

# Lots Of Talent, Shy Experience

The backfield will be long on talent but short on experience when the Texas Aggies take the gridiron Sept. 20 in their 1969 opener with LSU.

Larry Stegent, a senior All-America candidate, is the anchor-man for the Aggie backfield. He already owns two letters at the tailback slot. The 6-1, 195-pounder is one of the most respected broken field runners in the Southwest. Blessed with gifted hands, he also keys the passing game and has caught 59 passes in two seasons.

Stegent will receive adequate backup help from sophs Steve Burks and Gary Armbrister.

The fullback will be Marc Black, a red-shirt sophomore from New Mexico Military Institute where he was a high school All-America. The 6-2, 207 pounder

was the leading ground gainer in the spring game and runs with both authority and finesse. He will be backed up by sophomores Doug Robbins and Doug Neill.

The wingback slot will also be in good hands with senior Barney Harris, who was second to Jerry Levias last season in SWC pass receiving. He latched onto 49 for 745 yards in ten contests and had the best single game of any receiver with 13 catches in the SMU game. Harris will be backed by sophomore Billy Joe Polasek and letterman Bill Seely.

The quarterback slot seems to be the unknown factor in the Aggie attack. Gone is Edd Hargett, passer supreme, but back is junior letterman Jimmy Sheffield, a fine running signal caller. As demonstrated in the spring game, he also has a good throw-

ing arm. Any good football team goes as far as their quarterback carries them and seemingly all Sheffield needs is baptism under fire. He has all of the tools to become a fine quarterback and Stallings has confidence that he can move the team.

When talk about Aggie football for the past few years is started it always leads to their weakness, the offensive line. This year will mark a young, inexperienced line but bigger and quicker and deeper than any time in Stallings' regime.

It is anchored by center Jack Kovar, tight end convert Ross Brupbacher, split end Jimmy Adams, and weak tackle Carl Gough. The latter two missed spring drills and will be hard-pressed to regain their positions. At the end of the spring drills,

the starters were senior Tom Sooy at split end; junior Allen Hanson at weak tackle; junior Jim Parker at weak guard; Kovar, center; sophomore Robin Davis, strong guard; sophomore Andy Philley, strong tackle; senior Brupbacher, strong end.

Jimmy Adams, Phil Adams, Joey Herr, and David Odom will battle Sooy for the split end job. Gough, Randy Maddox, Ted Smith and Jim Bates offer Hanson stiff competition. Leonard Foery, Rusty Stallings, and Rae Albertini will fight for Parker's job. Mike Stinson, Benny DeWitt, and Mike Park back up Kovar.

Mike Fields, Tommy Eilers, and Tommy Deaton will challenge Davis. Joe Shaw, John Cunningham and Charles Crain are competitors behind Philley. Roy Kirkpatrick, Billy Bob Barnett, and Mitch Robertson are behind Brupbacher.

In most cases, the quality will not fall off when a change is made in the offensive line.

The kicking situation seems to be solved after a short indecisive period before the spring game. The punter will be either Mitch Robertson, a redshirt sophomore end, or Sheffield. Both punted for a 39-yard average in the spring contest.

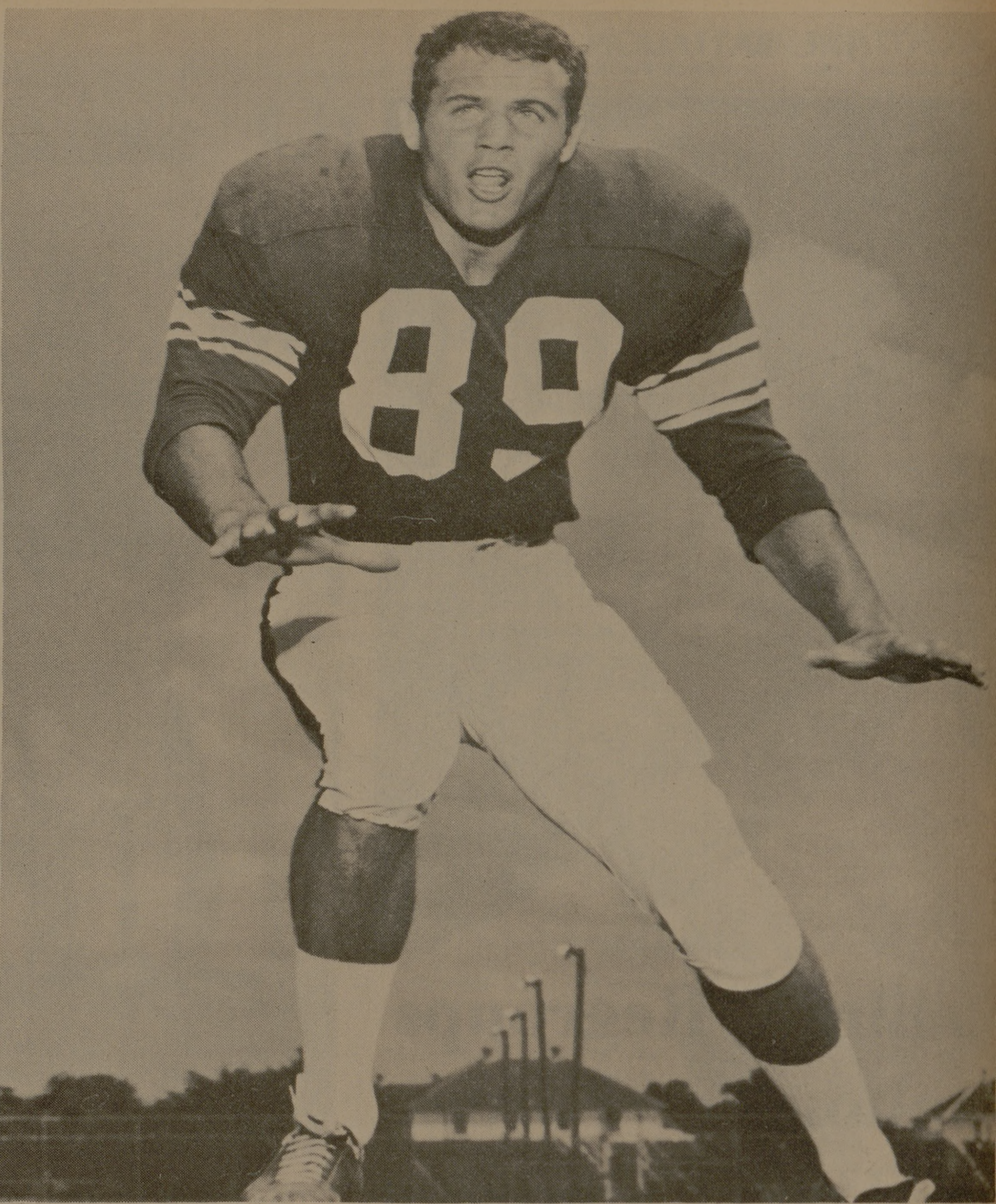
The placement kicking will be handled by Mike Bellar, a transfer from Eastern New Mexico at Portales. He was not eligible for spring practice but will be an eligible soph in the fall. He is a strong-legged youngster whose field goal range extends to the 50-60 yard category.

The defensive unit for the Aggies will also be freely sprinkled with sophomores but does have some experienced hands at key positions. Middle guard Lynn Odom, ends Jim Piper and Mike DeNiro and linebacker Buster Adami all return to bolster the trenches but the other positions, especially the defensive secondary, are up for grabs.

Linebackers Mike Caswell, a senior, and Andy Tewell, a red-shirt sophomore, did well in the spring but they, and Adami, were pressed by three candidates off last year's undefeated freshman squad — Mike Lord, Clifford Thomas, and Steve Luebbehusen.

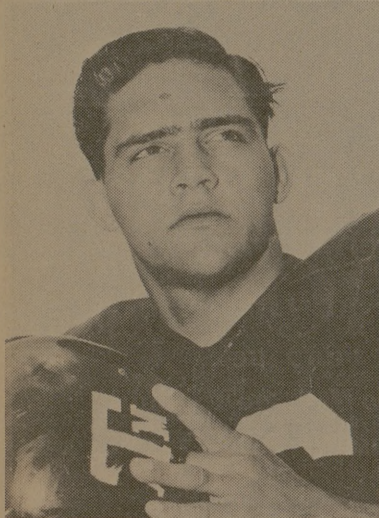
And a host of other sophomores-to-be competed strongly for line spots. They included Van Odom, Wayne Wheat, James Dubcak, Clifton Thomas, Barb Hinnant, and Tom Evans plus squadmen Lenard Millsap and Ronald Cole.

In the defensive secondary, only one experienced hand returns, safety Dave Elmendorf, and he saw limited service there last year as a sophomore, having played five positions during the season. Letterman Lynn Fister and redshirt sophomore Lee Hitt were in the race during the spring

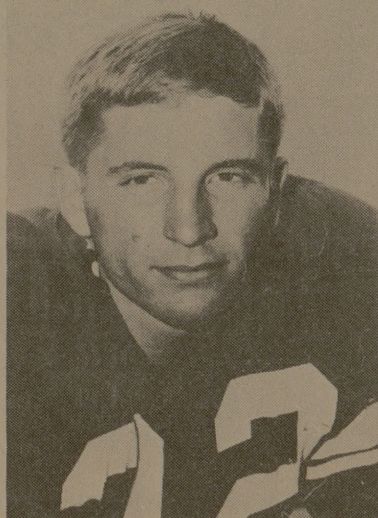


MEAN MIKE

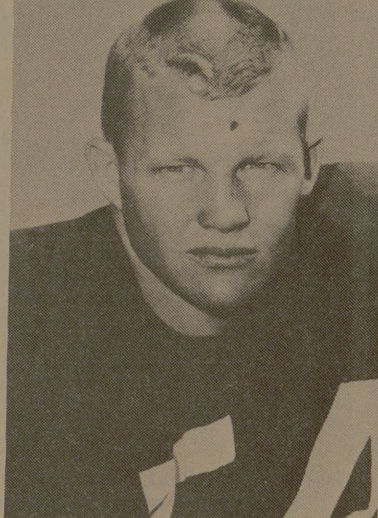
Mike DeNiro, junior defensive end, returns to bolster the defensive trenches. In 1968 he was consensus All-SWC and defensive sophomore-of-the-year.



KOVAR



SOOY



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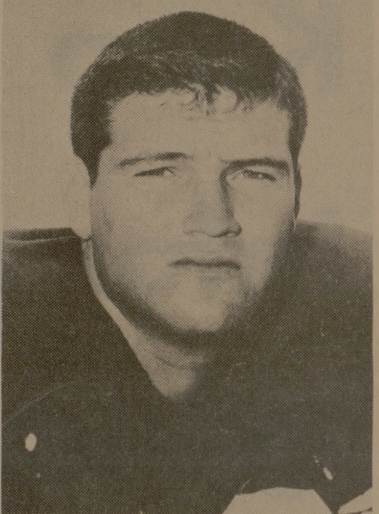
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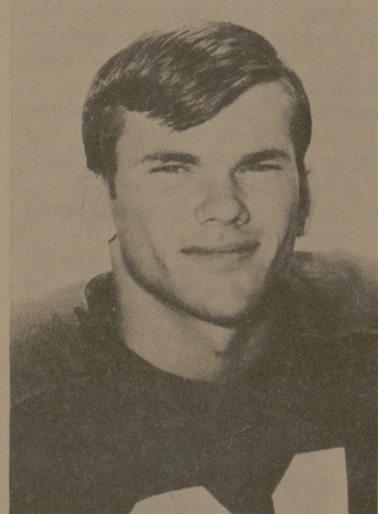
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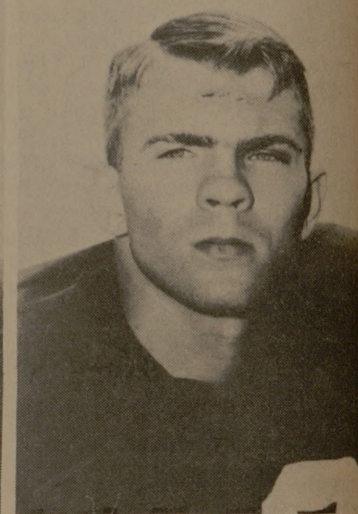
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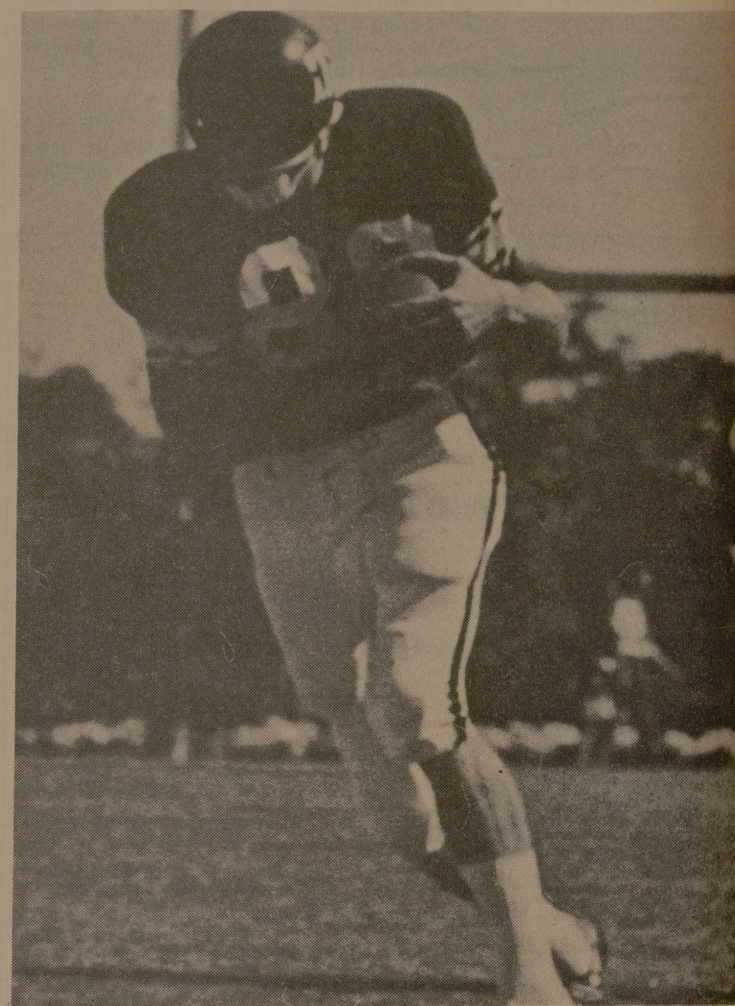
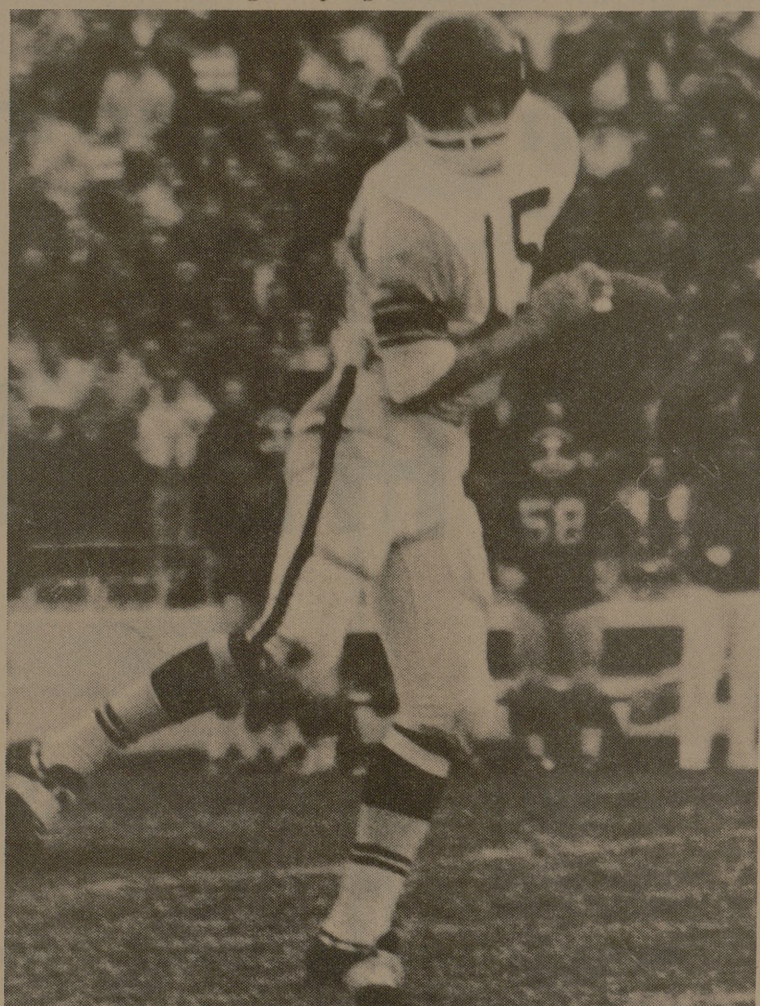
STALLINGS

but letterman Jack Whitmore missed most of the action because of a knee injury.

Sophomores could man all of the slots except safety where Elmendorf is set as a starter. Foremost of the newcomers was Edwin

Ebrom, who could develop into a real good halfback. The battle then rages among such sophs as Corky Sheffield, David Hoot, Chris Johnson, Mike Bungler, Pat Willis, Bland Smith, and John Gardner.

With inexperience to plague them at nearly all positions, the Aggies will not be picked very high in the preseason predictions, but if these sophomores develop rapidly they could be the surprise team in the conference.



PASS RECEIVERS SUPREME

Barney Harris (left) and Jimmy Adams are both seniors. Harris 6-2, 192, is from San Antonio MacArthur and Adams is a 6-2, 185-pounder from Houston Waltrip.



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