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Ags Capture 24-14 Victory Over Owls

By JOHN PLATZER
Two entirely different games were played on Kyle Field Saturday, with the Aggies taking both of them to capture a 24-14 win over the Rice Owls.

Offense was the keyword of the first quarter while the defenses took command for the final three periods of the contest. A&M won the offensive struggle 21-14 and edged Rice in the defensive contest 3-0.

The Aggies' offense marched through the Owls like Sherman in Georgia for the first fifteen minutes with the Rice offense responding in kind.

The first seven plays run off by A&M were good for first downs before the Owls' defense stiffened to hold Larry Stegent to only seven yards. In the hectic first quarter both teams had 11 first downs with the Aggies gaining 70 yards on the ground and 116 through the air while Rice picked up 99 yards rushing and 18 passing.

Behind the running of Tony Conley, the Owls drove for a touchdown on their first series. Conley rushed for 22 of the 75 yards of the drive and scored on a two-yard plunge.

A&M drove back 89 yards in 5 plays to pull even. Stegent started it off with a 12-yard run and then Edd Hargett connected with Barney Harris for 16 yards before Stegent rambled 27 more. Hargett passed to Bob Long for 21 and then Stegent climaxed

the drive with a 13-yard scamper. Rice fought right back to travel 56 yards on 12 plays to recapture the lead at 14-7. This time Robby Shelton was the key contributor with 23 yards while Conley picked up 17. Shelton went over from the two for the score.

In a matter of minutes the Aggies had knotted the score once more with a 9-play, 67-yard scoring march. Hargett got the drive off on good footing with 10 and 12 yard tosses to Stegent before Stegent ripped through the line for seven. After Hargett missed on a pass, Stegent and Wendell Housley picked up two apiece then Hargett found Long with a 16-yard bullet. Stegent picked up seven and then Hargett hit Long for the final 11.

On the next series the Aggies' defense stiffened and Rice was forced into a punting situation from their own 37. Ivan Jones burst through the Owl blockers to get a hand on the punt and A&M was back in business at the Rice 30 after Ross Brupbacher fell on the loose ball.

After the first play was an incomplete pass, Hargett hit Stegent in the flats and the swivel-hipped junior from Houston St. Thomas glided into the endzone behind a good block by Harris. Stegent put fakes on two Rice defenders during the run that left them talking to themselves as well as head coach Bo Hagan.

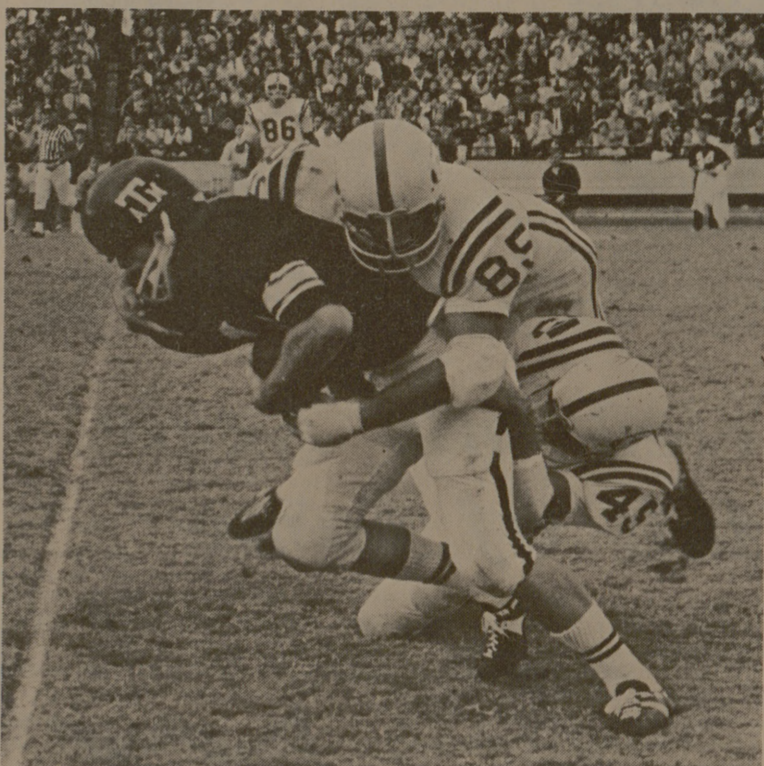
Each team had a scoring opportunity in the third quarter but neither could cash in on it. The Rice chance came when they caught Steve O'Neal back to punt and took over at the Aggie 41. They took the ball down to the 11 before Brupbacher ended the threat with an interception in the endzone.

With Stegent and Hargett

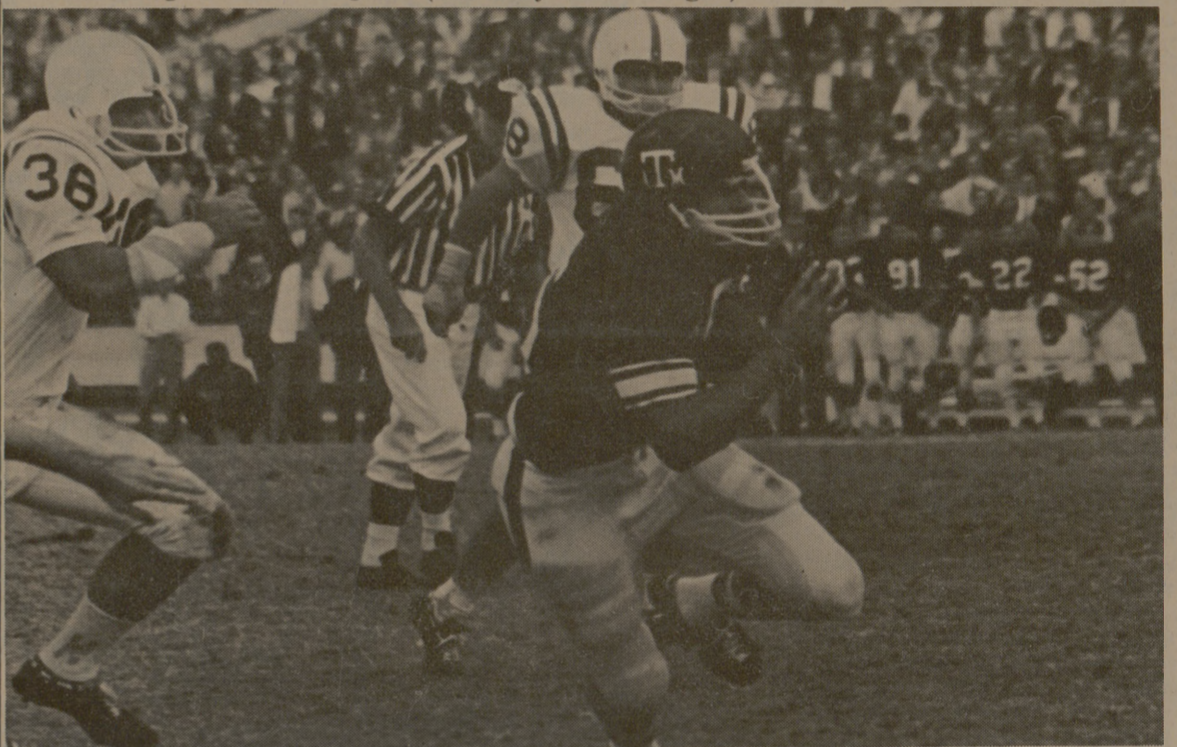
again leading the way, the Aggies went on a march from their own 13 to the Rice one late in the third period. On fourth down from that spot Housley tried left guard but was stopped short of the goal stripe.

The Aggies made good in their only opportunity of the final stanza with a 26-yard field goal by Charley Riggs. The kick hit the middle crossbar flush but somehow managed to flip over on the three-point side.

Hargett, A&M's Mr. Everything on offense, connected on 24 of 41 tosses for 328 yards and two touchdowns and ran his string to 171 straight passes without an interception. The national record in this category is 198 set by Tulsa's Jerry Rhome over a seven game span. Stegent was once again A&M's top ground gainer with 100 yards on 21 attempts while Long grabbed six tosses for 119 yards and one touchdown.



WATCH IT!
Barney Harris weathers two tacklers and a face mask violation as he takes a 16-yard pass from Edd Hargett. Harris caught 6 for 64 yards in the Aggies' 24-14 victory. (Photo by Mike Wright)



LOOSE AGAIN
Aggie tailback Larry Stegent spins for 13 yards and a first down in the fourth quarter after taking a pass from Edd Hargett. Stegent gained 100 of A&M's 106 yards on the ground in the 24-14 blitz over Rice. (Photo by Mike Wright)

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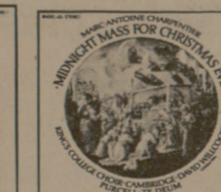
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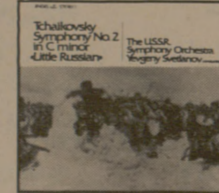
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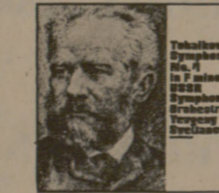
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