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Season opener in Kyle Field

Ags host Shockers in comeback battle for both

By JOHN CURYLO Battalion Sports Editor

The Texas Aggies have been saying all along that talk is cheap and that proof of their quality will come at game time.

The game itself has many interesting sidelights, such as the beginning of comebacks for both teams and the time for both schools to show what they are.

After the tragic plane crash last year, Wichita was able to use freshmen to finish their schedule. The players at A&M volunteered to donate the \$5,000 allotted for their football banquet to rebuilding the Kansas school's athletic

program.

But all these events will be forgotten momentarily, and the game itself will be the only thing on the minds of the participants.

The Aggies will be out to prove that they can rebound and play winning football, and the Shockers try to show that they are not a pushover.

A&M Coach Gene Stallings has shifted and shuffled his personnel since last season, and the lineup he starts has not been determined on the spur of the moment.

Lex James, out to prove that he can live up to his potential after beating hepatitis, will start at quarterback. Sophomore Mark Green, if he has recovered from a foot injury, will back him up. Also waiting in the wings are

Tim Trimmier and Joe Mac King. Doug Neill will get the call at fullback, but Marc Black should see plenty of action, since the two are almost equal. Steve Burks starts at tailback, and Cliff Thomas is his replacement.

Robert Murski, playing his first college game on offense and his first game ever at split end, is playing ahead of John Gardner. Joey Herr is the starting wing-back, but Hugh McElroy, the hero of Baton Rouge, will play, also.

Across the line, Buster Callaway is at left tackle, Todd Christopher, a defensive end last year, is at left guard, Robert Gerasimowicz or Skip Kuehn will play center, Leonard Forey, a two year starter, will start at right

guard, and Ted Smith will be at right tackle for the injured Ralph Sacra. The tight end is junior standout Homer May, who should be one of the best in the conference.

Also slated for replacement time on the front line are tackles Marshall Herklotz and Clifton Thomas and guards Mike Park and Butch Kamps.

Defensively, Max Bird and Kent Finley will start at the ends, with Boice Best and James Duback the tackles. Two year starter Van Odom looks for another outstanding season at middle guard, with Bill Wiebold to spell him on occasion. Mike Sweat and Dan Peoples are the substitute ends, and Bud Trammell backs up both tackles. For the first time in a number of years, no sophomores will start, but Trammell has the best chance of any to play a lot.

Grady Hoermann and Steve Luebbehusen get the nod at the linebacker spots, but Mike Lord will be ready to step in at any

Firemen's School has record attendance

Final statistics on the 42nd annual Texas Firemen's Training School this summer at A&M were released this week by Chief Instructor Henry D. Smith.

A record attendance of 3,121 was recorded, Smith reported, with representation from 914 towns and cities, five military bases, 38 U. S. states and 23 foreign countries.

The fire school, held the last two weeks in July and the first week in August, included sections for municipal, industrial and Spanish-speaking firemen.

Wichita SID tells about crash

By JOHN CURYLO

"Arkansas was the single most inspirational moment in our history. The ovation after the game was tremendous. It was the season I could write a book about."

Such were the thoughts of Conrad Downing yesterday when the Wichita State sports publicist spoke to a noon meeting of the local Jaycees.

"Now, there is nothing to feel sorry about," he said. "We've

regrouped and we're rejuvenated, and that's it. The Shockers are a team with a lot of heart."

The plane crash which killed 31 and wiped out much of the Wichita team last Oct. 2 has left quite a mental imprint on the 35-year-old, in his second year of directing sports information. He said that his main thought was that he easily could have been on that plane.

"Texas A&M played a major part in helping us rebuild our athletic program," Downing said. "There was equipment to be replaced, and a huge debt was incurred. A&M made the largest collegiate contribution by donating their \$5,000 banquet fund to us."

Downing said that the significance of the Arkansas game and the Aggie gift has made the two Southwest Conference schools his favorites.

"I have a little Razorback on my desk, and I guess I'll have to find an Aggie to go with it," he joked. "A&M is really a big favorite of the Wichita people."

Coach Bob Seaman is bringing a squad of 45 players to Aggie land, a group which, by necessity has had a rough fall with emphasis on conditioning.

"We have a good first-line bunch," Downing said, "but we lack depth. We'll probably give you three good quarters, then maybe we'll fizzle, like last year. Then again, maybe not; we'll have to wait until Saturday to see."

There are 71 players on the Wichita team, among them a number of sophomores who gained experience during the "second season." Also on the team are three survivors of the plane crash. John Hoheisel, Dave Lewis and Randy Jackson are all of what's left from the units that started last year's season opener.

Hoheisel is the team captain, and he will start at defensive end. Jackson is a fullback who is expected to go high in the next pro draft. Another standout is tailback Don Gilley.

"Hoheisel is 6-4 and 240," Downing explained. "He's a nice guy—the kind you'd like your son to grow up to be like. He saved Bob Renner's life by pulling him out of the plane and crawling to safety with him moments before the wreckage exploded."

"Jackson is a super ball player," he continued. "We've had 15 pro scouts inquire about him already. He runs the 40 in 4.55 and he's in excellent shape. Gilley can fly, too. He has 4.6 speed, and he had 28.9 yards per kickoff return last year. He didn't qualify for the national crown, though, because Tulsa and Louisville kicked away from him."

Downing added that quarterbacks Tom Owen and Rick Baehr should be mainstays, with Owen being the passer and Baehr the runner. Baehr plays split end when Owen is in the game.

Downing promised a lot of effort this year, and much hospitality from the Wichita people when the Aggies open there next year. He also reflected on the difference in outlooks from last year's speech to the Jaycees, when the Shockers were looking to have an improved year.

"Gentlemen, it's been a long, long time since I last spoke to you. What's happened in the past year has greatly affected my life."

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