

Hayes provides clincher

Bear title hopes dashed by Ags

By PAUL McGRATH
Battalion Sports Editor

Seeing is believing. Just ask Grant Teaff. Teaff and the rest of his "I Believers" saw their dreams of a second straight Southwest Conference championship vanish in the giant strides of defensive back Lester Hayes Saturday as the Aggies scooted past Baylor 19-10.

The game was not as close as the score indicates as the Aggies of Coach Emory Bellard dominated every phase of the game. However, ill-timed miscues eliminated golden opportunities to ice the game away in the first half.

A record crowd of 53,693 watched both teams fight a monsoon, the cold and each other as the Brazos men took their seventh successful step toward the Cotton Bowl.

The key play of the game began innocently enough when Bear quarterback Charley Parker ran an option play to his right at the A&M 21. Parker, a substitute for Mark Jackson, was hit by Tank Marshall and Ed Simonini while trying to make a pitch to a trailing halfback.

The ball landed instead into the arms of the elated Hayes who then used his 9.4 speed to dash 77 yards for the gamebreaker. Not a hand was laid upon him as the saddened faces of the Baylor fans watched Hayes' number 82 sail downfield, carrying with him their title hopes.

Ironically, Hayes has been performing a similar tactic in practice sessions for two years. This time it counted and counted big.

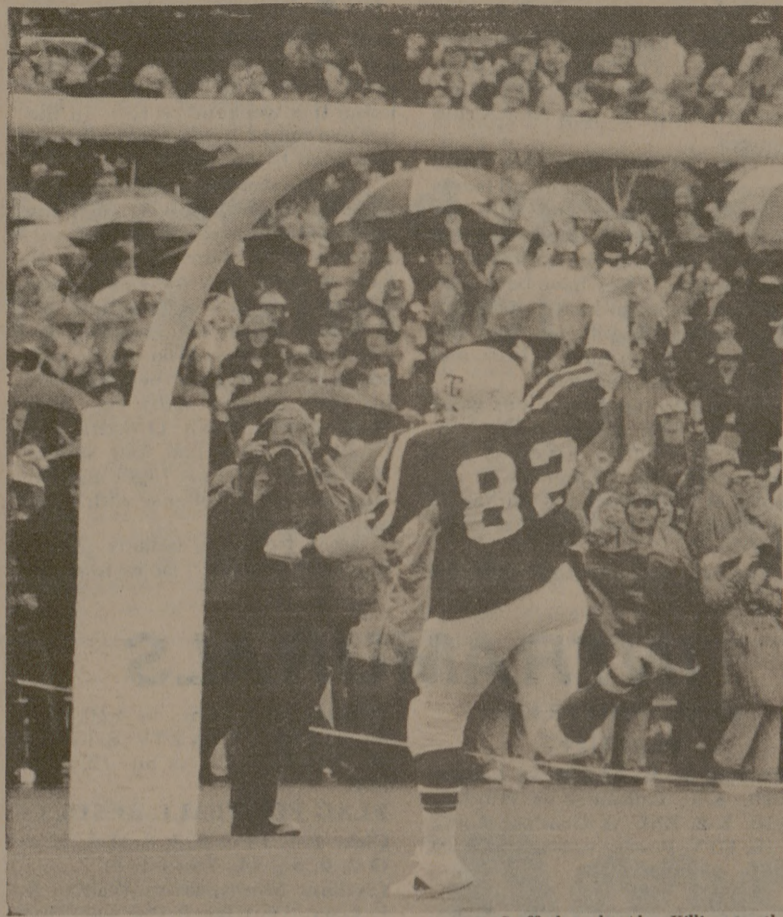
The score had been tied until Hayes' heroics, but the Bears were putting together a drive that appeared would grab away the lead. But it was not to be.

Last year, A&M also broke open the Baylor game on a fumble. For those with short memories, Carl Roaches picked up a Bubba Bean bobble in full stride and sped 60 yards to begin a 20-0 blitz of the Baptists.

All season long the Aggie defense has made the big play when it has had to. Safety Jackie Williams knocked away a fourth down Ole Miss pass in the end zone to save that game. Williams also made a drive-killing interception against Texas Tech, which started the momentum back to the Maroon side of the field.

Only once did the Aggie wall crack on the chilly, dreary, drizzly day against the Bears. A short third-down pass to Baylor freshman Ron Lee was turned into a 80 yard touchdown when Lee outmuscled Willie Thompson.

But overall, the defense put the muscle on the Bears. Ask Jackson, who left the game with a hurt shoulder. Ask Baylor running back Cleveland Franklin, who had but 19 yards



Crowd pleaser

Staff photo by Alan Killingsworth

A jubilant A&M crowd celebrates Lester Hayes' touchdown.

in seven carries as opposed to his 114 yards a game average. His counterpart, Pat McNeil, managed 38 yards on 14 attempts. It was McNeil that was slammed down by Garth Ten Napel and Blake Schwarz for the insurance safety in the latter part of the fourth quarter.

The defense too, should be accredited with giving the A&M offense excellent field position nearly the entire game.

Four fumbles and an interception dimmed what was otherwise a fine performance by the offense. Twice the Ags lost the slippery pigskin inside the Baylor five. A 54-yard TD jaunt by Bean, the type of which has become expected of the Aggie's leading rusher in history as of late, was negated when it was ruled he stepped out on the Bear 30.

The offense controlled the ball well, running off 78 plays to Baylor's 59. A new wrinkle was shown as A&M tried to off-balance the Bears with several first down passes. Although the maneuver was not highly successful, it holds promise for the future.

Aground, the A&M infantrymen, ranked tenth nationally, gained 245 yards. The uncertainty concerning footing was easily visible on both sides of the line. On several occasions, A&M helmetsman David Shipman was not able to cut upfield effectively on the option. Potential 20 yard gains were limited to five.

Freshman fullback George Woodard led all ballcarriers with 101 steps in 24 totes. His bull-like rushes kept alive many a drive with important third down yardage.

Woodard, who scored A&M's first six-pointer Saturday, now has 207 yards on 30 carries and three touchdowns while only seeing action in two games.

Coach Bellard summarized the game, saying, "The weather changed the course of the game many times, causing the turnovers. Our defense just played super. Baylor hit that quick route to the tight end for the touchdown, but otherwise I think we contained them real well."

"Offensively, we moved the ball almost at will, but fumbles kept us from scoring. We fumbled twice inside their five. It was a tough, hard-hitting game from the beginning."

Shipman sustained a strained hamstring during the course of the contest, but should be back and ready for the SMU game November 8.

The win moves the Aggies' unblemished record to 7-0, the only SWC team still unbeaten. It was also A&M's eighth straight home victory.

The Aggies remain tied with the University of Texas for the conference lead, each team boasting 3-0 marks in league play.

The pollsters still rate the Aggies fifth on both charts while statistically, the A&M defense should remain number one in the nation with their performance against Baylor.

The team now has a two week layoff before entertaining the Mustangs.

For the Bears, it wasn't their day as it hasn't been their year. They are now 1-3-2 with a pair of SWC losses. No one has to remind them that no SWC team has won the title with two defeats. "I Believe" has now turned into "I Remember."

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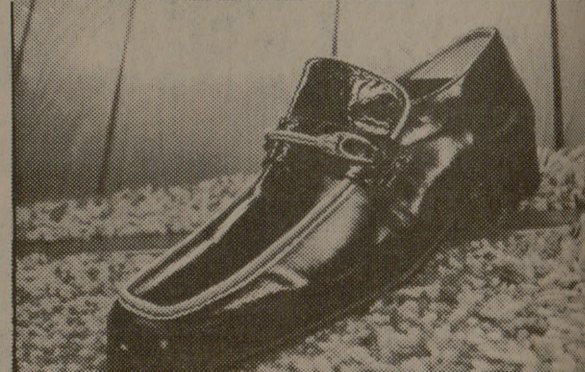
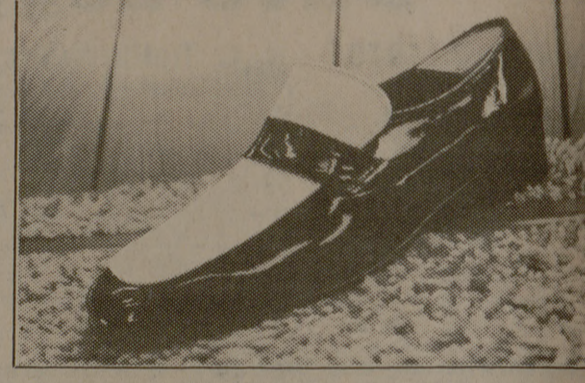
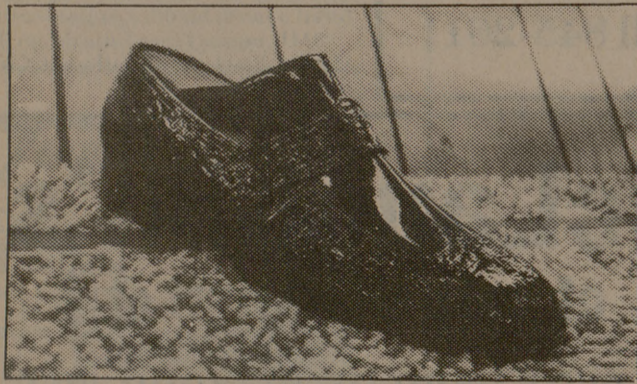
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