

Sports

Metcalfe has strong crew

With nine of the top ten players returning along with two starters from the 1976 championship team and three outstanding freshmen, Texas A&M approaches the 1977-78 basketball season as one of the top

contenders for the Southwest Conference title. Pre-season practice opens October 15.

After a 14-14 year (8-8, 4th place in SWC) which saw three freshmen in the starting lineup for most of the season, coach Shelby Metcalfe will have much more experience with which to work. The return of former high school all-Americans Karl Godine and Jarvis Williams, who missed the 1976-77 season due to conference suspension, gives A&M 11 lettermen, nine of whom have started at least seven games.

The veterans include full-time starters sophomore Dave Goff, senior Willie Foreman and junior Wally Swanson along with part-time starters junior Joey Robinson, sophomore Steve Sylestine, senior Keith Carter and sophomore Doug Pederson. Sophomore Doug Schlicher, who missed a year due to injury, came on strong at the end of last year, and Brian Barrett

provided strong defensive play coming off the bench.

Adding to the luster of the 1977-78 roster are three heralded freshmen—Vernon Smith from Dallas Carter, Rynn Wright from Dallas Roosevelt and Albert Culton from Ennis. All three were named to the all-state team and were heavily recruited. Each averaged better than 19 rebounds per game as high school seniors.

As freshmen starters on A&M's 1976 championship team, Godine and Williams provide a good outside-inside combination. Godine averaged 12.6 points with a high game of 24 points and 10 rebounds against Texas. Williams had high games of 18 points against Rice and 14 rebounds against Houston Baptist.

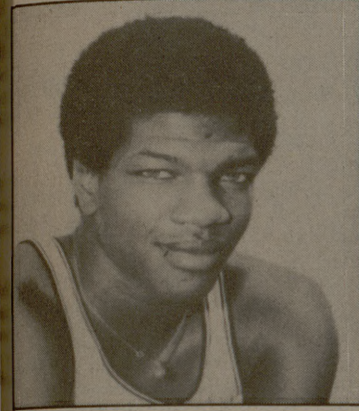
But the duo will face a stiff test if they are to regain their starting berths. Goff set a school record with 129 assists as a freshman last year

and averaged nearly 35 minutes per game. Foreman was chosen as Newcomer of the Year in the SWC while averaging 12 points and 4.7 rebounds with high games of 29 points against Rice and nine rebounds against Houston.

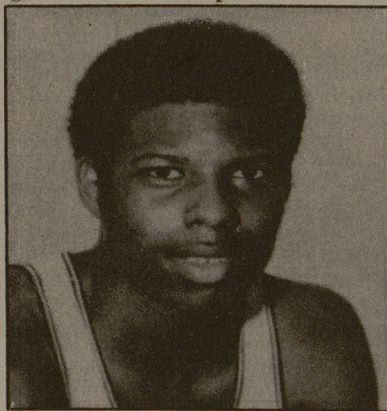
Swanson was one of the top rebounders in the league with an 8.8 average and high games of 29 points against Houston and 18 rebounds against Bowling Green and SMU. Sylestine started 15 games with a high of 17 points against Texas and 11 rebounds against TCU. Robinson started eight games and scored 14 points three times. Carter started seven games and had highs of 23 points against Houston and twice had 10 rebounds. Pederson started 16 games last year as a freshman.

With experience, depth, speed, shooting ability and rebounding, the 1977-78 Texas Aggies have all the ingredients for an exciting season.

The Aggies open the season with four home games against Angelo State Nov. 28, Southwest Louisiana Dec. 1, Houston Baptist Dec. 3 and Sam Houston State Dec. 6. Home games start at 7:30 p.m.



Godine



Williams

Third-stringer gets nod

Texas quarterbacks out for year

AUSTIN — University of Texas first string quarterback Mark McBeth, who suffered an ankle injury in the Longhorns' 13-6 defeat of Oklahoma last Saturday, will be on crutches for eight to 10 weeks and will not play again this season, Longhorn head coach Fred Akers said Monday.

However, McBeth's injury is not as serious as was first believed, Akers told reporters at his weekly press conference.

Akers also said he was unsure of the status of Jon Aune, who replaced McBeth and then left the game with a knee injury. Doctors

planned to check Aune late Monday.

Akers said it was first feared McBeth had torn an ankle ligament, but x-rays showed it to be loose and his foot was placed in a cast.

The coach praised third-string quarterback Randy McEachern and hinted quarterback Ted Constanzo, who underwent a knee operation this summer, may be taken off the red-shirt list and could see action this season.

"I've never seen it happen before — have your top two quarterbacks go out early in the game," Akers said, shaking his head. "McEachern is probably the most experienced

third-string quarterback in the nation."

Akers praised McEachern for his poise and courage against the Sooners. He said the rest of the team helped by reassuring him and welcoming him into the game.

And the coach had plenty of kind words for fullback Earl Campbell, who ran for 124 yards and scored a 24-yard touchdown against the Sooners.

"I think Earl has a Heisman-type performance every time he goes onto the field," Akers said. "Let me say this — I would not trade him for any football player in America."

The Texas defense, which had

seven players with 10 or more tackles each during the game, also received the coach's applause.

"I don't think any one of them took lazy steps — they were just swarming," Akers said. "The defensive and offensive lines were attacking better than they had all year."

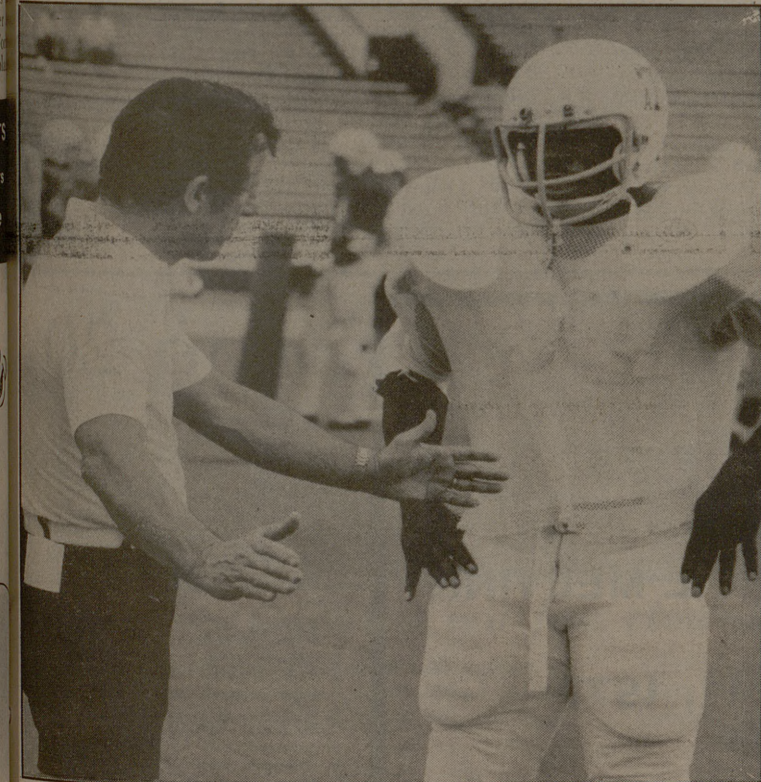
Akers criticized defensive tactics employed by the Oklahoma team, which he said included tackles and blows aimed at his players' heads.

"As for swinging those fists and the clothesline type of tackle, there's no place for that," he said. "They had several shots in our game like that on Earl (Campbell)."

Akers said he wants his players to

be aggressive but there needs to be continued efforts to make it a safer sport. He said players pick up the tackling techniques from professional players and he hopes coaches and officials do not let them become part of the college game.

"You're not supposed to try any kind of tackling or do anything aggressive around the head," Akers said. "As for grabbing someone and trying to wrestle him down, that is just a natural reaction."



Coach Emory Bellard explains to David Brothers in practice how the wishbone offense is to be run. The Aggies travel to Waco this weekend to play the Baylor Bears. Kick off is at 4 p.m.

Battalion photo by Jim Crawley

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