

Aggies have Bryant-oriented staff

A new offensive coach and a promotion for a defensive mentor bring two new looks to the coaching ranks for Gene Stallings' 21-man staff, out to overcome the memories of a 2-9 season Sept. 11 when the Aggies beat Wichita State on Kyle Field. Charles H. (Pug) Gabrel, who joined the A&M staff in the spring, will be in charge of the offensive line. Gabrel comes to

Aggieland from Oklahoma State where he was the offensive coordinator for one of the up and coming major college football programs. Gabrel replaces Bud Moore, who headed the offense for the past five seasons. Offensive line coach Charlie Bradshaw also resigned after completing his first season at A&M. Bradshaw now is at Vanderbilt.

Harvey Aschenbeck, a defensive tackle on the 1967 Southwest Conference champion A&M squad, will be starting his first season as coach of the defensive line. Last year Aschenbeck was a full-time varsity assistant after serving the 1969 season as a student assistant.

Head coach Gene Stallings will begin his seventh season in charge of the Aggies this fall and will be out to reverse a trend that saw A&M football at its lowest last season. A&M has a 22-20-1 record during Stallings' tenure, including a 7-4 Southwest Conference title in 1967.

Stallings earned three varsity letters at Aggieland under Coach Paul (Bear) Bryant and was tri-captain for the unbeaten 1956 team. He later joined Bryant as an assistant coach at the University of Alabama.

Returning for his seventeenth season on the staff is assistant head coach Elmer Smith. Smith, a member of the Arkansas Hall of Fame because of his athletic prowess, joined the A&M coaching staff for the first time under Bryant in 1954.

As with the majority of the staff, the name of Bryant has influenced defensive coach Dee Powell, quarterback coach Jack Hurlbut and receiving coach Bobby Marks, who also learned some of their football from the Bear.

Powell, now in his fifth season, was a center and guard along with Marks, who was an All-Southwest Conference end, in the Bryant era. Both finished a year after Stallings. That year, 1957, Stallings coached the Aggie Flah.

Hurlbut coached one year as a defensive backfield coach, since he also worked in the defensive secondary as a player under Bryant. He has been a

quarterback coach since that first season. His most noticeable graduate is Edd Hargett, who spearheaded the 1967 champions and is now one of the top signal callers for the New Orleans Saints of the National Football League.

Marks joined the Aggie staff in 1969 after a very successful stay as head mentor of the Houston Sam Houston football program. But he didn't just leave the Sam Houston program behind. Marks, who scouts in the Gulf Coast area, has brought in some of his former high school players, including quarterback Lax James, fullback Doug Neill and receivers, Thomas Burke and Bobby Hughes.

Lance Van Zandt and John Paul Young, who both have coached under Stallings for one season return to coordinate the defensive secondary and linebackers respectively.

Van Zandt previously coached at New Mexico Highlands and West Texas State before coming to A&M and Young, who was an outstanding linebacker at the University of Texas at El Paso for four years, was an assistant coach at Oklahoma State prior

to coming to A&M. He also coached as an assistant under Hayden Fry at Southern Methodist University. Jim Keller awaits another group of prospective Aggie football stars as he begins his fourth season as A&M freshman coach. Keller's teams have a 9-6 record in three seasons. He was a varsity quarterback-safety for three seasons during his playing days in the early sixties for the Aggies. He came to A&M on basketball scholarship, however, and also played two years on the varsity cage squad.

Barny Welch, one of the leading Southwest Conference football officials for several years, is entering his second season as varsity assistant and is in charge of the Aggies' vast recruiting program.

Welch got a before and after look at college athletics as he started his career at A&M before World War II but entered the service after his sophomore year. He returned to complete his eligibility in the 1946 and 1947 seasons and then served as director of intramural athletics at A&M in 1948.

Facing the guy who just might become one of the great college quarterbacks, the Texas Aggies travel to Little Rock to meet the University of Arkansas and their junior phenomenon Joe Ferguson. Ferguson, one of the greatest high school quarterbacks in Louisiana history, was understudy to Bill Montgomery last year and if he comes through as expected the Hogs could really fly.

The two teams shared the lower rungs of the league last year. Twenty-six lettermen are back for coach Bill Beall's Bears, who trimmed the Aggies 29-24 in a Baylor homecoming clash last year. That win gave Baylor a 1-6 conference mark while the Ags finished 0-7.

They meet in Houston this year with new coach Bill Peterson expected to have the Owls throwing the ball just as he did at Florida State, where he traditionally had one of the liveliest passing games in college football.

As usual the season finale is a Thanksgiving Day battle with the University of Texas at Austin. The match is set for 1:30 p.m. on Kyle Field. The Longhorns, suffering from the loss of 23 lettermen off the 1970 national champions, have to depend on an outstanding crop of sophomores that could provide the key to another super season. Top returning veterans include quarterback Eddie Phillips, running back Jim Bertelson and offensive guard Jerry Sisemore.

Two sophomores are rated as

good shots in the defensive unit as Bud Trammell from Dumas is vying for a tackle spot that would free Odum to handle the middle guard duties and Billy Wiebold from Beaumont is an outstanding prospect at linebacker.

Elmendorf is gone from the defensive secondary and that leaves the Aggie secondary in what Stallings called his team's most serious problem.

David Hoot, senior from Houston, is the strong safety and Ed Ebrum and Bland Smith are lettermen returning for the corners. But Stallings hasn't got a free safety. Lee Hitt, Elmendorf's understudy is the top candidate, although Stallings has hinted on the use of Dusek or Thomas at the position. He said that he plans to give Dusek a full trial at the position during the fall workouts.

Chris Johnson, one of the Aggies numerous wounded returnees has reported back in good health as is Mike Burger and the duo will also be in the running for defensive backfield posts.

The latest addition to the Aggies squad is track star Curtis Mills, who has completed his eligibility for the Aggie cinder squad, will get a good look at the free safety position.

Stallings said that Mills agreed that his best position might be the secondary because it might be easier and take less time to perfect than running patterns and catching passes required in football. Most observers had felt that wide receiver would be his position because of his speed.

Stallings also said he has changed his philosophy of the big play. "We're not going to emphasize the big play. To us every play is important. It's not what you do on five or six plays that wins games, it's what you do on the other 75 or 80. In fact, every first and ten is a big play."

When asked about the conference race this fall Stallings said, "I know more about A&M than I know about anybody else. And I like A&M and I think we can win. Any coach that doesn't think he can win isn't worth his salt."

In less than two weeks Stallings' Aggies embark on the 1971 season with a new style, a new philosophy and hopefully a new future.

Two sophomores are rated as



Pug Gabrel, left, and Harvey Aschenbeck are the two new additions to the A&M coaching staff this season. Gabrel will coach the offensive line while Aschenbeck, who had previously served as a student assistant coach after completing his eligibility will coach the defensive lineman.

Loaded with people

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A wide open battle is expected for the punting job, a position which has distinguished many Aggies including the latest gem, Jimmy Sheffield, who was drafted last year by the Buffalo Bills of the National Football League. Senior Mitch Robertson is currently leading the group after averaging better than 50 yards a kick in the final scrimmage of the spring. But Stallings says he wouldn't be a bit surprised to see Herr or Dusek take over the job or even Freshman Bill Nutt, who's 40.7 average was better than SWC's varsity leader.

The team's leading scorer last year place kicker Pat McDermott returns to defend his post, but sophomore Roberto Payan is challenging him. Both are soccer style booters and McDermott does his barefooted. Senior Mike Bellar, who handled most of the kickoff duty last year returns to add depth at the position.

Although standing only 5-9 Johnny Gardner took over the split end post midway in the 1970 season and put a tight grip on it while catching 15 aerials. Letterman Tommy Goodwin is the leading challenger.

Four lettermen are leading the fight for the defensive line with juniors Max Bird and Kent Finley at the ends and senior Van Odum and junior James Dubeak at the tackles. Bruce and Boice Best are also fighting for defensive line posts as they start their junior seasons but Bruce's availability is clouded with an injury.

Bruce missed spring training due to surgery for a detached retina and is now having to recover from more surgical work on his eye that could keep him out indefinitely.

Mike Lord, Steve Luebbehusen, Grady Hoermann and Dennis Carruth, are all lettermen at the linebacker but injuries decked them for either part or all of the 1970 season. The Aggies hope to overcome that this fall. Lord missed the season with a knee injury and then sat out spring training to make sure he was healed for the coming campaign. Luebbehusen and Hoermann are healthy but Carruth suffered a broken leg in the spring and his availability is still unknown.

Two sophomores are rated as

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