

# Quality, depth mark '74 linebackers

## Simonini, Stratton, Ten Napel top off deepest squad

Led by All-America Ed Simonini, the linebacking corps at Texas A&M is the deepest position on the Aggie squad for the 1974 football season.

Simonini, 6-0 and 205 from Las Vegas, Nev., is a seasoned veteran and he's only halfway through his collegiate career. He won a starting slot as a frosh in 1972 and was named "Defensive Newcomer of the Year" in the Southwest Conference. Last year, as a sophomore, he made the Associated Press' second-team All-America, was unanimous all-SWC and was unanimous "Defensive Player of the Year" in the SWC.

Simonini starts at left linebacker while Ken Stratton, 5-11 and 198, is the middle linebacker and Garth Ten Napel, 6-2 and 197, is on the right side. Those three are returning starters but there's a host of top challengers.

Carl Warnke, 6-0 and 222, is behind Simonini. John McCrumby, 6-2 and 253 and Grady Wilkerson, 6-3 and 222, are behind Stratton. Lester Hayes, 6-2 and 202 and Jesse Hunnicutt, 6-1 and 216, are behind Ten Napel.

There's a lot of good size and quickness among that group. Hayes, who won a letter as a freshman last year, may be the fastest linebacker in America. He has run a 9.4 in the 100-yard dash.

The linebacking looks good for a few years to come because Stratton and McCrumby are the only seniors among the playing personnel for 1974. Simonini, Wanke and Ten Napel will be juniors while Wilkerson, Hayes and Hunnicutt will be sophomores.

Linebacker coach John Paul Young was well pleased with the group's work during spring training.

The only bad aspect was that Hayes received a broken thumb in one of the early scrimmages and didn't get to see much contact work.

But, with quality depth on hand, the Aggies should be able to keep fresh players on the field and the intensity of competition should make all of the group go full throttle when they are in action.

Most interesting battle has been at the middle spot where Stratton has fought off McCrumby and Wilkerson. Stratton isn't large but he's quick, seeks out the ball carrier well and hits with authority. McCrumby has all the tools for greatness but needs to shed a few pounds. Wilkerson is another fighter who won a letter as a frosh last season.

Hunnicutt came on rapidly during spring practice and forged into the playing picture. He's a hitter with good quickness.

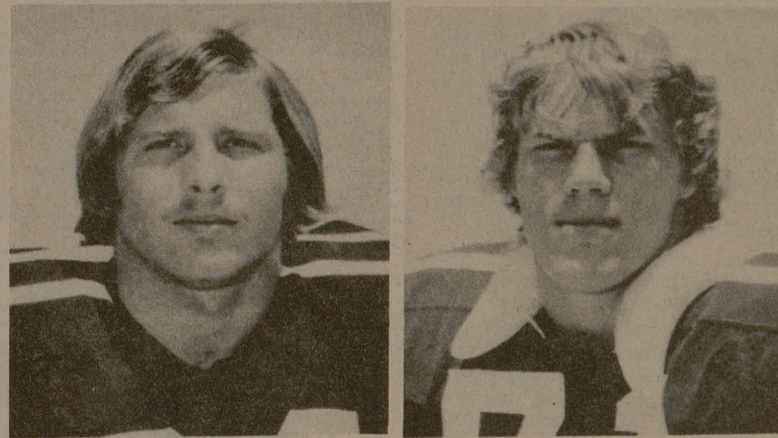
Simonini, however, is the bell-cow of that group. He's a bonafide candidate for All-America honors during the 1974 campaign.



Ed Simonini

### Open playday set for saddle club

The Bastrop Saddle Club will hold an open Playday at their arena in Bastrop June 23rd starting at 2 P.M. The events will be Cloverleaf Barrels, Straightaway Barrels, Pole Bending, Potato Race, Ring Race and Stake Race. Trophies will be awarded to the winners in each event and Rosettes to second thru sixth places. Entry fees are \$1.50 per event for advance entries, no later than June 21st, and \$2.00 per event for post entries.



Ken Stratton

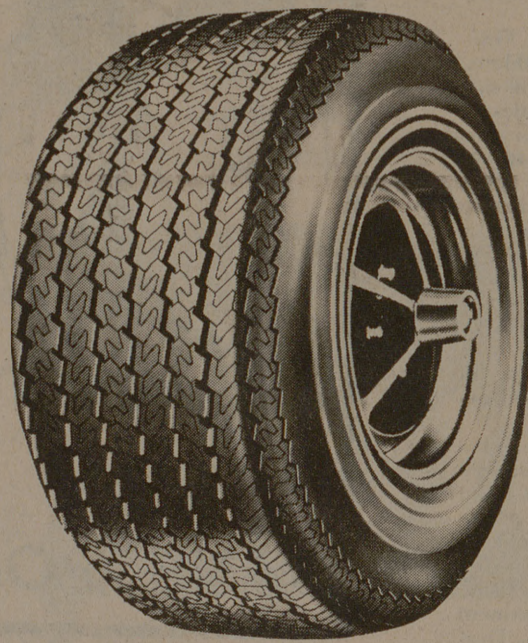
Garth Ten Napel

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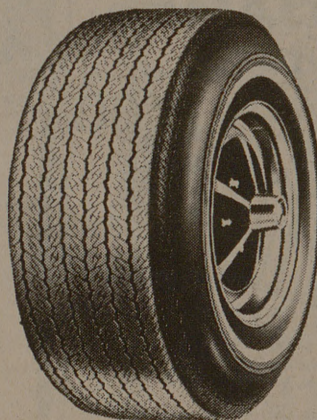
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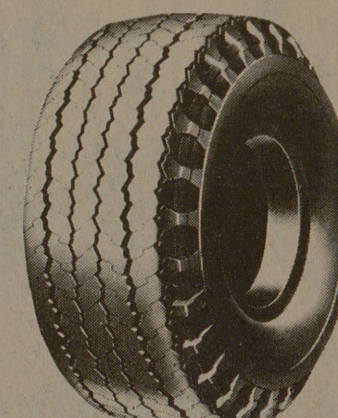


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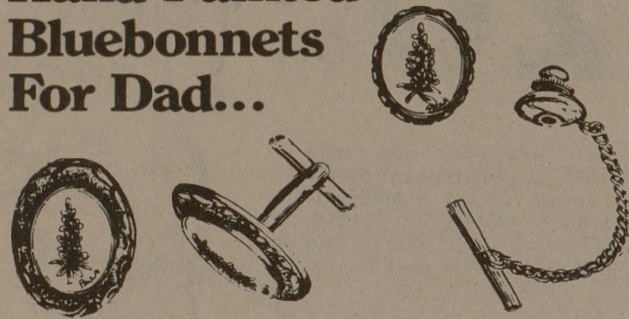
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