

# Godfather Simonini Faces Challenge Of Hogs

By KEVIN COFFEY  
Assistant Sports Editor

Ed Simonini is The Godfather. The similarities between Simonini and Vito Corleone are almost uncanny.

Simonini has lived in Las Vegas, Nev., and Naples, Italy, was brought up on homemade Italian food, is from a large family and he will become the godfather of his sister's first child this Sunday.

Simonini is the starting strong side linebacker for the A&M football team, and he faces the challenge of his short varsity career Saturday in Joe Ferguson and the Arkansas Razorbacks. That's the way he likes it.

"The great thing about football is the challenge," Simonini said. "I don't have any personal battles on the field, but just work toward a great team effort. The real challenge is lining two teams

up against each other and hitting. That's football."

Simonini was a high school star in Nevada when the Aggies upset Arkansas last year, but what a star he was.

He was an all-state linebacker for two years and his team's most valuable player both of those years. In 1971 Simonini was voted the MVP of Nevada schoolboy football. He was a state champion wrestler for two years and the MVP wrestler of Nevada in 1971.

Simonini said the team isn't looking at last year's win over the Hogs. "Now is the time to think about. Arkansas will be tough and we will have to play well to beat them. We can't rest on last year's victory," he said.

Simonini is the baby of the family, having four brothers and a sister all older than he is. He had to make a big adjustment in coming from Las Vegas to College Station.

"Las Vegas is moving 24 hours a day. Even the Safeways are open all the time. That was the biggest adjustment I had to make." But it's easier to study in College Station because there aren't so many distractions, he noted.

Simonini had scholarship offers from such national powers as Nebraska, Notre Dame, Colorado and Texas, but chose A&M because "We have the greatest

coaching staff in football. Nobody knows more about defense than coach Robertson."

Water holds a fascinating effect on Simonini. He wants to get a degree in oceanography or some related field, and is considering a master's degree. But until Thanksgiving, football is the main thing on his mind.

At any rate, Simonini is likely to make Arkansas an offer they can't refuse.



Ed Simonini

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