

# sports

## New Orleans wants victory

**United Press International**  
ATLANTA — Leeman Bennett says New Orleans' loss to Tampa Bay is going to make it tougher for the Atlanta Falcons to beat the Saints in Sunday's season finale.

"I think New Orleans will come in here fired up," the Falcons coach said Tuesday.

"They are going to be seeking a win to get rid of the stigma of losing to the Bucs. I'd have been embarrassed if that had happened to us and I know they are too."

But Sunday's game is just as important to the Falcons. They need a win to post a breakeven, 7-7, season. The Falcons also must hold the Saints to 10 or less points if they are to set an NFL record for the fewest points allowed in a 14-game season.

The Falcons, who gave up the most points they've allowed this

season in last Sunday's 23-7 loss to the Los Angeles Rams, have yielded a total of 122 points in 13 games. The record is 133 scored against the Minnesota Vikings in 1969.

However, the Falcons could beat the Vikings' mark and still not wind up with the record since the Rams, who close their regular season Saturday at Washington, have allowed only 129.

The Falcons also will be out to protect their position as the top team in the NFL in yardage defense. Atlanta has allowed an average of only 228.6 yards per game, five yards ahead of second-place Dallas which hosts Denver Sunday.

"I wasn't all that surprised that Tampa Bay beat New Orleans," said Bennett. "Sure, I expected the Saints to win, but, like I warned before we played the Bucs the Falcons

won 16-0, Tampa Bay was bound to beat somebody sooner or later.

"And the Bucs are going to beat several teams next year," he said. "I'm not saying they are going to be a contender, or anything like that, but I am saying they are going to win two or three games."

New Orleans publicist Jerry Wynn, who arrived in Atlanta Tuesday, said the loss to the Bucs "was a natural letdown caused by losing the previous two weeks by just three points."

"We had been playing so well, without having much to show for it, that we were due a game in which everything went the other way," Wynn said.

"We've had too many peaks and valleys this season. Last Sunday was a valley, a deep valley."

The Saints last won four weeks ago when they overcame a 20-7 fourth-period deficit to nip the Falcons, 21-20.

"If anything good came out of that game," said Bennett, "it was the fact that it makes our job easier this week getting our players up for the Saints. We were embarrassed that day."

Bennett said he would like to be able to use the final game of the 1977 season to take a look at some of his younger players to see how they might fit into his scheme of things for 1978.

## Rockets threaten to sue Los Angeles

**United Press International**  
HOUSTON — The Houston Rockets are threatening to sue the Los Angeles Lakers because of Kermit Washington's punch that left Rudy Tomjanovich sidelined for two months.

General Manager and President Ray Patterson Monday also called for NBA Commissioner Lawrence O'Brien to suspend the Lakers franchise and asked for compensation for the loss of Tomjanovich, the Rocket's leading scorer who suffered a broken nose and jaw and a concussion last Friday.

O'Brien has fined Washington a record \$10,000 and suspended him for at least 60 days.

"At the present time I cannot applaud the decision," Patterson said. "This punishment is only the tip of the iceberg."

"Kermit swung the most vicious punch I have ever seen. You could hear it all over the arena."

The Rockets' general manager said he did not know when his proposed suit would be filed. None of the Rockets attorneys were present

Monday, but Patterson said attorneys for both the club and Tomjanovich were convinced there were grounds for legal action.

Patterson said Tomjanovich was trying to break up a fight between Rockets' center Kevin Kunnert and Washington when the Laker uncocked his punch on Tomjanovich.

Tomjanovich was placed in intensive care for 36 hours in a Los Angeles hospital. He is expected to be released from the hospital within 10 days.

Patterson said the NBA should crack down on what he referred to as the "enforcers" of the league.

"I don't think Kermit should be left out there on a limb by himself," said Patterson. "He is a product of professional basketball."

Patterson also asked the NBA board of governors to convene a meeting as soon as possible to possibly amend the bylaws and make a franchise responsible for the violent actions of its players.

The Lakers visit Houston Wednesday night before what is expected to be a large crowd.



George Woodard Phil Bennett Doug Holmes

## Aggie Notes

The Aggies won the coin toss and will be the home team in the Bluebonnet Bowl. They'll wear Maroon jerseys, white pants, and white helmets. After two consecutive years of producing nine four-year lettermen, this year's senior class has only three who have won four letters — QB David Walker, OT Frank Myers and LB Kevin Monk. A&M has seven seniors among its starting 22 — Walker, Myers and center Mark Dennard on offense; Monk, DT Steve Spitznberger, DE Phil Bennett and CB Mike Williams on defense. Other seniors are LB Jimmy Kocurek, safety Ralph Barrett, CB Wade Miles.

Big George Woodard, A&M's junior fullback, has carried the football 612 times in three seasons and has been thrown for losses only twice. Texas put a minus-2 on him as a freshman and Virginia Tech got him for a one-yard loss as a sophomore. This year he carried 245 times without losing a yard. Last year Woodard and HB Curtis Dickey combined for a total of 1,879 yards to become the greatest two-man running combo in Aggie history. This season they did even better, combining for 2,085 yards. Woodard got 1,107 and Dickey 978.

The Bluebonnet Bowl is A&M's 11th bowl appearance and it will be the 9th different bowl. They've played in the Cotton Bowl three times, Dixie Classic, Sugar Bowl, Orange Bowl, Presidential Cup, Gator Bowl, Liberty Bowl and Sun Bowl.

Starting offensive guard Doug Holmes is the younger brother of Ernie who plays on the front four of the Pittsburgh Steelers' defense.

Southern Cal a formidable foe? "Year after year, they probably have as much talent as any team in the country," says A&M Coach Emory Bellard. "It's difficult to believe they lost four games this season. Turnovers were their downfall in the four losses." Attendance-wise, Texas A&M had a tremendous year when one considers stadium sizes. Kyle Field has 49,700 permanent seats and the Aggies averaged 53,930 for five home games. Folding chairs were placed on the track around the football field to attain that figure. Largest crowd for A&M this season was 104,802 at Michigan and the smallest was 28,563 at TCU. A new Kyle Field record was set when 57,443 crowded in for the Texas game.

A&M's 27-7 victory over Houston kept a unique streak going. The Aggies and Cougars have played 16 games and neither has ever won two in a row. A&M now leads the series 7-6-3. Tight end Russell Mikeska made the most of his pass receptions this year. He caught only six, but three were for touchdowns. He also added another touchdown when he recovered a fumble in the endzone.

Tony Franklin's final field goal of the regular season also was his longest of the year, a 57-yarder against Houston. Although Texas A&M is only slightly more than 100 miles from the Astrodome in Houston, the Bluebonnet Bowl will

mark the first football appearance there for the Aggies. But, they'll likely meet the Houston Cougars there next season in a SWC contest.

Texas A&M will take approximately 118 players to the Bluebonnet Bowl but Coach Emory Bellard plans to suit up only between 70 and 75. "Bowl awards to the players," Bellard says. "We'll have every player, including walkons, who have been on this season." A&M's football squad picture for 1977 will be made the morning of Tuesday, Dec. 27, a day before the squad departs for Houston.

The Texas A&M Football Awards Program is scheduled for 7:30 p.m. on Saturday, Feb. 4, in the Rudder Tower Auditorium. Presentation of the Aggie Heart Award will feature the program. The season highlight film also will be shown.

Tony Franklin kicked off 62 times this season and 44 went into the endzone for touchdowns. Eighteen were returned for 270 yards, an average of 15 yards. On the other hand, A&M returned 20 kickoffs for a 19.2 average. Franklin had a perfect 37 for 37 in extra points. The foes hit on 30 of 34. Punter David Appleby had a 43.3 average for 57 kicks and the average hang time was 4 seconds. His longest punt of the year was 65 yards.

Only six players in this year's Aggie squad were listed on the two-deep chart for the 1975 Liberty Bowl game against Southern Cal. Center Mark Dennard, tackle Frank Myers and fullback George Woodard were starters, though Myers was a guard in 1975. On defense, Stacy Brehian at DE, Steve Spitznberger at DT and Kevin Monk at LB were listed on the second defensive units. QB David Walker was a red-shirt during the 1975 season. Tony Franklin was a freshman kicker in 75. A&M's roster this season lists 16 scholarship players from Houston high schools and some 40 from the Greater Houston area. A&M has 15 players on pro team's payrolls, though a few are on the injured list. They include linebackers Brad Dusek, Washington; Ed Simonini, Baltimore; Garth TenNapel, Detroit; Robert Jackson, Cleveland; offensive guards Glenn Bujnoch, Cincinnati and Dennis Swilley, Minnesota; tight end Richard Osborne, Philadelphia; running back Bubba Bean, Atlanta; defensive linemen Edgar Fields, Atlanta; Jimmy Dean, Houston and Tank Marshall, N.J. Jets; and defensive backs Dave Elmendorf, Los Angeles; Tim Gray, Kansas City and Lester Hayes, Oakland.

The Aggies and USC have another athletic date next spring. The Trojans will be in College Station on March 21 to play the Aggies in baseball in A&M's new 5,000-seat baseball plant.

Texas A&M is a state land grant school of 30,000 students. Southern Cal is a private school of 24,000 students. A&M observed its centennial year in 1976. USC will be 100 years old in 1980. In any way it'll be Aggie vs. Longhorn, too. A&M's President, Dr. Jarvis Miller is an A&M graduate while USC President Dr. John Hubbard is a graduate of Texas.

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