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Paul Arnett

Aggies are still the one



The prestigious Arnett poll, which has been correct since its conception in 1976, predicts Texas Tech will win the SWC. The poll lists Texas Tech, Baylor, Houston, Arkansas, Texas, SMU, Rice and TCU in that order, behind the Aggies. Texas A&M has had the best team in the conference the past three years. The only problem is that no team has won the Cotton Bowl since the Aggies to prove the belated prediction. Coach Emory Bellard chooses not to talk about the bitter past. He is interested in the bright future of his Aggie team. We're anxiously awaiting the start of the college football season," Bellard said. "We believe we'll have a competitive team that will continue to improve."

"With seven starters returning," Bellard said, "our offensive team should be a strong, solid unit." The only question mark falls upon the inexperienced defensive team. This has not been a problem in the past, and Bellard seems confident of the future. "Our defense should mature quickly," Bellard said. "With this maturity, they should become another aggressive unit." A very aggressive team, which shall be in hot pursuit of the Aggies, is the Texas Tech Red Raiders. And when you talk about the Red Raiders, you talk about quarterback Rodney Allison. Last year Allison made his debut against the Aggies and led them to a 27-16 upset victory. He has had nothing but success since. "Rodney Allison is one of the finest quarterbacks I've seen," coach Steve Sloan said. "We feel he is a definite Heisman Trophy candidate." Like the Aggies, defense is the main concern of the Red Raiders. "On defense the main area of concern is replacing linebacker Thomas

Howard," Sloan said. "Most of our defensive success was centered around him. Our secondary is in good shape, with depth in our defensive line being another major concern." The Houston Cougars' major concern is also in that defensive line. Wilson Whitley, who led the Cougars to cotton last year, has retired to the pros. "We have lost our entire left side of our defensive line," coach Bill Yeoman said. "If we are to compete with the Aggies or the Red Raiders, we are going to have to find someone to replace those men." Offense, on the other hand, is of no real concern for the Cougars. "The offense did a great job last year," Yeoman said. "We will have seven starters returning from last year's squad. If our defense can play competitively, then we should have a chance of winning it all." The dark horse in this year's chase is the Baylor Bears. If coach Grant Teaff can piece his unpredictable squad together, then the Bears may have a chance of sneaking into first place. "Unpredictable might be a good description of us," coach Teaff said. "I am optimistic about this team, but being a realist, I also know that

inexperience, youth and great talent mixed together can only make for an unpredictable season." The Bears lost 11 men to the pros, with defense being the main supplier of that market. "The big problem is defense," Teaff said. "For us to be successful

defensively, some young, inexperienced players are going to have to come through for us." The rest of the conference colleges will only play in the Cotton Bowl when they play SMU. The Mustangs will play host in that great stadium five times. There won't be a sixth.

Gunshot opens open

United Press International
FOREST HILLS, N.Y. — Eddie Dibbs and John McEnroe hadn't planned it that way, but for a few frantic moments tennis was the farthest thing from their minds. The two players had just begun play in last night's final match when a gunshot was fired from the stands, hitting a 33-year-old male spectator in the left leg and shattering the

genteel setting of Forest Hills Stadium. It was an inauspicious beginning for what was surely the toughest match of the fifth day of competition at the \$462,400 U.S. Open tennis championships. It was also a particularly dire night for the ninth-seeded Dibbs, who was beaten by McEnroe 6-2, 4-6, 6-4.

SWC season begins with 'biggie'

United Press International
The Southwest Conference opens its 62nd football season next Saturday with two league games right off and prospects running high for a late open race. All nine conference teams will be in action on the opening weekend

— although defending co-champion Houston will wait until Monday night to embark on its campaign — and for the second consecutive year the Baylor Bears will be involved in a critical contest on the first Saturday. Baylor began its season last year

with the Houston Cougars, and although at the time that game was not considered all that important, it turned out to be a springboard for Houston's surprising trip to a share of the league title and a journey to the Cotton Bowl.

This time around the Bears will host the Texas Tech Red Raiders, who shared the conference crown with the Cougars last year and who, along with Houston and Texas A&M are being mentioned as championship caliber. Baylor and Tech will kick it off at 4 p.m. Saturday, one of four games involving conference clubs scheduled for that time.

Houston's Hardeman happy with victory

United Press International
HOUSTON — Fullback Don Jaws' Hardeman is raising his voice again and that could be a big asset for the Houston Oilers this season. "I've been called a fat hog," says Hardeman, who reported to the Oilers training camp in August 30 pounds overweight. "But I've known all along I could do the job." Saturday night he did the job for the first time since he burst on the NFL scene in 1975 full of poems and self-praise. His two touchdowns and 109 yards rushing helped Houston beat the Dallas Cowboys, 23-14, each team's fifth preseason game. "They were outthumping us," said Cowboys coach Tom Landry, whose team is 2-3 in exhibition play and presently playing without regular quarterback Roger Staubach. Staubach rested a pulled hamstring Saturday night and backup Sammy White distinguished himself by completing 16 of 22 passes for 24 yards and a touchdown. But White drove Dallas to only one touchdown. The victory was Houston's first over Dallas in four seasons or since Bum Phillips became head coach. "I've been waiting a long time to get them," Phillips said. Then he laughed. Ball control, ground hogging offense is Phillips' style and the Oilers hugged him by rushing for 252 yards and a 5.6-yard average carry. "Listen," said Phillips, "we were moving the ball against a doggone good defensive football team." Said the Cowboys' Jethro Pugh, "We played guys like Walter Payton

and Terry Metcalf and O.J. Simpson last year and they never ran on us like this." Hardeman, who still carries a hefty 245 pounds, sought out interviewers after the game as well as he did running room during it. "I don't play well when I'm criticized," he said. "When people pump me up I want to do good. I don't know what I weigh right now, but I feel good and strong." Not since his rookie 1975 season has "Jaws" talked so much. Then, he predicted stardom for himself and a touchdown every five times he carried the ball. "I'm not predicting anything at this time," he said. His performance, and a slight injury to Fred Willis, likely cleared the Oilers running back situation. NFL teams must be down to 43 players by the start of the season and Houston had one back too many. Hardeman, Ronnie Coleman, Tim Wilson, Rob Carpenter and Horace Belton may have made the team when Willis twisted a knee.

the Astrodome against potent UCLA. Tech with all-America quarterback candidate Rodney Allison, will be favored to take the Bears, who will be starting several players who have never played a varsity game. And if the Red Raiders can whip Baylor, the schedule begins to favor them. The key early season conference battle comes Sept. 24 in Lubbock when Tech will host Texas A&M. That game is the first in a potentially murderous stretch for the Aggies, who then must tackle Michigan on the road and Baylor on the road. A&M, Houston and Tech make up the top echelon in the preseason picks, Texas, Arkansas and Baylor make up the second three and the bottom portion of the early selections is made up of TCU, SMU, and Rice. But, as SMU coach Ron Meyer said: "All of that talk doesn't mean a thing. Nobody knows nothing until we see it up."

Texas A&M, another of the likely championship contenders, will start its season with a 4 p.m. game at home against Kansas and Texas begins the season at the same time in Austin against Boston College, the team that started the Longhorns on the way to a bland 5-5-1 record in 1976. Arkansas hosts New Mexico State and Rice entertains Idaho in night games Saturday and Houston will make a national television appearance the following Monday night in

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