

# Defensive End Was Larry Ellis' First Love

By BILL HENRY  
Battalion Sports Editor

If A&M's Larry Ellis hadn't been at the wrong place at the wrong time, the Aggies would be in desperate need for a right safety.

Ellis, 5-11, 172 lbs. from Troup, decided in the spring of his sophomore year that he'd look good in the Maroon and White. The only problem was that he wanted

his 160-pound frame at a defensive end position.

When practice started, Ellis went with the wrong group, the secondary, but there he found a home.

It didn't come right away as Ellis spent most of 1971 on the kickoff team except for the Wichita State game where he knocked down four passes.

"I got a lot of breaks last year and ended up No. 1 in the spring at right safety," he said. "Then during the summer I heard everybody saying that the secondary was the weakest part of the defense. I know that inspired the secondary to play hard this year."

A&M's secondary is the SWC's second best unit allowing only 118.3 per contest yielding seven

touchdown passes in seven games. The group, which does not return one starter, has picked off 12.

Seven touchdown passes may seem like quite a few but six came against Nebraska and LSU early in the season. In SWC action, the secondary has given up only one.

The under-rated A&M secondary picked off six Joe Ferguson

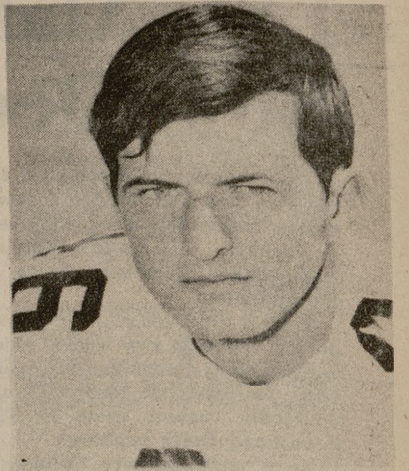
passes last Saturday giving the former Heisman Trophy candidate his worst performance ever as a Razorback.

"We're playing together now," Ellis said. "We know where each other will be on certain plays. The whole unit is very intelligent and coach Robertson's enthusiasm is contagious."

The former All-East Texas per-

former is tied for the team lead in interceptions with All-SWC Player of the Week, Robert Murski, each having three.

This week's opponent will give the Aggie secondary a little problem with the third best passing mark in the SWC averaging 149 yards per game, but having a former 160-pound defensive end back there, nothing is impossible.



Larry Ellis

## SMU Looks To Bowl, Not Aggies

By DENNE H. FREEMAN  
Associated Press Sports Writer

DALLAS (AP)—Southern Methodist starts its "new" season Saturday and Coach Hayden Fry hopes it propels the Mustangs into a post-season bowl.

"We've got an exciting type of club, a lot of colorful players, and we're a big play team," Fry said Tuesday. "That's the type of team the bowl committees look for. Of course, we could lose our next four games because the conference is so easily balanced."

The Mustangs meet Texas A&M in the Cotton Bowl Saturday as both clubs fight to salvage their seasons. SMU is 4-3 and the Aggies are 2-6.

"I believe we have a better ball club than our record shows," Fry said. "We could still go to a bowl. We're calling it the 'new season' and hoping we can turn things around."

Fry said the Mustangs came out of Saturday's 17-9 loss to Texas with numerous bumps and injuries.

"I believe we'll be OK by game time," Fry said. "I can tell you this—Texas is just as powerful as they have ever been. They just came right at us."

"When they got their passing game going, look out. That will add even a new dimension. I watched Texas quarterback Alan Lowry throw in the pregame warmup and believe me, he can hum the ball."

Fry said he wasn't certain of the reason for the drop off in production by tailback Alvin Maxson.

"Alvin has fumbled five times in the last two games and that's just not like him," Fry said. "Of course, he's having to share time with Wayne Morris at tailback and playing fullback is a new environment for him. He still doesn't look like the Maxson of old."

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