

Battalion Sports Special

Green Aggies Open Here Saturday

Bellard Unveils T-Bone at 7:30 Against Wichita State

By KEVIN COFFEY
Sports Editor

There is a slight tinge of green parading around in the maroon and white uniforms of the Texas Aggie football team. Green is the symbolic color of youth and the Aggies, if they are anything, are young. Whether they are ready or not, the 1973 football season finally gets underway with Emory Bellard's Aggies hosting the Shockers of Wichita State at 7:30 Saturday night on Kyle Field.

There will be many questions to be answered by the Aggies as Bellard unveils his kiddie corps and the new T-Bone offense before 30,000 fans.

The season just might be coming a year or two early for Bellard's bunch of fuzzy-faced kids but the second-year Aggie grid boss thinks they are ready.

"We'll be ready to play," Bellard said, "and we should be a better football team than we were last year. I think we have a better quarterback and more overall ability offensively and we could become an outstanding offensive football team. I don't have much to base that statement on except that I think we have more talent."

Talent does indeed abound in Aggieland, but it's young talent.

The starting lineup for Wichita State will have nine sophomores, one junior and one senior on offense and three sophomores, seven juniors and one senior on defense. Two of those juniors, cornerback Tim Gray and safety James Daniels are transfers. The second unit has seven freshmen who are expected to see some heavy action.

Quarterback has been the thorn in the side of the Aggies since

Ed Hargett's graduation in 1968.

For the moment that problem seems to be solved by rodeo bull rider and former Marine Mike Jay.

Jay is in his fourth football program at A&M. He played at Hiram Scott as a freshman and transferred to Wyoming when Hiram Scott quit football. When Wyoming moved him to defensive back, Jay joined the Marines and quarterbacked Quantico to an 8-4

record against college competition.

Jay is backed up by a talented duo of freshmen in David Walker and David Shipman. Shipman may be sidelined for Saturday's game due to a strained knee.

The offensive backfield is Bellard's pride and joy. "We have five backs that can almost interchange," Bellard said. "They are real fighters and have lots of talent." All five of the ball carriers are sophomores. They in-

clude Bubba Bean, Alvin Bowers, Skip Walker, Buckey Sams and Ronnie Hubby.

A&M's offensive line has never really been tested under the gun. Sophomores Dennis Smelser and Glen Bujnoch will start at the tackles. Soph. Bruce Welch and senior Bud Trammell will open at guard with Ricky Seeker at center.

The Aggie receivers have talent and speed to burn. Richard

Osborne is the tight end with fellow sophomore Carl Roaches handling the split end chores.

Under Bellard's new alignment Osborne is not a blocking tight end but split about 75 per cent of the time. This gives the Aggies more versatility and ability to throw the ball; and throw they will.

"We'll throw more but not just for the purpose of throwing," Bellard said. "We'll try to put ourselves into more situations

where we have a pass option and can use our discretion. We will use the pass as an offensive weapon this year."

Defensively, it is again the line that is the major concern.

The questionable line will have Don Long and either Blake Schwartz or Paul Hulin at the end spots with juniors Warren Trahan and Ted Lamp at the tackles.

The A&M linebackers just may be as good as any in the league.

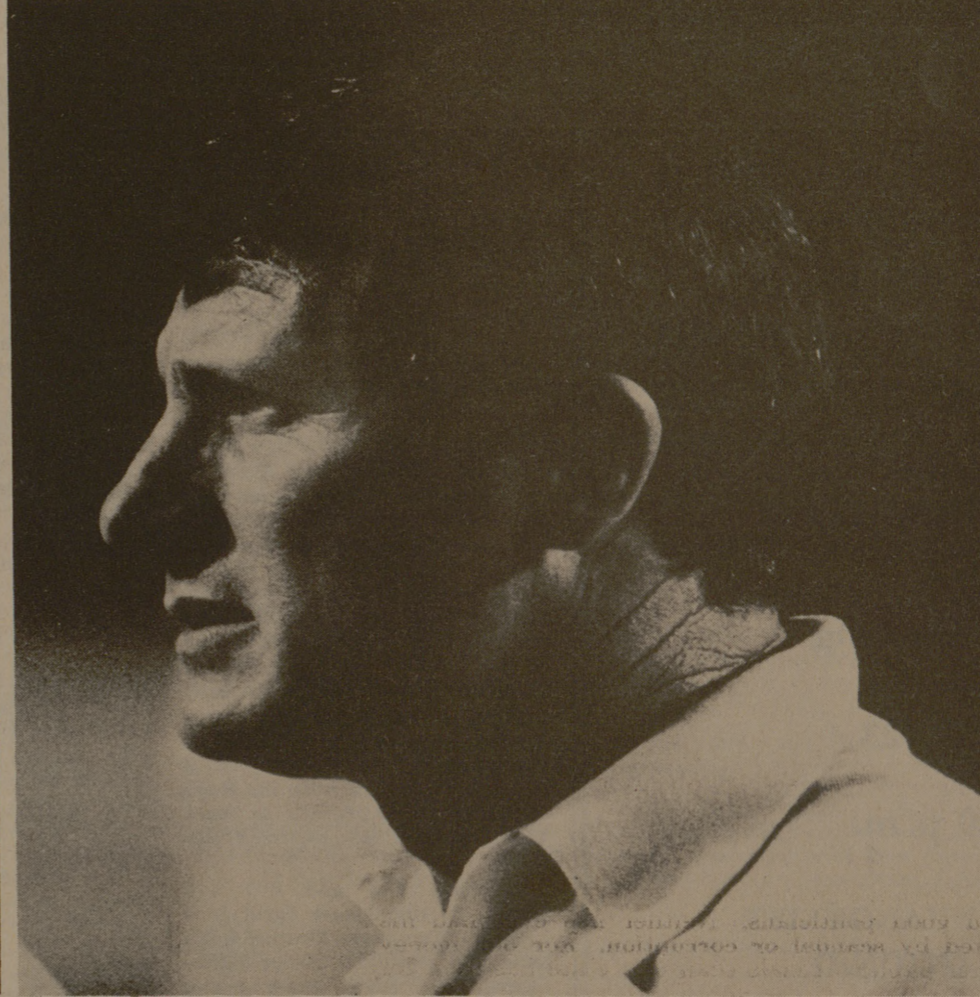
They are led by super soph Ed Simonini who Bellard describes as "one whale of a football player." Garth Ten Napel is the other outside linebacker with Kenny Stratton in the middle.

Stratton is backed up by John Paul McCrumby who was an all-America in junior college.

The defensive backs sport two junior college transfers. Daniels and Gray, both of Navarro Junior College are joined by soph Pat Thomas and Larry Ellis, the only senior letterman on the team.

This is the last of a four-game series which was started when the 11-game rule came into effect in 1970. A&M has won all the previous meetings.

Next week the Aggies travel to Baton Rouge to face LSU. Wichita hosts Arkansas State.



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