texas, Tech and TCU victories would result in an unprecedented four-way tie with Tech going to the Dallas Classic. It would really be much simpler and easier to understand if the Aggies just licked Texas on Thanksgiving.

CONFERENCE Standings also rest on the Baylor-SMU contest in Waco Saturday. The two teams will decide the conference cellar dweller. If the Ponies win, it will assure the Bears a last place finish but a Baylor victory will knock the Mustangs down to the bottom to keep the Bears company.

With two weeks to go in the season there are still four teams in the running for the conference title. With only an eight-member league, you know that's really something.

Stallings Stresses Defensive Game

By JERRY GRISHAM

When you are playing a team whose offensive unit has as its quarterback the Southwest Conference's total offense leader and as its tailback the conference's best rusher what do you have to a lot of faith in?

The answer as Texas A&M Coach Gene Stallings is well aware is the defense.

"AGAINST TEXAS we're going to have to play the best defensive game we've played all year," the Aggie coach said Tuesday in his weekly press conference. He pointed out that against the University of Texas on Thanksgiving Day anything less than the best just won't be enough.

He singled out the Texas tailback Chris Gilbert as a real threat to the Aggies.

"Gilbert is the single best runner in the country," he noted.

As far as the Aggies' health is concerned Stallings seemed optimistic. Wendell Housley who broke his foot in the game against Arkansas and has been the only serious injury on the team this week is reportedly improving.

"HOUSLEY ran pretty well yesterday," Stallings said. "I don't know what that means. We weren't going full speed and did-

n't have any contact."

Stallings praised the work of the Aggies in the building of the Aggie Bonfire and said that he and the team's five seniors, Grady Allen Robert Cortez, Mark Weaver, Dan Schneider and Bill Sallee will speak to the crowd at the bonfire tonight.

"Not only those but the whole team will be there," he noted.

Bluebonnet Bowl Eyes Ags-Texas

HOUSTON (AP) — Indications were Tuesday that Thanksgiving Day's traditional football game between Texas and Texas A&M will determine Colorado's opponent in the Dec. 23 Bluebonnet Bowl.

A victory or tie by A&M would give the Aggies the host spot in the New Year's Day Cotton Bowl at Dallas and apparently send Bluebonnet officials looking outside the Southwest conference for a team.

Texas coach Darrell Royal has said his team would not consider a bowl bid if the Longhorns are dropped to a 6-4 season by a loss to the Aggies.

'Mean Green' Faces Test

MEMPHIS, Tennessee (AP) — North Texas, newly crowned champion of the Missouri Valley Conference, was one victory away Saturday from its first undefeated season in 52 years of football.

The Mean Greens' last obstacle was Memphis State, newest member of the conference but not competing for the football title until next year.

North Texas has only 31-31 tie with New Mexico State to mar its otherwise perfect record.

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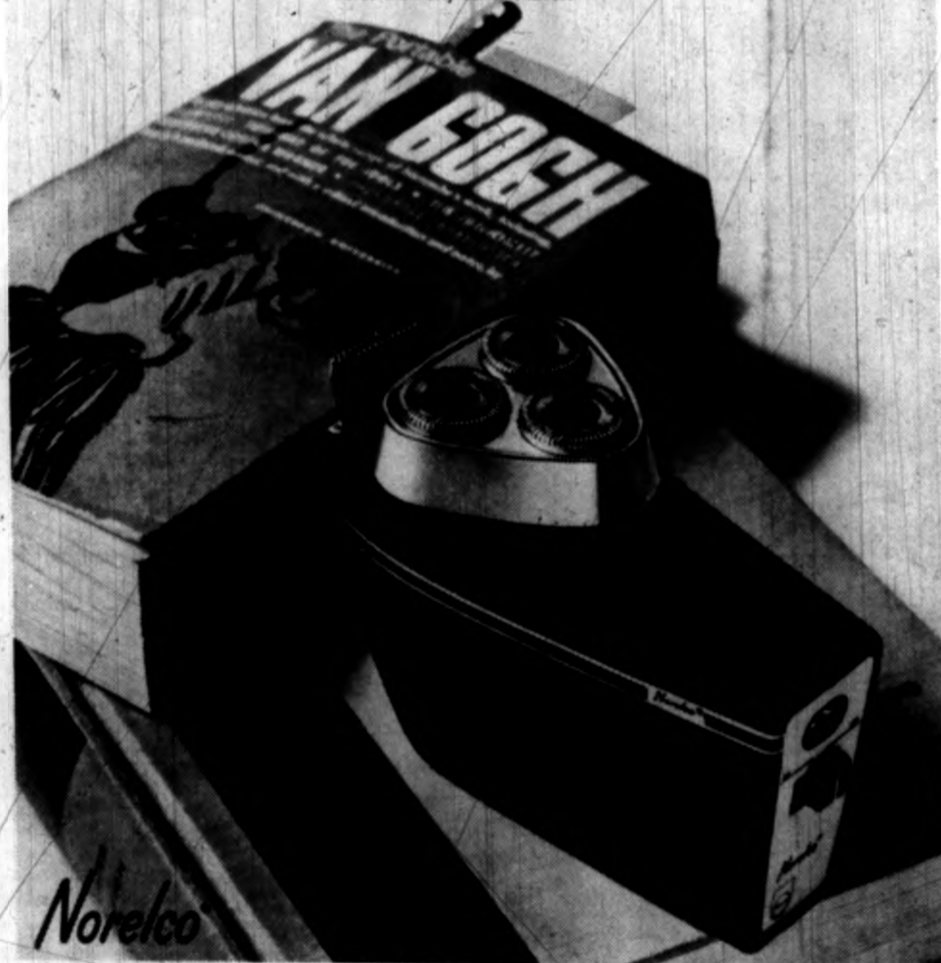
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