

# Time has passed the Ag football team



A celebrity

Tony Franklin (No. 1) makes another field goal against Rice. Franklin will be featured on ABC News on Nov. 25. The Aggies host the SMU Mustangs tomorrow afternoon at 1:30.

Battalion photo Jeff Berger

By PAUL MCGRATH  
Time is the most effective and clever agent of change. It can reduce a mountain range to rocky rubble and is able to steal youth without fear of penalty.

Man can fight disease with a vaccine but there is no cure for the advance of time. Unconquerable and undefinable, time is all-reaching in its scope.

For a closer look at the effects of time, take a glance at the Texas A&M football team. Time has done its job well.

The Aggie defense was the best in the league and one of the best in the nation for the past four years. Presently, the Aggies are fourth — in the Southwest Conference.

The A&M defenders have yielded an average of 159 yards a game rushing. It wasn't long ago that an A&M opponent felt fortunate to gain that amount in total offense.

Safety Carl Grulich is leading the team in unassisted and total tackles with 59 and 78 respectively. Apparently, there are either some leaks that need plugging or Grulich should be mentioned for all-World. How long has it been since an Aggie defensive back led the team in stops? Not since the days of Dave Elmendorf.

One would have to go back to 1974 to find a running back who had gained 100 yards or more against

A&M. That feat has been performed four times this season. Virginia Tech's Roscoe Coles had 117 yards to snap the string. He was followed shortly afterwards by Michigan's Russell Davis with 110 and Baylor's Steve Howell (who?) with 125 yards on three carries.

Of course, the Aggie defense has had to battle inexperience as well as the opponent. But the season is half gone and the players have yet to learn their lessons.

The effects of time have not just been unkind to the Aggie defense, the offense has had its share of problems as well.

Turnovers, long an Aggie nemesis, took a short vacation at the end of last year, but have become common occurrences this season. Seven interceptions and 17 fumbles, coupled with nearly 400 yards in penalties, have made the A&M offense its own worst enemy.

After six games last season, fullback George Woodard had accumulated 535 yards. He is ahead of that pace with 594 through half a dozen contests this year.

But Woodard is not the Woodard of old. His 270 lbs. have shown noticeably. While he still commands posing defenses to key the tackle, Woodard is not the tackle gamebreaker he was a year ago. Woodard gained 355 yards in two previous games against SMU. He was held to 69 yards last day.

Variety may be the spice of life, but it's a foreign word to Woodard. Too long has it been a righthanded team which is only as a final resort.

Whether or not the Aggie offense is smooth out the rough spots in its schedule is matter yet to be decided.

Only time will tell.

## Column

One Earl has already piled up the rushing yards against the Aggies, he being Rice's Earl Cooper who had 130 yards last Saturday night.

Aggie fans may relish the fact that A&M has yet to face the Southwest Conference's two leading rushers; Earl Campbell of Texas and Ben Covins of Arkansas.

## Evert recovers from injury plans to play less next year

United Press International

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. — Chris Evert has been working out for just two days after a nearly three-week layoff from a leg injury, but she expects to have her game back in shape for next week's Colgate Series Championship tennis tournament.

"My doctor told me to come back slowly and gradually," she said. "I'm up to an hour and a half a day of playing tennis now. I didn't think I should play any more the first two days."

"I'll get up to three hours a day before the tournament and then I'll be fine," she said.

She has been recovering from what her doctor describes as the "beginning of a stress fracture" in her left leg.

"The leg so far has been good, but I've lost a little bit of touch. That happens when you take two and a half weeks off," she said.

Evert, who disclosed she is planning to skip the Virginia Slims Circuit which begins in January, said she expects her strongest competition in the \$250,000 event at Mission Hills, Calif., from Virginia Wade and Martina Navratilova.

"It's being played on a hard surface and that favors the aggressive players like Virginia and Martina," said Evert, who has played her best tennis on slower clay surfaces.

"And I have to think Billie Jean (King) is playing really well right now," she said.

She said she feels she should find a way to schedule that has been growing more hectic each year.

"I'm tired — I haven't had a real break in years," she said. "Other players like Evonne Goolagong or Margaret Court have had breaks because of injuries or pregnancy. But I think I played the most intense schedule of anybody in the last four years."

"And this year I think I played my busiest schedule of all, at least up until Forest Hills," she said.

"I haven't committed myself to the Slims or what I tell people is that as of right now, I don't intend to play," she said.

She said, however, she intends to play Wimbledon next year, although she doesn't know which team she'll be with. Her two-year contract with Phoenix ran out this year.

The rest of this year also promises to remain busy. "The week after the Colgate is the Wightman Cup in San Francisco and Billie Jean and Rosie Casals and I are on that team," she said. "And then I'm thinking about going to Australia in December to play some tournaments there."

## Smith enjoys one-on-one

By D. D. GRUBBS

There aren't many one-on-one confrontations left in college football nowadays, but one in particular that still exists is especially important for Texas A&M split end Darrell Smith.

When the 5-8, 170-pound junior lines up wide and gets set for an offensive play, he can't wait to be challenged by the defensive back.

"I really enjoy it out there. Playing split end gives me a chance to do my job with one thing in mind — be better than the guy covering me."

After playing halfback his first two years at A&M, Smith was moved to split end last spring after the Ags became blessed with a flurry of talented freshman running backs in 1976.

"Darrell just had too much ability to be sitting on the bench," explains receivers coach Dean Campbell. "When Curtis Dickey and David Brothers became our starting halfbacks last year, we decided to move Darrell to split end. The position was new to him but he worked hard to learn it and is getting better every week. He has all the tools — speed, quickness and a great pair of hands."

A broken collarbone kept Smith out of action for most of his freshman year, but last year he started the first three games at right halfback before Brothers stepped in

and won that starting role. Smith continued as the Aggies top kick return specialist and finished the season with 259 yards in punt and kick-off returns.

Against TCU last year, he had what he considers his best individual game as an Aggie, rushing for 147 yards on just four carries, including a 90-yard touchdown run for A&M's final tally in a 59-10 romp of the Horned Frogs at Kyle Field.

The switch to split end from running back created no problem for Smith, who admits he has always wanted to play split end.

"It gives me a better chance to use my natural abilities. There weren't any difficult adjustments to make. I could always block and catch the ball. I guess learning to run a long pattern was the thing I had to work on the hardest."

Smith's first big individual game at the new position came against Baylor a couple of weeks ago at a time when the Bears' pass defense was nationally ranked. Smith caught two touchdown passes against them for a total of 69 yards. He has already set ten TD's as his individual goal for 1977.

Smith played his high school football at Fort Worth Wyatt where he made All-District and was named Offensive Player of the Year in Tarrant County in 1974. He was also a

track star at Wyatt and turned a 9.4 hundred his senior year.

Right now, however, Smith is concentrating on football and especially this week's game with SMU which will be A&M's first home game since the season opener against Kansas on September 10th.

"We've been on the road for a long time. It'll be good to get back home and play in Kyle Field for a change. SMU's a good team and they'll be tough — but they're all tough."

Smith believes the Aggie offense has opened up quite a bit this year and is more balanced than ever since he's been at A&M.

"We've got the running backs, no doubt, but we can also throw the ball when we need to. David Walker is an excellent quarterback and is passing better this year than he ever has. We feel we have two good receivers in Russell Mikeska (tight end) and myself, so we definitely are a more well-balanced offensive unit."

Smith is looking to earn his second varsity letter in 1977 and at the same time help the Aggies earn a trip to the Cotton Bowl. He also wants to make all-SWC in his first season as a split end. Those are monumental challenges by anyone's standards — but Darrell Smith thrives on challenges.

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