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sports

Football polls are inconsistent

By MARK PATTERSON
BAT Battalion Staff

The newest Aggie joke appeared this week in the form of the weekly UPI college football poll.

Entering the SMU game the Aggies were ranked 9th in the nation. Though they played a shaky first half, A&M flexed its muscles and came away with a 38-21 victory over the Ponies. The Aggies now stand 6-1 on the year.

Taking note of their victory, the board of coaches that makes up the UPI voters, dropped the Aggies down to number 11. After a victory the Aggies dropped two positions in the national ranking.

Pittsburg, a 6-1-1 team, and Nebraska, 6-2, replaced the Aggies as the number 9 and 10 teams respectively.

But the Aggies aren't the only team that can't find a home in the poll. Texas Tech, who entered last week's Texas game as the number 13 team in the nation, fell out of the top 20 this week with 26-0 loss on Saturday.

But isn't the number 13 team suppose to

get beat by the number 1 team in the nation? Yet the loss cost the Red Raiders their national ranking.

There are many rating conflicts between the AP poll, voted upon by sports writers across the country, and the coach's UPI poll. There is an agreement among the coaches that a school presently on athletic probation cannot be voted on in the weekly poll.

The AP poll has The University of Kentucky, current on probation, ranked 7th in the country. And Kentucky received one of the two first place votes not cast for Texas this week (Alabama received the other).

But in the UPI poll, Penn. St. is ranked 7th (9th in AP). Is Penn. St. the 7th best team in the nation or does Kentucky lay claim to the honor?

Another example of the inconsistency between the two polls is shown in the case of Iowa St., a member of the Big 8 conference. The coaches think highly of the 6-2 team and voted it number 12 in their poll.

But the writers (AP) believe that Iowa

St. is the 20th best team in the nation this week. Who can you believe?

One thing the two voting groups do agree on is that Texas is the number 1 team in the nation. In both polls the Longhorns were almost a unanimous choice for the coveted spot.

In the AP poll Texas captured 57 of the possible 59 first place votes cast by the writers. The Horns came even closer to a clean sweep in the UPI poll, receiving 36 of the 37 first place votes cast.

But the biggest laugh of the week is in the UPI poll. North Texas State University, a 35-14 loser to 15th ranked Florida St. last week, retained its top twenty ranking in this week's poll.

Entering last week's game, the Eagles

were ranked 16th in the nation. The loss left North Texas with a 6-2 record and 20th in the nation. They received one vote to stay in the top twenty this week.

But isn't it convenient that Hayden Fry, the head coach of North Texas, is on the voting board of the UPI poll. And the Eagles received a single vote in this week's poll.

So how much weight can you put in the polls if a national ranking can be had for a single vote of a coach?

But no matter if you're a devout believer in the national rankings and the system used to determine the positions, each week's polls are always good for a conversation piece or for a few surprises.

And always for a good laugh.

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Longhorn defense lacks interceptions

United Press International
AUSTIN, Texas — The Texas defense has given up only four touchdowns in seven games this year, but one aspect of the success puzzles Coach Fred Akers.

The young Longhorn defenders have intercepted only four of the 173 passes opponents have tried against Texas, and Akers said he has never been associated with a team which played such excellent pass defense and produced so few interceptions.

He previously had said the Horn defenders missed eight interception chances against SMU, and said Monday they missed at least two — and perhaps four — interception possibilities against Texas Tech.

"We are playing excellent pass defense and we're just not getting any interceptions," Akers said. "We've had the opportunities and we're going to start intercepting them."

"That part of it comes around, too. It will be a bonus when it comes around, and it will come."

One of the missed interception opportunities against Tech was a

pass which hit Longhorn safety Ricky Churchman in the stomach and bounced away.

Churchman is the holder for Texas field goals and extra point tries.

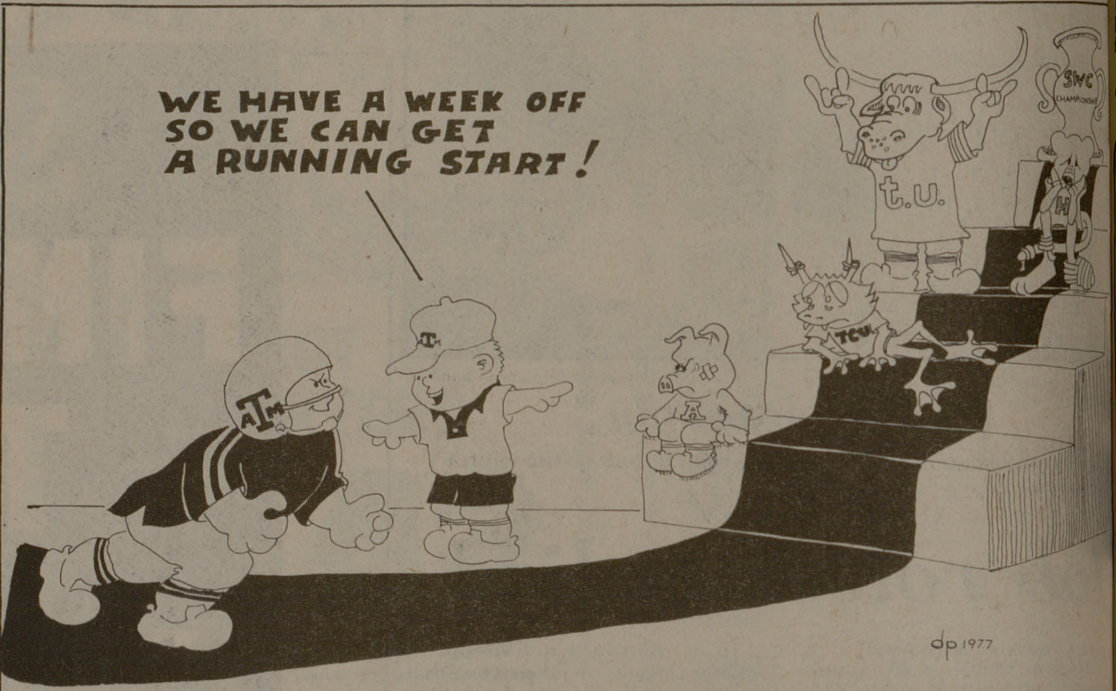
Despite the lack of interceptions, Akers said the Texas secondary is one of the best around, and said freshman halfback Johnnie Johnson already rates as the best in the Southwest Conference.

Johnson has returned one punt for a touchdown this year, has two of the team's four interceptions, and has had two other punt return touchdowns called back because of penalties.

Metcalf searches for combination

By DAVID BOGGAN
Battalion Staff

It's November, a month that not only offers Aggie sports fans the Arkansas Razorbacks and the Texas Longhorns in Kyle Field for important football battles against A&M, but also marks the beginning of the



1977-78 basketball season.

Coach Shelby Metcalf has been preparing the Aggie basketball team for the approaching season with three-hour workouts daily since the middle of October, and he has some interesting thoughts about his players, his opponents and his expectations for the season.

Metcalf says his players have advanced right on schedule during the practice sessions.

"They're getting the (defensive) press down but they don't know the offense real good yet," Metcalf says of the Aggies.

"The most pleasant surprise has been the performance of the two freshmen, Vernon Smith and Albert Culton," he adds.

"They are doing better than we expected at this point."

Smith, from Dallas Carter, and Culton, from Ennis, are both

6-foot-6 forwards who were on the all-State team in high school.

Metcalf says the Aggies' biggest problem is learning to play as a team.

"We have a lot of experience but only Wally (Swanson) and Joey (Robinson) have been through two seasons," he says. "Right now we have three different teams: we have Karl (Godine) and Jarvis (Williams) from two years ago, we have Dave Goff and Steve Sylestine and that group from last year, and we have this year's freshmen. We have a lot of lettermen but only Wally and Joey have two letters."

"Our main problem is becoming team oriented so that each player knows his own limitations and the limitations of his teammates," Metcalf continues. "Each player must realize his role and must be willing

to perform in that role."

If Metcalf has mentally picked starting five out of his talented squad, he will not admit it.

"Nobody has a definite lock on starting position," he says, explaining that the Aggies substitute in the starting line-up freely.

Metcalf expects a close conference race.

"Arkansas would have to be favored because they have already announced their starting line-up; they have a jump on everybody else," he says. "Of course we're ready to concede first place to them."

The Aggies play their first game on Nov. 28 against Angelo State G. Rollie White Coliseum. The first conference game is against Baylor on Jan. 9 in Waco.

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Top 20

United Press International
NEW YORK — The United Press International Board of Coaches has named the top 20 teams after the eighth week of the college football season with first-place votes and record in parentheses:

Team	Record
1. Texas (36)	7-0
2. Alabama (1)	7-1
3. Oklahoma	7-1
4. Ohio St.	7-1
5. Notre Dame (1)	6-1
6. Michigan	7-1
7. Penn St.	7-1
8. Arkansas	6-1
9. Pittsburgh	6-1-1
10. Nebraska	6-2
11. Texas A&M	6-1
12. Iowa St.	6-2
13. Brigham Young	6-1
14. Clemson	7-1
15. Florida St.	6-1
16. Arizona St.	6-1
17. California	6-2
18. Stanford	6-2
19. No. Carolina	6-2
20. No. Texas St.	6-2

Note: By agreement with American Football Coaches Assn., teams on probation by NCAA are ineligible for top 20 national championship consideration by the UPI Board of Coaches. Those teams currently on probation for 1977 are: Kentucky, Michigan State, Redlands Calif., West State Colo., Houston.

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