

Ags need victory for third place finish

By DAVID BOGGAN
Battalion Staff

It seems like the Aggie football team is involved in another grudge match every time you turn around. They went to Lubbock this year in a vindictive mood after Texas Tech gave A&M its first of two defeats in 1976. There has been no love lost between the Aggies and Arkansas over the past few years, either. And, of course, the Texas rivalry is always big.

The game against Houston Saturday will be no exception. The Cougars defeated A&M 21-10 last

year and the Aggies will be out for revenge.

Revenge will not come easily for the Aggies. The Cougars are ranked fourth in the conference with a 4-3 record, right behind the third place Aggies.

The Aggie-Cougar series is only 15 games old, with each team having won six games while there have been three ties. A Houston win Saturday would leave A&M and Houston tied for third place in the final conference standings. So, even though it is a young rivalry, it will be an emotion-filled game.

The Cougars run a balanced offensive attack with Delrick Brown at quarterback. Brown, a sophomore, replaced Danny Davis who is out for the year after being injured in the Cougar's second game of the season against Penn State.

"We're going to have to play an inspired defensive football game," Aggie head coach Emory Ballard said at his Tuesday press conference. "Brown is a quick quarterback and a great passer."

Since Brown got the starting job, he has completed 57 of 113 for 873

yards to become the fifth best passer in the conference this season.

"Houston has a great threat in their tight end," Ballard said of senior tight end Don Bass.

Bass is Houston's leading receiver with 505 yards and seven touchdowns on 35 catches. He is fourth in the conference in receiving this season.

Bearing in mind that the Aggie defense allows an average of 164 yards passing per game and gave up 172 yards and four touchdowns passing to Texas last week, the Houston air attack could be very important in

Saturday's game. But if the Cougars' passing game fails to be effective, they can always depend on "Moose" and "Juice" to move the ball on the ground.

"Moose" is a 6-foot-2, 211-pound senior fullback Dyral Thomas. Thomas gained 104 yards and scored one touchdown on just 14 carries in the 1977 Cotton Bowl. He is the perfect compliment to his partner in the Cougar backfield, "Juice."

"Juice" is a 5-foot-11, 193-pound senior running back Alois Blackwell. "Blackwell is just a great running back," Ballard said of the confer-

ence's fourth leading rusher. Blackwell, who was named the Outstanding Offensive Player of the 1977 Cotton Bowl, has gained 1,009 yards on 184 carries this season.

While Blackwell and the rest of the Cougar offense is on the sideline, the Houston defense will be fighting to improve its record and trying to keep the Aggies from breaking the many records that they have a chance of breaking on Saturday.

The Cougars are third in the conference in rushing defense, but it will be hard to stop Aggie fullback

George Woodard from gaining 81 yards to surpass Bubba Brierley's career record of 2,846.

The man to watch Saturday, however, is Curtis Dickey. If the sophomore halfback gains 81 yards in the game he will have 1,000 yards for the season. Dickey and Woodard, who already has 1,000 yards, will then become only the eighth backfield duo in NCAA history to both gain 1,000 yards in a single season.

So even though the conference title is already decided, goals, records and pride will be on the line when the Cougars come to Kyle Field.

Rockets end losing streak win 120-103

United Press International

HOUSTON — Rookie Robert Reid, starting his first game in the NBA, shot the Houston Rockets to an early lead and guard Calvin Murphy got the hot hand early in the fourth quarter to help Houston end a six-game losing streak with a 120-103 victory over the New York Knicks Tuesday.

Murphy, hampered by an ankle injury much of the season, led scorers with 23 points. He hit his first four shots in the fourth quarter to boost the Rockets to an unmountable 13-point lead.

Reid and Rudy Tomjanovich chipped in 22 points. Reid split Houston to an 11-point first half by hitting six of seven field goals and two free throws.

Bob McAdoo scored 20 points for the Knicks, but the closest he pulled in the second half was 10 points with one minute left in the third quarter.

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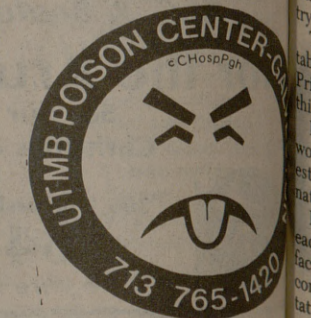
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