

FROM THE PRESSBOX



by Richard Campbell

I don't know whether you realize it or not but the Texas Aggies are at a crossroads once again.

Those of you who were here two years ago when we played Texas Tech in Lubbock remember that it was the turning point in what otherwise could have been a disappointing season. We had lost four straight games and things were looking dim until we slipped past the Red Raiders, 23-24. From there on, the rest of our games fell right into place as we reeled off seven straight victories, won the conference championship and beat Alabama in the Cotton Bowl.

Here the Aggies stand at the crossroads of another so-so season or a bright, winning one and it's ironic that Tech is again our opponent. Losing two non-conference tilts means nothing but come Saturday night and the games all count until that final whistle blows Dec. 6.

This is the point in the season where the Aggies can look back on months, sometimes even years, of hard work and see that it has got them. It is also a time for personal reflection when every player must forge his objectives and work unyieldingly toward them. It is like a man pushing a car up a steep hill. He knows that the top of the hill is near but he also realizes that he will have to push a little harder and longer to get to the crest of it and coast down the other side. The Aggies have been pushing the car through three hard games and all indications are that they are on the way to the top of the hill. All it takes is seven more weeks of hard work to reach the top.

Although missing the first game due to a pulled hamstring, Larry Stegent has moved into sixth place among conference rushers with a total of 130 yards in two games. He has also carried 44 times and is third in that department behind Danny Hardaway of Tech with 55 carries and Bill Burnett of Arkansas with 53, who have both played in three games.

Rocky Self has also moved into third place in passing with 34 completions in 69 attempts for a 49.3 percentage and 386 yards. Strangely enough, A&M's quarterback for the first game with LSU and part of the Nebraska contest, Jimmy Heffield, is still ahead of Texas' James Street in passing, only SMU's Chuck Hixson and TCU's Steve Judy are ahead of Self at this point in both passing and in total offense.

For the Army game Aggie trainer Billy Pickard wore a special good luck jacket given to him by Paul "Bear" Bryant. The only other time that he wore the jacket was for the Cotton Bowl game Jan. 1, 1968 when the Aggies beat Alabama, 20-16.

Don't feel too bad about losing to LSU and Nebraska because other teams are having their problems against them. LSU beat us 35-6 but in successive weekends they have pounded Rice 42-0 and Baylor 63-8. Nebraska has a 2-1 record and last week they swamped Minnesota, 42-14. The capacity crowd of 41,500 expected at Lubbock Saturday night will be the fourth straight full house that the Aggies played before. LSU (67,510), Nebraska (66,331), and Army (1,000) were all sellouts.

Buckeyes, Hogs, Irish Get Nod

By WILL GRIMSLEY
Associated Press Sports Writer
NEW YORK (AP) — The fourth week traditionally is Knock-Down-The-Favorite week in college football.

So look for Ohio State to have its No. 1 rating rattled — but not dislodged — by Michigan State, which will do far better than its three-touchdown underdog rating. Upsets are in store for second-ranked Texas and fourth-rated Southern California and other surprises are in the offing.

Last week: 35-19 for .648. Season 129-45 for .741.

Ohio State 33, Michigan State 28: The buckeyes are too powerful on the ground but the Spartans give them a scare.

Oklahoma 30, Texas 22; Steven Owens of the Sooners, with

nearly 3,000 yards rushing, is an antidote for Texas' Wishbone-T. Stanford 28, Southern California 21: The Trojans, at home, are favored but Jim Plunkett doesn't read the line.

Penn State 40, West Virginia 26: West Virginia leads the country in rushing offense and Jim Braxton in scoring, but Penn State has greater depth.

Notre Dame 39, Army 14: One of the great rivalries renewed at Yankee Stadium, the Irish's Joe Theismann is getting better at quarterback.

Missouri 24, Nebraska 18: Terry McMillan if by air and Joe Moore if by land — the Tiggers are tusk-toothed.

California 27, Washington 20: The Golden Bears have punch but their ace card is a secondary defense headed by Ken Wie-

demann. Arkansas 37, Baylor 13: Even the Mets would like a battery like Bill Montgomery and Chuck Dieus.

Auburn 28, Clemson 14: Frank Howard's boys foiled in attempt to score another out-of-conference victory. Plainsmen have

too much muscle.

Tennessee 24, Georgia Tech 7: With Bobby Dodd watching from upstairs instead of the bench, the Tech urge isn't the same in this game.

Pittsburgh 32, Navy 27: The Panthers finally tasted raw meat a week ago, and they like it.

Harvard's Champi Calls It Quits

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. (AP) — Harvard quarterback Frank Champi, who came off the bench last year to direct the Crimson's closing rally against Yale that

produced a tie for the Ivy League championship, has left the 1969 football squad after two games, the school said Wednesday.

"It was a very hard decision," said Champi, "but football has lost its meaning for me. I've been thinking about my relation to the game for a long time — several years.

"I kept asking myself why I was playing. I wasn't doing it for publicity, or for pride, or for the thrill of victory.

"I wasn't getting those things from it. I can't take the game seriously any more."

"I have been a nervous wreck. I just can't get myself psyched for football any more."

Champi had started both of Harvard's games this season.

Table Tennis

Hard hitting Roger Brown of Vicksburg, Miss., led the field of 33 last Wednesday as he captured the men's class A table tennis title for the second straight year.

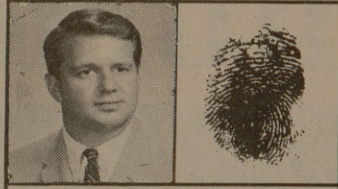
He defeated Fausto Alvarez of the Dominican Republic in the Texas A&M Open Table Tennis Tournament in the MSC Assembly Room.



DISCUSSING DEFENSE PLANS

Defensive coach Dee Powell and linebacker Buster Adams discuss a new adjustment during the second half of the Army game, as defensive halfback Dave Elmendorf (left) and end coach Ralph Smith look on. (Sports Photo by Mike Wright)

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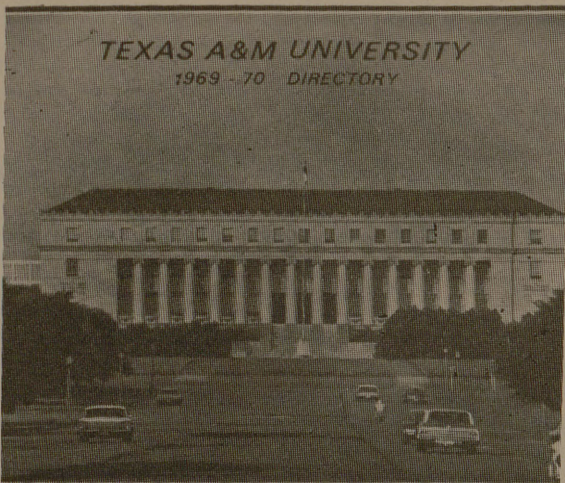
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(An updated student section will be published about Oct. 24. It will be available free of charge upon presentation of the coupon included in the basic directory.)



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