

Title battle

Seniors close long SWC career in Austin

By ROBERT CESSNA
Staff Sports Writer

Four years ago a certain group of Aggie football players joined a team and program that resembled a ship.

The ship had been sinking and was taking on water fast. It appeared they had made a bad choice.

Now four years later the ship has changed drastically. One more voy-

age and they can lay claim to the best damn ship in the fleet.

Bill Cazalas, Rusty Cook, Mike Farrell, Mike Keese, Randy Haddox, Dennis Henderson, Jerry Honore, Paul Hulin, Doug Jordan, Ted Lamp, Don Long, Gary Pless, John Pumphrey, Ricky Seeker, Ken Stratton, Al Thurmond and Warren Trahan will have been aboard that ship for four years. James Daniels, Tim Gray and John McCrumbly joined the crew last year when they were still developing. On Friday they will play their last Southwest Conference game.

If A&M defeats Texas these men will graduate with the coveted title of SWC champs. Many football players have graduated from the SWC without that. But to get this far they have seen a lot.

They have been at A&M for the change of coaches from Gene Stallings to Emory Bellard. They have seen A&M go from the laughing stock of the SWC to one of the most respected teams. They have also seen all the changes on the campus.

But mainly they have seen a losing football team converted into a winner.

The changes occurring in football during their tenure are seen differently by various athletes. "Instead of doing a lot of talking this year we are doing a lot of doing," Hulin said. "Not that the talk wasn't sincere before, but this year we are coming around the way we knew we could," he said. The 8-2 record A&M takes into the Texas game tends to back his theory.

Lamp supported Hulin when he said, "We could always play well in other years but this year, we are winning." Confidence and enthusiasm are other reasons cited by Keese. "Before when we got behind we expected to lose. Now we have the poise and confidence needed to win," he said.

Another change touched on before was that of head coaches. All coaches have their theories and new ways. Bellard was no exception. "Coach Bellard has brought in more quality athletes than Stallings and

the program is more organized," Pless said.

Some voiced the fact that Bellard is less a disciplinary than Stallings. They have noticed the openness between the upper classmen and the lower classmen. When Stallings was here, seniority was recognized. With Coach Bellard, "Everybody is treated equally," Jordan said. "Teams have lost some of the old army that was here under Stallings, not saying that it is good or bad, just that it's lost," Cazalas said.

Probably one of the main ingredients needed for a winning team is the five letter word, pride. "We always had pride in ourselves, but now we take pride in winning," Trahan said. "We won't settle for anything but winning," he said.

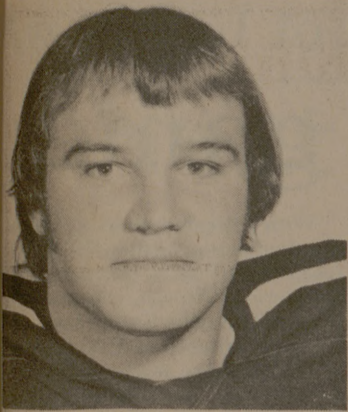
The other change they have noticed in four years besides the football program is the campus itself. The most voiced change they all mentioned is the larger number of co-eds.

With the changes has come the breaking down of the conservatism.

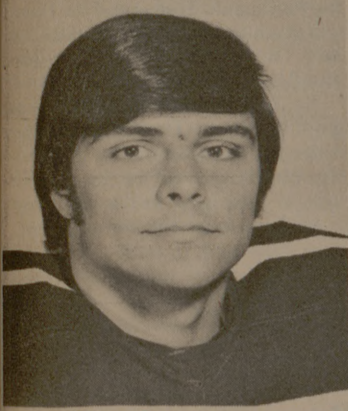
"A&M is getting away from the conservatism," Hulin said. "I believe in all the traditions at A&M, that's one of the reasons I came here. Even if the Corps is diminishing, tradition is still here," he said.

"The school has loosened up a lot. It's still conservative but not as con-

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Mike Farrell



Don Long



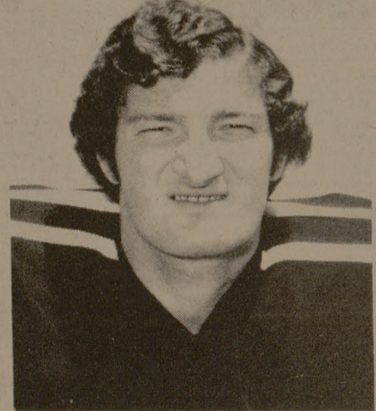
Al Thurmond



Warren Trahan



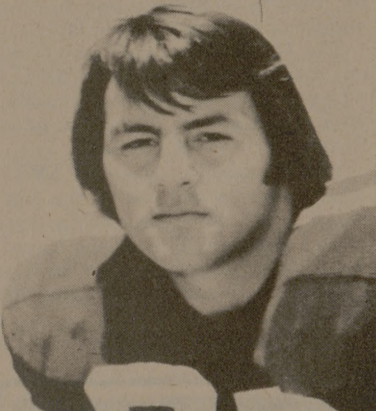
John Pumphrey



Randy Haddox



John McCrumbly



Paul Hulin



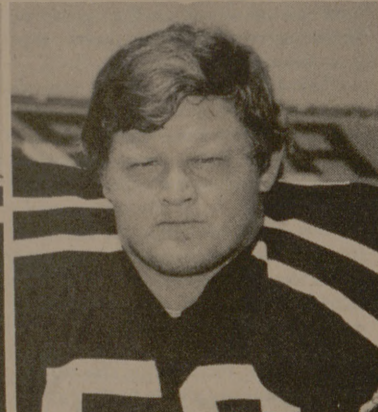
Tim Gray



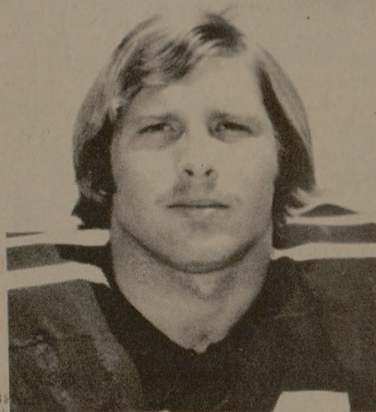
Doug Jordan



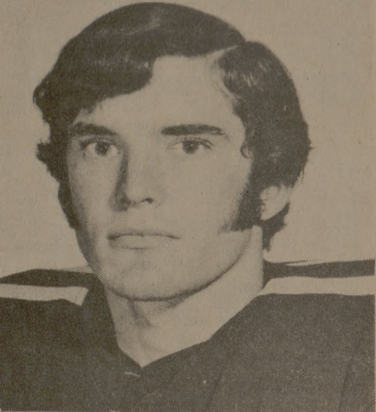
Gary Pless



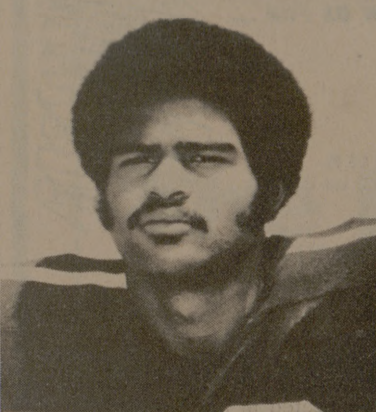
Dennis Henderson



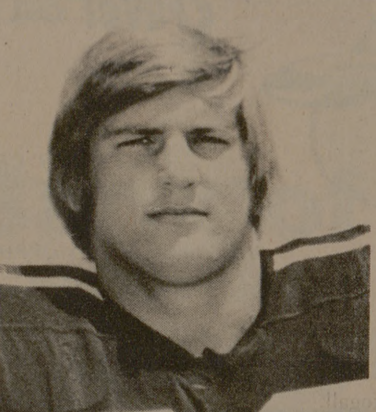
Ken Stratton



Mike Keese



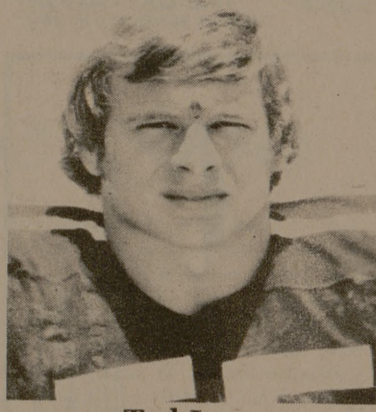
James Daniels



Ricky Seeker



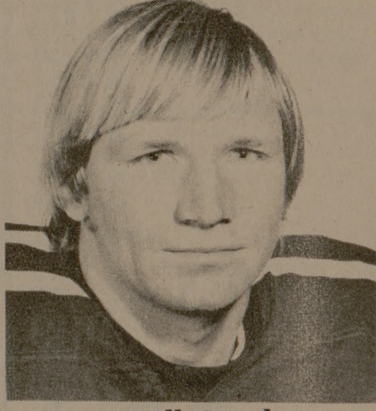
Jerry Honore



Ted Lamp



Rusty Cook



Bill Cazalas

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