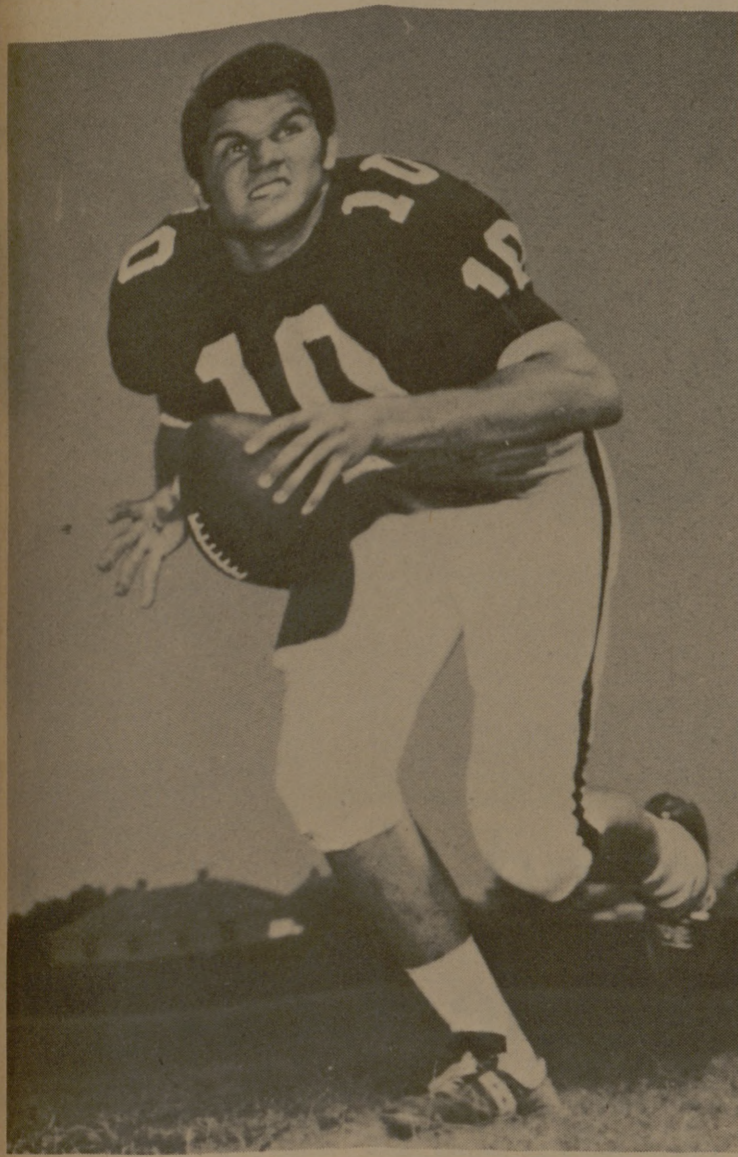


Color '70 Aggies slightly green

But add desire, enthusiasm



New Aggie Quarterback—Lex James, a 6-0, 182 pounder from Houston Sam Houston, will carry a large part of the Aggies' load on the gridiron in 1970. The sophomore earned a freshman numeral as quarterback on the 4-1 team. He ended spring training as the No. 1 quarterback.

Color the 1970 Texas Aggies young again with a slight tint of green, but add a dash of robust enthusiasm and a burning desire to succeed.

What was a sophomoreish outfit in 1969 will be a juniorish-sophomoreish group in 1970. The No. 1 offense has eight juniors and three sophomores and the No. 1 defense has five juniors, five sophomores and one senior. The lone senior is all-SWC safety Dave Elmendorf, a two-year veteran who missed spring drills because of his participation in baseball.

After two outstanding recruiting years in the springs of 1968 and 1969, the talent appears to be good, even if still young.

After the Maroon-White game that closed out spring practice, head Coach Gene Stallings said: "I feel better about this spring training than any we've had here. But I have to be realistic about the early schedule. I just hope we're healthy when we get to the Southwest Conference play."

The Aggies open at home against Wichita State on Sept. 12. Then, they hit the road for three rugged non-conference games — against LSU in Baton Rouge, Ohio State in Columbus and Michigan in Ann Arbor.

"I think we have a little more depth than we've had ever and if we don't have a lot of injuries, I think we have a chance to have a pretty good football team," Stallings said.

Texas A&M's foes will face the huskiest line in Stallings' six-year regime this autumn. The first offensive line, excluding the split end, will average 231

pounds. The second will be even heavier, at 237. The defensive front four, plus three linebackers, will average 218 for the first unit and 215 for the second.

That isn't huge, by current collegiate standards, but it is a sharp departure from the light horse troops that have marked Stallings' regime.

The Aggies lost 23 lettermen and returned 29 from last year's outfit. Among those departing were four — tailback Larry Stegent, split receiver Barney Harris, tight end Ross Brupbacher and defensive Billy Bob Barnett — who were drafted by the pros.

The major hurdle ahead for the Aggies seems to loom at the all-important quarterback slot where there are no proven hands.

The top candidate following the spring game was sophomore Lex James, a 5-11, 182 pounder from Sam Houston High in Houston. The rest of the offensive backfield includes Brad Dusek, at left halfback, Marc Black at fullback and Clifford Thomas at right half. Dusek will be a sophomore while Black and Thomas will be juniors. Black is a returning starter and Thomas is a letterman.

The competition was hot and heavy, especially at left half where lettermen Steve Burks was in the thick of the picture and at fullback where Doug Neill came through with a big spring performance. Joe Mac King, a junior letterman, finished as the No. 2 quarterback but the versatile Dusek also could be called upon to play there in the event anything happens to James.

Elmendorf will likely see some

action at right halfback during early fall drills and another sophomore, Robert Murskim, who was out with a shoulder operation in the spring, is expected to make a strong bid in the fall.

Two solid offensive line units emerged in the spring, meaning the competition will be close again in the fall drills. Sophomore Mike Park, 216, won the center spot in the spring while the first team guards were Leonard Millsap, 220-pound junior squadman and Leonard Forey, 230-pound junior returning starter. The tackles were Benny DeWitt, 237-pound junior squadman and Andy Philley, 241-pound junior returning starter. Mitch Robertson, 220-pound junior squadman, was the tight end and Joey Herr, 181-pound junior letterman, was the split end.

Close behind them were split end Hugh McElroy, 170, junior squadman; tight end Homer May, 224, sophomore; tackles Mike Fields, 231, junior letterman and Buster Callaway, 240, sophomore; guards Winston Beam, 251, senior letterman and Gary Martin, 234, sophomore; center Ted Smith, 224, junior letterman.

Young, reckless hitters might best describe the defensive front four. The only veteran on the first group is junior Van Odom, 233, a starter as a sophomore last year. The other three all will be sophomores. The two ends are Todd Christopher, 219, and Max Bird, 210, and the other guard is Boice Best, 228.

The competition is close, however, and the second unit is about only a half-step behind. The ends (See Green, page 5)



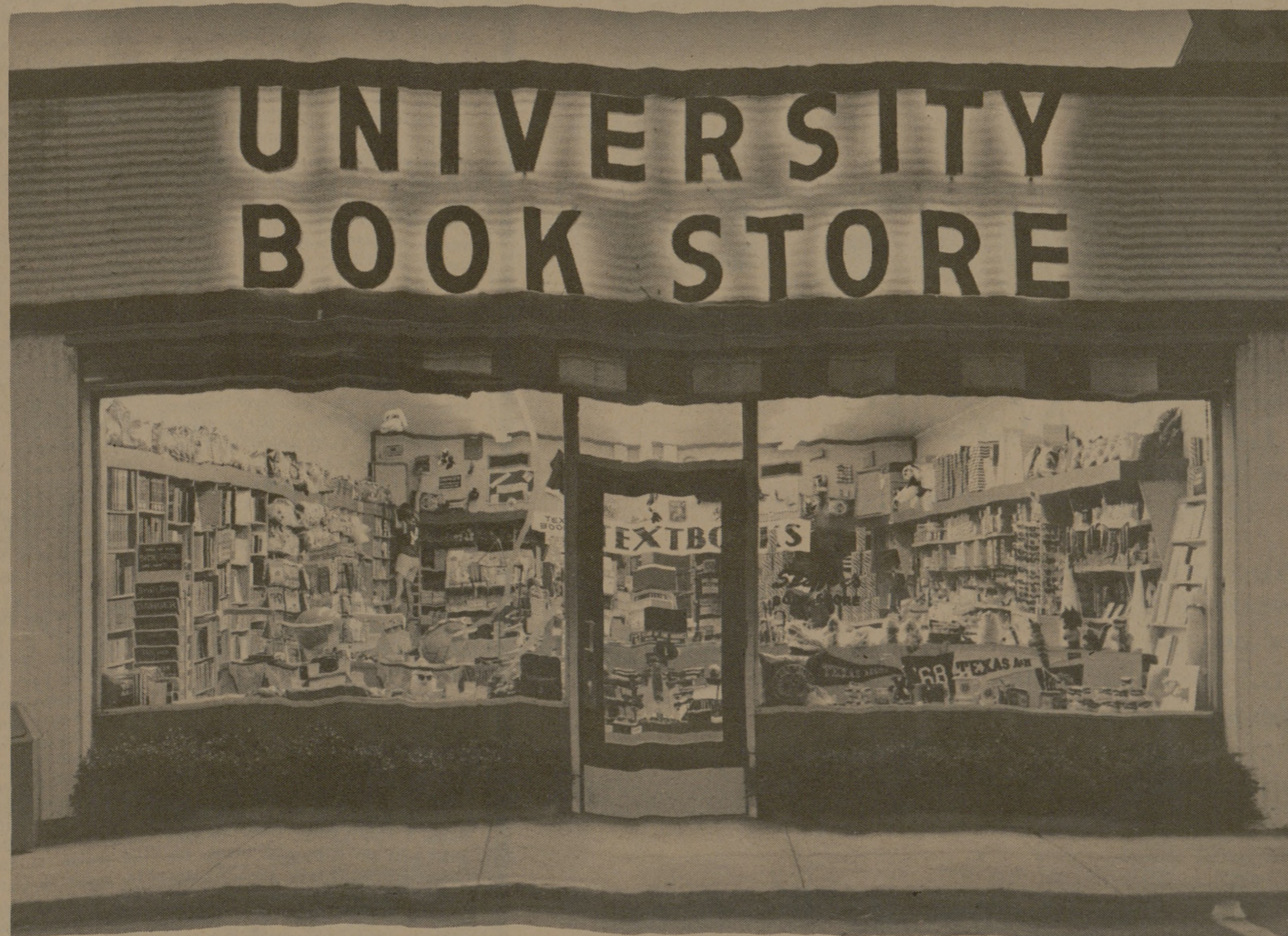
Aggie All-SWC Player—Dave Elmendorf, a 6-1, 190 pound senior, is returning to the Aggie squad this fall as a two-year varsity letterman. As a junior, he was All-SWC safety and second team All-America Academic Team. He was also twice All-SWC as baseball centerfielder.

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