

Horns domination ends?

Ailing SWC finds cure by winning games

By MARK WEAVER
The big 'uns will always eat the little 'uns."

Darrell Royal
Head Coach
University of Texas

In the past 15 seasons Darrell Royal's quote on collegiate football has certainly been true as far as the Southwest Conference is concerned.

Between 1959 and 1973, the University of Texas has played the part of the big 'un, winning 10 conference titles. Arkansas won three titles during that period with Southern Methodist University and Texas A&M winning one apiece.

Texas has won a record six conference titles in a row and its domination is beginning to take a toll. College football attendance rose nationally for the twentieth consecutive year but the SWC suffered its worst drop in more than two decades.

With attendance dropping 8.32 per cent for the SWC in 1973 and Texas appearing to have another winner with the likes of All-American Roosevelt Leaks in its backfield, the conference's problems seemed insurmountable.

Was the SWC seeing one of its last seasons? If Texas continued to dominate and other conference schools continued to provide little competition, it would be conceivable that the SWC was heading for a shakeup.

But the 1973 season brought a new hero into the picture. Texas Tech lost only one game and prevailed in its Gator Bowl battle

against Tennessee 28-19. Unfortunately for Tech, its single loss was to Texas to the tune of 28-12 and kept them out of the Cotton Bowl.

At last some competition was brewing for Texas, who had grown from a big 'un into a giant, continuing to "eat the little 'uns." But something happened between 1973 and 1974 to those little teams of the SWC.

Pre-season polls came out for 1974 and most predicted Texas to repeat as conference champion. Arkansas, Texas A&M and Texas Tech were predicted near the top with SMU, Rice, Baylor and TCU all near the bottom.

The season began and after the first couple of weeks there was a noticeable change in SWC play. Arkansas beat fifth ranked USC 22-7 and Baylor played surprisingly well in their 20-11 loss to the Sooners of Oklahoma.

The SWC's non-conference mark was 18-12-2, an improvement over last year's 14-12 record against non-conference teams. But one of the biggest shockers came in the middle of pre-conference play.

The Red Raiders of Texas Tech ran over the big 'un of the SWC, whipping the Longhorns soundly 26-3. And suddenly there was new feeling in the SWC. Hope.

As the season progressed, SWC teams were in and out of the top twenty polls. After the opening win of 24-0 against Clemson, the Texas Aggies never dropped out of the top 20, dipping in and out of the top 10 rankings.

Going into the final week of SWC

play, three conference teams are ranked in the top 20. Texas is ranked 17 after losing to Texas Tech and then to Baylor 34-24. The dark horse of the SWC, Baylor, came on to beat Oklahoma State 31-14 in pre-conference play and never slowed down after that.

A&M is ranked 8 in the top 20 and tied for the conference lead with Baylor. After beating Clemson, the Ags then proved they were contenders for the SWC title with a 21-14 victory over sixth ranked LSU in the Tiger Den.

Is the Southwest Conference dying? The way it looks this season, the answer is no. There has been what seems to be a severe coma during the past years, but most of the teams have been revived. TCU and

Rice are another story.

And with winning seasons, attendance has jumped after last year's big drop. Attendance for home games went over the 1.5 million mark last weekend for the tenth straight year as the total and average attendance records are threatened.

Saturday's crowds pushed the season's total to 1,548,813 after 40 home dates. Five games remain as SWC schools near the record 1.75 million set in 1972. Crowds are up 7.7 per cent over last season and the average attendance of 38,720 is just 320 below the per-game record set in 1968.

Arkansas, Texas A&M and TCU all ended home seasons last Saturday with increases over last season. Arkansas drew 44,544 per game, up

7.5 per cent over last year and played before 96.1 per cent of capacity at its Little Rock and Fayetteville sites.

The Aggies have improved their attendance 37.9 per cent since 1970. This year they have averaged 43,867, or 91.4 per cent of its capacity. TCU's average attendance was 21,528, up 7 per cent over last year and 46.8 per cent of capacity.

For the first time in its history the SWC appears certain to have at least four schools finish the season with average attendance of more than 40,000 per game. Arkansas and A&M have already attained that figure. Texas is at 57,087 with one to go, Tech is at 42,440 with one left and Baylor is at 39,900 with one remaining.

With attendance up and Texas not dominating as they have in the past, the SWC is completely revived, right? Wrong. Texas may still be headed to the Cotton Bowl.

The final week of SWC play has arrived and the team going to the Cotton Bowl depends entirely on the outcome of the Texas A&M-Texas game. If A&M wins, they will go to Dallas and the Horns will go to the Gator Bowl. If the Ags lose, Texas goes to the Cotton Bowl and Baylor goes to the Cotton Bowl.

So Texas, as usual, is in another good situation. The Gator Bowl is theirs, win or lose to A&M. While the big 'uns aren't eating the little 'uns as they have in the past, Texas is back up near the top. As usual

| | Rod Speer | Alan Killingsworth | Steve Gray | Mark Weaver | Gerald Olivier | T.C. Gallucci | Tony Gallucci | Will Anderson | Guest Picker | Your Pick |
|---------------------|-----------|--------------------|------------|-------------|----------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|-----------|
| A&M-Texas | A&M | A&M | A&M | A&M | A&M | A&M | A&M | A&M | Texas | |
| Baylor-Rice | Baylor | Baylor | Baylor | Baylor | Baylor | Baylor | Baylor | Baylor | Baylor | |
| Army-Navy | Navy | Navy | Navy | Navy | Navy | Navy | Army | Navy | Navy | |
| USC-Notre Dame | ND | ND | USC | USC | USC | USC | ND | ND | ND | |
| Auburn-Alabama | Bama | Bama | Bama | Bama | Bama | Bama | Bama | Bama | Bama | |
| Penn St.-Pittsburgh | Penn St. | Penn St. | Penn St. | Pitt. | Penn St. | Penn St. | Pitt. | Penn St. | Pitt. | |
| Oklahoma-Oklahoma | OU | OU | OU | OU | OU | OU | OU | OU | OU | |
| Houston-Tulsa | UH | UH | UH | UH | UH | UH | UH | UH | UH | |
| Dallas-Washington | Dallas | Wash. | Dallas | Wash. | Dallas | Wash. | Wash. | Wash. | Wash. | |
| Houston-Pittsburgh | Pitt. | Pitt. | Pitt. | Hou. | Pitt. | Pitt. | Hou. | Pitt. | Pitt. | |
| Last Week | 6-4 | 8-2 | 6-4 | 4-6 | 6-4 | 5-5 | 6-4 | 7-3 | 5-5 | |
| Season | 72-38 | 71-39 | 71-39 | 70-40 | 70-40 | 69-41 | 68-42 | 68-42 | 68-42 | |
| Percentage | .655 | .645 | .645 | .636 | .636 | .627 | .618 | .618 | .618 | |

This Week's Picker: Herb Holland, Sports editor of The Daily Texan, UT

1974 seniors have seen many changes

(Continued from page 5)

ervative as when we came here. The school cares more about football, mainly because we are winning. The school is getting a lot of recognition," said Seeker.

While there has been an increase in women, Daniels notices the increase in blacks over last year, when he transferred here.

Most of them wouldn't change anything at A&M. The traditions are one of the reasons some of them came and they wouldn't want to see them changed. But a few did think of a few minor changes they felt would improve a good thing.

Stratton would like to see better food at Sbis, the rule about having liquor in your room dropped and the hassle about moving off campus changed.

Hulin would like to have taken himself out two seconds earlier in the LSU game.

Jerry Honore would like to see the girls stay out of the Corps. "I'd hate to see an old tradition go down the drain," he said.

Gray would like to see more blacks recruited while McCrumby would like to see more black girls in particular recruited. They felt this would help the campus social life of blacks.

Pumphrey would like to see you choose your own professor.

The accomplishments they have made vary from person to person. But they are all proud of the fact they are going to graduate from A&M. A lot of them, while they may not be starters, are glad they stuck it out and reaped the benefits of a winning team. They all said they have contributed in some way in helping turn A&M around.

They have had many high and low points in this football season. Some of the high points picked out were the Tech game on national television, the LSU game, the Baylor game and the Rice game.

Low points most commonly picked out were the SMU and Kansas games; the SMU game in particular. But overall they are all glad it is a winning season.

What makes them proud to go out a winner is that they are the last of the Stallings era except for McCrumby, Gray and Daniels who

were recruited by Bellard.

While most of them are not starters, they all say that leadership is an important aspect of this senior class.

"Everybody has stayed in there and kept the right attitude," said Lamp. "The ones that have stuck it out have helped the program."

It was also pointed out that of the 55 recruited by Stallings only 17 remain. "We proved people wrong," Seeker said. "By the time we were seniors, people thought two might be starting out of this group. We have quite a few senior starters. Our year was to have been one of the lowest in recruits."

Daniels said, this season the change has occurred, we want to go out winners. We are willing to go all out for it.

Most of these seniors have been

here three years and in that time have tasted defeat at the hands of Texas every year. Why should this year be any different?

"It's different this year," Farrell said. "Until this week we hadn't beat Rice when I was here. I'd hate to go out of here without beating one team. We have the material and for four years this game proves us."

Also mentioned was the fact that this year A&M is not just playing Texas as a rival but for all the SWC marbles. "If you don't get up for a game like this, you never will," Haddox said.

But now they must begin to change their emphasis to the future and answer the question of what they are going to do.

Haddox, Daniels, Trahan, Seeker, Gray and McCrumby would like to have a chance in the

pros. The other choices vary from coaching, grad school, business, federal probation, law school, accounting and the unknowns.

Playing college ball has proved a lot of them that they can compete. Others say that getting the scholarship has made them able to get a degree. It also helped them establish lifetime friends and mature together.

"It helped me to gain experience in meeting people and gaining traveling experience," Gray said. Bellard described the senior class in this way. "It is a great group of young men. They have provided an awful lot of devotion and dedication. They have shown lots of leadership. The staff and everyone share a great respect with these fellows."

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