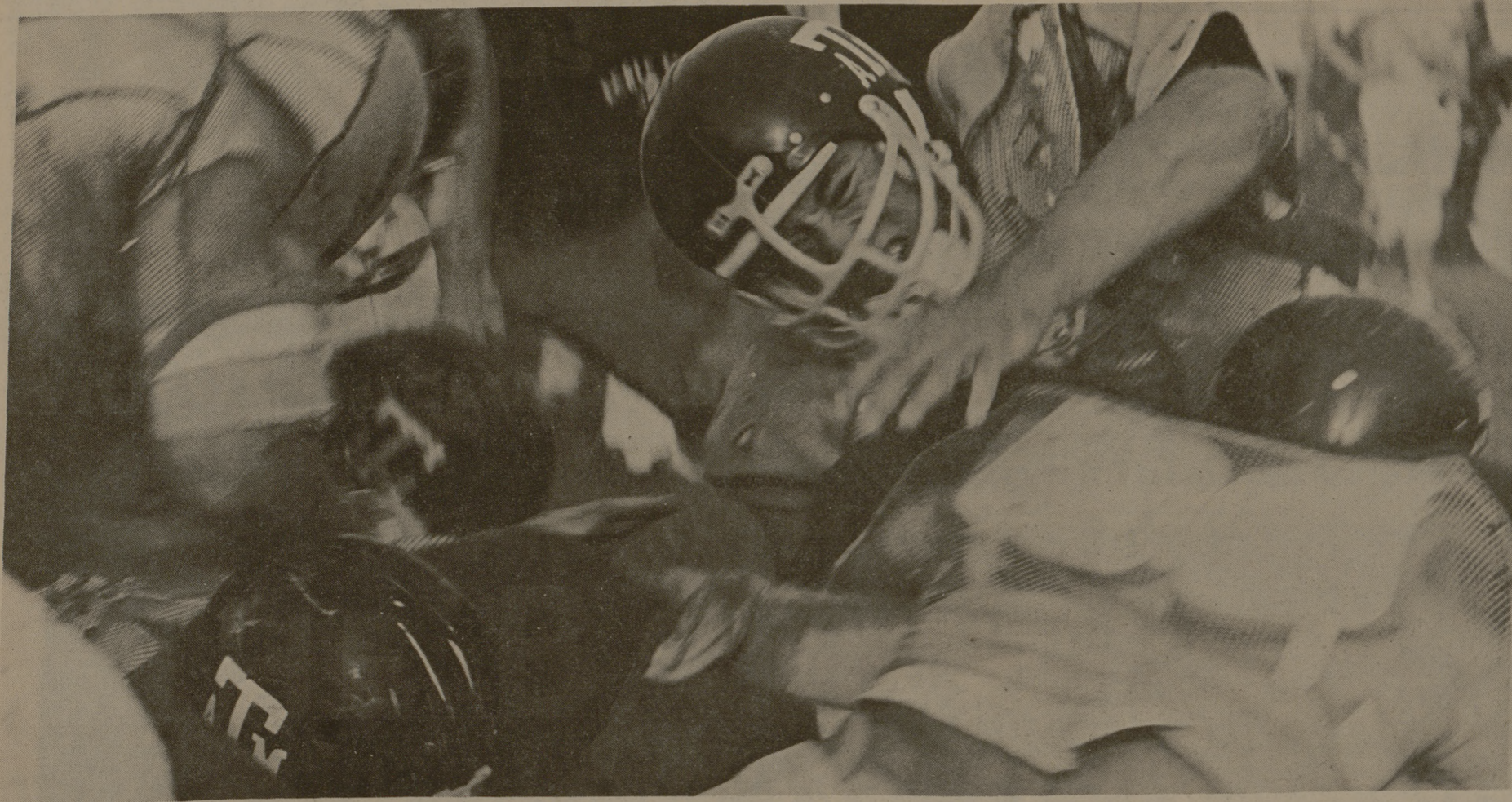


SWC Champs Working Harder To Defend Title



'Opportunists' Return 14 Lettermen And Determination For Another Try

Continual improvement remains the basic theme of Texas A&M as Gene Stallings prepares his Aggies to defend their Southwest Conference football championship.

Despite the championship, the ensuing 20-16 victory over Alabama in the Cotton Bowl and the seven-game winning streak the Aggies carry into 1968, there is room for a lot of improvement.

Strange as it might seem, the 1967 SWC champion finished dead last in per-game offensive averages in the eight-team league. And, they were fifth in per-game defensive averages.

The reason they won is that they made the Big Play when it was mandatory. During the 10-game regular season the Aggies intercepted 27 enemy passes and recovered a dozen enemy fumbles.

Admittedly, they were a wild band of opportunists who capitalized on their foes' mistakes time and again. But never did they monopolize a contest, either offensively or defensively.

Stallings, a candid realist, admits his team "should be improved" but adds "there is no way we can have a great offensive line."

The offensive line is the team's main weakness. Last season, Stallings made some position switches that saw end Mark Weaver moving to guard, linebacker Robert Cortez moving to guard and fullback Dan Schneider moving to tackle. They were all seniors who knew what the heat of battle was all about.

After the Cotton Bowl, game, both Weaver and Schneider were named to the All-Bowl offensive team, signifying the great development they had made in one season.

But, at the close of spring training last May, three sophomores were in the spots vacated by Cortez, Weaver and Schneider. They were guards Rusty Stallings and Jim Parker and tackle Mike Fields. Whether they can retain their hard-won berths won't be decided until fall drills are well under way. Even so, they lack that all-important battle-field experience and it can't be attained on the practice lot.

Otherwise, A&M is pretty well set at starting positions. Sophomore Mike DeNiro stepped in and took over right end, the one vacated spot on defense that Grady Allen left.

However, there is a decided dropoff between first and second units on the Aggie squad. Injuries to key personnel hurt all football teams but such could be disastrous for the Aggies.

"I thought our first units put out more effort than anyone during the spring," Stallings commented, "but I was disappointed with the second and third units." He added, however, that "It could have been partially my fault because I didn't give the youngsters as much work as I did the veterans."

On the credit side, the Aggies have 14 senior lettermen on hand, including 10 two-year starters. Senior leadership, a vital factor in Stallings' outlook, will be strong in 1968.

**Keep Your Parents
Informed
On Campus
Happenings
With A Subscription
To
THE BATTALION**



PUBLISHED 4 TIMES WEEKLY

RATES:

\$6.50.....Full Year \$3.50.....Semester
\$6.00.....School Year \$1.00.....Month
Plus 3% Sales Tax

CLIP OUT THIS COUPON AND MAIL TODAY

Please Start My Subscription
September 1st To:
THE BATTALION
College Station, Texas 77843

Enclosed You Will Find My Check or Money Order for: \$6.50 per year....., \$6.00 per school year....., \$3.50 per semester....., \$1.00 per month....., Plus 3% sales tax. (Check one wanted).

NAME.....
ADDRESS.....
CITY..... STATE.....

EXCEPTIONAL VALUE? CERTAINLY!

advertised in
ESQUIRE



Yorktown
Shoes for Men

When you slip your feet into the supple luxury of this distinctive, fine leather shoe and experience its made-for-you fit... you'll agree that rarely has so little money bought so much downright comfort and walking pleasure.

\$13.95
(Regular \$16.00)

THE ONLY SHOE WITH A GUARANTEE

Past performance has been so good that we unconditionally guarantee the wearability of these Yorktown shoes. (Over 500 Boys Wearing These Shoes - Ask the Man Who Owns Them.)

If your sole wears out by Christmas we will give you a NEW pair of shoes

If your sole wears out by Easter we will resole your shoes FREE OF CHARGE

You are protected when you buy YORKTOWN SHOES

Order by mail now and have your shoes "broken in" by September. Heel taps furnished free.

Loupot's
North Gate



GIFTS — GIFTS — GIFTS

For the unusual gift, come to the

Aggieland Flower and Gift Shoppe

Flowers, Candy, and Perfume Sent Out Of Town

209 University Dr.
North Gate Shopping Center



member of FTD
TeleFlora for out of town orders.