

UH Defense Tough

Face Auburn Saturday

HOUSTON (P) — Twelfth ranked Houston is famed for its gaudy offensive statistics but Coach Bill Yeoman can't stop talking about defense.

The Cougars, now 6-0 going into Saturday's showdown with Auburn, defeated highly regarded Miami 30-7 last week and defense got its share of praise from Yeoman.

"Defense set the tone of the game," Yeoman told the Houston Sports Writers and Sportscasters Association Tuesday. "They took some of the enthusiasm out of Miami running back Woody

Thompson." Houston came out of the Miami game averaging 448.2 yards in total offense while giving up only 283.2. The UH defense is among the best in the nation with an average yield of 98.2 yards per game.

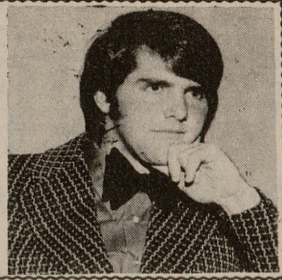
Cougar defenders are giving up an average of only 2.6 yards per rush. Auburn, which defeated Georgia Tech last week to run its record to 4-2, also has rock-ribbed defense against the rush with a 103.0 per game average.

"There should be some degree of momentum going into the Auburn game," said Yeoman, whose Cougars have won 10 straight games. "And we'll need all of it."

Auburn will be playing before a homecoming crowd, an unhealthy sign for the Cougars. Auburn has lost only two homecoming games in the past 22 years.

The last meeting between Auburn and Houston was the Cougars' 36-7 victory in the 1969 Astro-Bluebonnet Bowl.

Kevin's Korner



By KEVIN COFFEY, Sports Editor

An air of uncertainty covers the 1973-74 Texas Aggie basketball team. Just how good it is or how good they can be is a big question mark on the mind of A&M coach Shelby Metcalf.

"We will probably be picked in the middle of the pack," Metcalf said referring to his teams chances in the Southwest Conference title race. "We could go up a few places or down a few, I just don't know. It's a little early to tell."

It is a little early to be talking about basketball, but it happens to be one of my favorite topics. Metcalf said practices have been good and spirited since opening Oct. 15. "We are getting a lot done, but then we have a lot to do," Metcalf said.

At the end of last year the Aggies had a good team. They finished strong in SWC play to post a 9-5 conference mark and 17-9 record overall.

There is one new rule that will be in effect in conference games this year, namely the 30-second shot clock. All teams must shoot once every 30 seconds or lose the ball.

"The new rule won't affect us much," Metcalf said, "But I think it will help the officials."

One key to the Aggies appears to be the post position on their double post offense. Three players, Cedric Joseph, Jerry Mercer and John Thornton are battling for the spots. Joseph and Mercer are returning letterman and Thornton is a JC transfer.

"We are solid in the pivot and all three will most likely play about the same amount of time," the county's most famous cat fisherman said.

Mercer is a hustler; Joseph a multi-talented individual and Thornton an unproven player when it comes to the SWC. That should make it interesting.

Out front the Ags are in good shape. Mike Floyd is an experienced junior and solid. I think he's better than Mario Brown was, surely a better defensive player.

Randy Knowles is probably the best to come the pike here offensively in a long time. He can shoot, hit the offensive boards but needs some work defensively. He averaged 19.1 points per game in conference play last year. Floyd averaged 13.6 and was the ninth best free throw shooter in the country while Knowles was 13th.

The Aggies depth looks pretty good at this stage. Webb Williams is "the most improved player on the team," according to Metcalf, and should see a lot of action.

Freshmen Mike Johnson and Leroy Baerwald, "should help us early," Metcalf said. "It is a long way from high school to the SWC," warns Metcalf, "but these are the kind of kids that can make it."

Also contributing is red shirt Ray Roberts, who is battling for a starting position.

Knowles is co-captain along with Joe Arciniega. Arciniega won't play much this year but he contributes in an intangible way. "Joe is a leader and the stabilizing factor of the team," Metcalf said. "He's the sort of person that you don't meet every day and will really help the club."

Arciniega is one of the greatest guys I've ever met. You can't help but like him but I wish his name was easier to spell. He captured the fans last year and some formed the "Joe Arciniega Fan Club." He's that type of guy.

Basketball opens Nov. 30 in G. Rollie White for what should be an interesting season.

Collins Apologizes, Wants to Return

HOUSTON (P)—Rice split end Edwin Collins, suspended from the team after cursing Coach Al Conover during a running drill, said Tuesday he had apologized to Conover and wanted to continue playing football.

Collins, who was the second leading receiver in the Southwest Conference last year, said Conover would not allow him back on the team after the incident at Monday's practice.

"I apologized," Collins said. "I felt like what I said was wrong and what he said was wrong. This morning (Tuesday) I did what I thought we should do as men—come together and discuss it. But he was still upset and not in the mood to listen."

"He said he couldn't let me back on the team and keep the respect of the team."

Conover, trying to shake the Owls out of a 1-4 start including last Saturday's 27-16 conference opening loss to SMU, said he didn't want to go into the details of the suspension.

"I had no choice in the matter," the solemn Conover said. "It was something that had to be done. We'll miss him because he's a fine football player."

Collins said he felt the incident started in the team meeting Monday when Collins expressed an opinion in which he felt he was speaking for the team and not for himself personally.

"I wasn't speaking my opinion," Collins said. "I was just trying to tell him what some of the younger players were feeling."

But he took it personally that his authority was being questioned. I was caught in the middle."

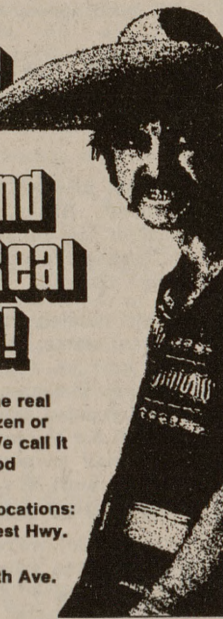
Collins said in running the extra sprints after practice, a penalty for missing a Sunday running session, Conover pushed him past his limit.

"He had pushed me to the point where I wasn't thinking clearly," Collins said. "I just couldn't hold it any longer."

Tupinamba

Eddie Dominguez '66
Joe Arciniega '74

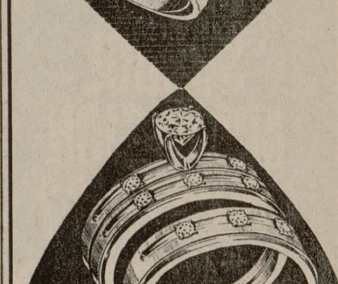
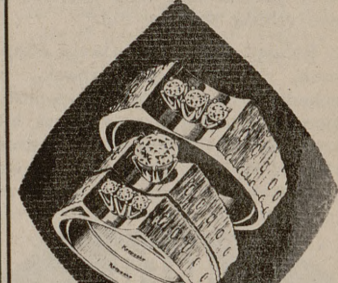
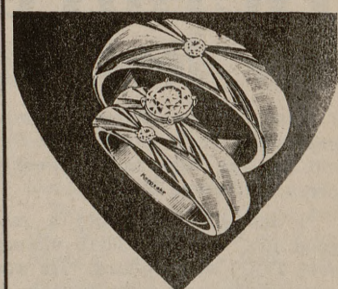
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UNIVERSITY STUDIO

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Water Polo Wins Tournney

A&M's water polo team renewed its winning ways this weekend by taking the Hendrix Invitational Water Polo Tournament.

The Ags, who took a beating in New Mexico two weeks ago, have advanced their record to 14-4 for the season.

A&M beat Southeastern Missouri in the finals, 8-7, to take the crown. Doug Adamson had his best offensive game of the tournament, leading A&M with four goals. Kevin O'Brian, Mike Reilly, Don Wedermann and Mike Shary each scored once to spread out the A&M scoring.

In marching to the finals, the Ags downed nationally ranked swimming power Southern Illinois University, 10-9. O'Brian, a JC transfer, paced the Aggies with four goals. Adamson and Reilly scored twice each with Steve Moore and Bill Cunningham adding one goal each.

A&M returns to Downs Natatorium tonight at eight when it takes on "The Bunch," a club team from Houston.

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