

# Trainers and Managers Play Mom to Aggie Athletes

By MARY RUSSO

"We're a lot like the football players' mothers," said Mike DeWitt, senior manager for the Aggies.

The managers and trainers are the men behind the scenes who comfort the players and look after their equipment, their injuries and occasionally their morale.

Managers basically take care of the equipment, spot balls and "make sure Coach Bellard doesn't have anything to gripe about."

Trainers care for the players' bodily needs. "We tape ankles, pass out salt and vitamin tablets, and work under Dr. Henry McQuaide," senior trainer Al Cooper said.

"These students are usually high school athletes who want to stay close to the sport," said Billy Pickard, supervisor of all the student trainers and managers.

There are 16 positions held by the students which means there are four from each classification and two in each of the different jobs.

"There's kind of a caste system," DeWitt said. "The freshmen do most of the picking up after the team, who happen to be pretty neat as far as athletes go."

"Here's where the difference between managers and trainers really counts," Pickard said. "A senior trainer will do more than a freshman trainer when it comes to actual taping and treatments. A senior manager will be sure the freshmen managers get their work done."

"Freshmen mostly get the first aid things out and put them back. They observe and learn," Cooper commented.

Watching is a major responsibility of both the managers and the trainers. Trainers watch different parts of the field. Cooper watches the offensive half, while Rick Evans is responsible for the defensive portion. As seniors, these two have ultimate responsibility for anything that should happen to a player on the field.

"When we take water out, we always ask how everyone is," said Cooper. "Sometimes there's a case like Alvin Bowers who couldn't tell us our names, the day of the week and really had

to think about it before telling us his name.

"We try to learn how a player reacts to pain. Some guys have really high thresholds of pain and we've got to watch them close because they don't look like they're hurting," Cooper said.

"The managers work with one certain coach and watch those players who are coached by him. DeWitt takes care of the defensive players while Bob Owens watches out for the offensive players. "We make sure that the guys have a ball to play with and if they should throw it somewhere we've got to retrieve it," DeWitt added.

"At the beginning of a season

we fit the shoulder pads, uniforms and helmets. Throughout the season we check the equipment, keep it in good repair and watch for wear," said Owens.

The trainers and managers don't live with the team this year, but they do get to know the players pretty well. "We can tell what kind of game they are going to play by the practices before," Cooper and DeWitt said.

The seniors travel with the team and serve on occasion as information sources. "At the Rice game, we (DeWitt and Owens) went out to watch the halftime show. Well, we reported to the team what had happened and it

seemed to be the thing to fire the team up. The players hold tradition important and don't like people mocking A&M. That was reflected in their second half play," DeWitt said.

"Managers and trainers get just as fired-up and involved in the game as the players. We surely do get excited but it takes self-control," Pickard said.

Pickard was hospitalized for a bleeding ulcer from containing his excitement. He has been a trainer since '52 and decided to "walk across the hall and become a trainer" after being a manager his freshman year. Originally Pickard wanted to be a coach but realized there was no way to really understand the game unless he played.

"Training is a method of livelihood and we try to prepare the students to take their exam for licensing through the football trainer activities," Pickard added.

"I'm just waiting for Dec. 15," Cooper said. "It takes three years of experience to even qualify for the quiz."

"Managers mainly like football and can't play on a college level." One manager is a 28 year old Vietnam veteran who wanted to stay in contact with athletics, the rest applied for their positions while still in high school.

Both managers and trainers apply as high school students. For next year, there are already 75 applicants. "Trainers should have worked under a trainer in high school and have a desire to become licensed. Usually they're enrolled as P.E. or pre-med majors. The managers can be just about anyone who isn't en-

rolled in architecture or school," said Pickard.

"We usually choose the people for their interest in the job and their interest in the team. An example of a lot of them is a young man from Paris who has been in contact with me three years," Packard said.

Being a trainer or a manager also means putting up with certain things. "The players try your patience just to see who'll get away with anything," said Cooper.

"Most football players are onery. A bridge player who worry about his opponent being across the table and slapping him. In football it's slapping," Pickard said.

The trainers are seniors Cooper and Rick Evans, juniors Jim Koteh and Mike Galt, sophomores Travis Cox and Heath and freshman David P.

Managers include seniors Owens and Mike DeWitt, juniors Paul Baker and Al Adams, sophomores Bruce Miller and Boenig and freshman G. Thompson and David Rej.

These men are dedicated to the part of football and take it seriously. The managers report Kyle Field about two hours before any practice and four hours before a game. They often finish their job until after work-out stops and then get to dinner with the team.


The trainers and managers have different jobs and perform different functions, but they have one thing in common they "want to be around football players and part of the sport."

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HELP MOM—Blue Bomber Robert Dennis gets medical assistance from senior trainer Al Cooper. (Photo by Kathy Curtis)

## Blue Bombers are Power Behind Ags

By BOB CHANEY

It has been said that behind every great man, there is a woman. That every great accomplishment is merely the sum of many smaller accomplishments. And that every battle has its unsung heroes. And what about those unsung heroes?

When you go to an Aggie football game you expect to see a well trained machine which will, in short order, devastate the opposition. But have you ever considered how that machine goes about becoming devastating? Who are the unsung heroes of the Aggie football effort?

They are known as the "Attack Team," or more appropriately "The Blue Bombers." George Bohn is a sophomore pre-vet major. He is also a "second year all-pro member" in good standing of the elite group which helps prepare the Aggies for what they will meet come game time.

Bohn is a 5-foot-11, 210 pound center from Victoria who has a lot of pride in what he does. "I'm responsible for how good our team does," he said. "How well we perform determines how well the Aggies play."

"Our job is to run the opposing team's offense and defense against the first and second teams," he said. "This is not an easy job."

A typical week starts with a pre-practice meeting where "The

Blue Bombers" learn the basic defense of the week's opponents. Emphasis is placed upon how individuals on the other team play and react. "We have to present a true picture so that there are no surprises," Bohn said.

"Offensively, we learn the opponent's backfield set-up," he said. He went on to explain that cards are used by the coaches to outline specific offensive plays which may be used against the Aggies.

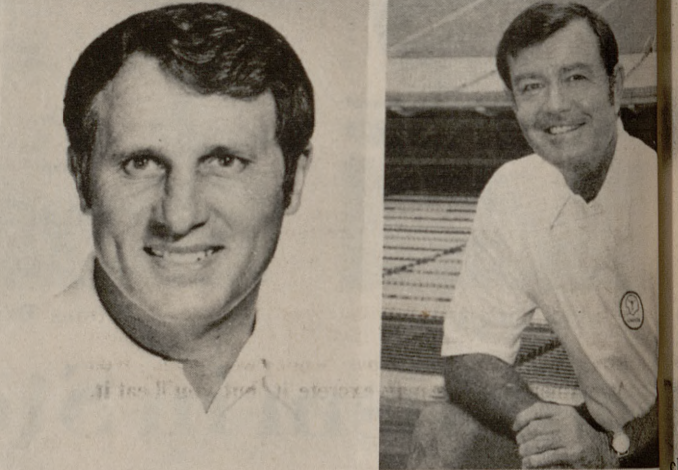
The Bombers then spend the remainder of the week running the various offenses and defenses against the Aggie defense and offense respectively.

There are approximately 40 people on The Bombers. They are primarily freshmen and they are all there because "they like to play football," said Bohn. "The unit has a lot of pride and the guys really put out. There are very few slackards."

There is a great deal of talent on The Bombers and you never know when you will get a break, he said. "Last year I was playing center for 'The Blue Bombers' one week and the next I was first string offensive center for the freshman team against Texas Tech."

Where did they get the name, "The Blue Bombers"?

"From our blue jerseys, where else," said Bohn.



WISHBONE PRACTITIONERS Emory Bellard and Darrell Royal are ready to do battle Thursday on Kyle Field. Royal, in his 17th year at Texas, needs a victory over the Aggies to tie Jess Neeley's SWC mark of 144 victories. Bellard, in his second year at A&M, was hired away from Texas where he invented the Wishbone offense in 1960.

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