

Offense prepared for knockdown dragout



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that one little step of speed that Mike has over David. And David has better than average speed.
"Mike and David are the most talented athletes we've had at the position since we've been here. They run the triple option just as good as anybody, but they also have that extra athletic ability, speed and quickness. They have a tremendous future."

Mosley started in two games for the Aggies last season, while Beal saw action as a backup quarterback and placekicker holder.

With last year's starting fullback George Woodard red-shirted and hopefully "ready by spring training of 1979" after sustaining a leg injury while playing softball this summer, and reserve fullback Eddie Hardin's, football career ended on doctor's orders, finding a fullback was a primary concern to Bellard. He elected to move junior halfback David Brothers to the important position.

"David is an excellent football player," Bellard said. "If George (Woodard) had not been on campus when David arrived, he (David) would probably have been our fullback. He may be the most underrated running back in the conference. He is very dependable. You can bet your life on David Brothers. He will make the transition real well."

Senior Raymond Belcher and

freshmen Herbert Booker and Roger Wiley will add depth at fullback.

"Losing George and Eddie cut into our depth, obviously, but it probably hurt us worse at halfback than at fullback," Bellard said.

"Adger Armstrong will start at right halfback. He is a complete football player. He has quickness, a darting style, tremendous strength and excellent hands for pitches. He really found himself this spring."

"Holly Wilson is also ready to play now," Bellard said of the junior halfback who has experienced knee problems since coming to Texas A&M. "If anybody deserves a break, it's Holly. He has fought to play and he hasn't lost his spirit. If we can only keep him healthy."

What type of offense will Bellard choose to use with this talented backfield? This question has been on the lips of Aggie fans and foes since rumors began last spring that the wishbone offense was on its way out at Aggieland.

"You either believe in what

you're doing or you don't," Bellard said, commenting on his confidence in the wishbone offense. "More coaches have been failures because they worried about what other people said about the way they played the game."

"We will continue to run our offense from the wishbone. We will also use the I-formation. The I and the wishbone are very similar. It's a matter of placement of people. With the I, you move one halfback 18 inches until he's behind the fullback and you replace the other halfback with a receiver. But the option offense will be our basic structure."

"We will do some things that are unique to the I, like the sprint-out pass. We are going to throw and throw effectively. We will probably throw more this year than we did last year."

Bellard is confident that there will be able hands at the receiving end of those passes.

"Doug Teague and Gerald Carter are both fine wide receivers," the Aggie coach said. "They are fight-

ers. They will be involved in the running game as well as the passing game. They will block, not just run pass routes."

"Russell Mikeska and Phillip Simpson will battle it out for the tight end position. I would say that Russell has reached the level of Gary Haack (senior tight end at Texas A&M in 1976), and that is a fine compliment to both of them."

The offensive line still has some positions that are being challenged, including right tackle, where Zack Guthrie and Curtis Jennings battle it out for a starting spot, and left guard, where Kyle Golson and Thomas Gregory are the prime candidates. Doug Holmes is likely to start at right guard while Ed Pustejovsky has made the transition from guard to center in good form. All-SWC left tackle Cody Risien is expected to lead the offensive line.

"Cody has played outstanding football for us," Bellard said. "He is one of the best offensive linemen around. And that's one of the toughest positions on the football team."

"You got to have great ability on the offensive line. They're a great bunch of human beings. The only time they're noticed is when they miss a block—never when they complete their assignment. Everyone is looking at the running back who squirted through the line and is 20 yards upfield."

"But Cody knows he did his job. And the coaches notice. It's an exceptional person to become a great offensive lineman."

Playboy magazine All-American candidate Tony Franklin, and Dan Appleby are expected to provide Aggies with a consistent kick game this fall.

"We should have a fine kick game," Bellard said. "Our kids could determine our final success."

What kind of conference does Bellard anticipate?
"It's going to be a knockdown dragout," the Aggie coach said. "There are five teams in the conference with squads strong enough to win the championship."



This SMU running back was lassoed for a loss by Jacob Green and other members of the Texas Aggie defense last year. Green (6-2, 235), a junior from Houston Kashmere, will play defensive left end

for the Aggies this year. According to defensive coordinator Mike Robertson, the defensive line should be "improved against both run and the pass."



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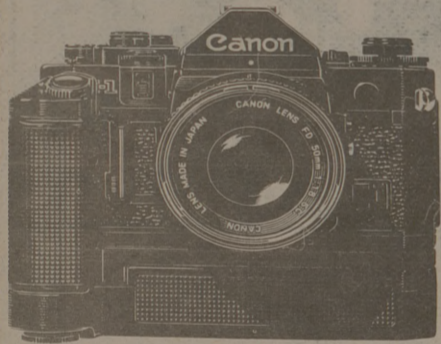
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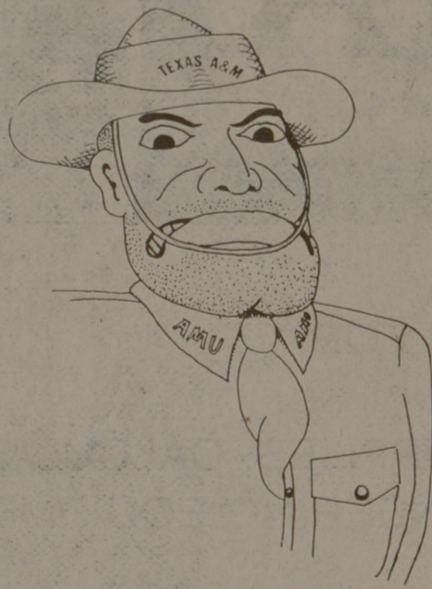


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Aggie defense planning to make name for itself

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have a much improved defense this year. Our front line is going to be improved for both the run and the pass rush. Our linebackers will get better in time. And our secondary will be better, especially with our one-on-one coverage."

"Given a choice," Bellard noted, "almost all linemen would rather play defense than offense. There is more glory to hitting than to getting hit."

Jacob Green (6-2, 235) will start at defensive left end. He started in that position in half of last year's games.

"Jacob has great reaction ability," Bellard said. "And defense is a reaction game."

Eugene Sanders (6-4, 268) will start at defensive left tackle.

"Eugene moved from defensive end to tackle. At 268, he is more adapted to play inside," explained Robertson.

"If Eugene's mental approach to the game is fierce enough, he will be one of the best defensive linemen in the conference," Bellard said. "If he doesn't prepare mentally, he will express himself below his capability level."

Johnnie Donahue (6-6, 260) and Garry Milligan (6-0, 235) are the leading contenders for the defensive right tackle position.

"Johnnie is back but he will have to fight off Garry," Robertson said. "Both missed spring training with injuries."

"Eddie Heath (6-5, 245) and

James Zachery (6-2, 236) will be battling it out for the defensive right end position."

Unintentionally Robertson asked the question that many Aggie fans are asking about Texas A&M's linebackers this season.

"What is his name?" the defensive coordinator asked, scratching his head as the name of middle linebacker Frankie Lemons slipped his mind. Surely an Ed Simonini or a Robert Jackson would not rest on the tip of a coach's tongue. Robertson said that this crew of no-name linebackers would make a name for themselves before the season is over.

"Linebacker is the most inexperienced position on the football team," he said. "Yes, these are the most inexperienced linebackers that we've had since we've been here."

"The crucial spot on our defense is middle linebacker. It's just like a pitcher in baseball. Frankie will start here but he will be challenged by Cal Peveto and Dick Frazee."

Either Mike Little and Lawton Carlton will start at strongside linebacker, while Floyd Randle and Doug Carr will battle for the weak-side linebacker spot.


Last season, the Aggies ranked seventh in the conference in pass defense. They allowed an average of 158 yards passing per game and let 14 passes be completed for touchdowns. The Aggies hope to solve this problem with an improved defensive secondary this season.

"We gave up a lot of big plays last year," Bellard admitted. "This year we will be more talented in the defensive secondary. We will have more depth and be able to sustain injuries better."

"We have one proven player that's Grulich," Robertson said. "Darrell Smith has moved from offense to play left corner. That's a position he hasn't played since high school. He's used to going to have to get used to running at them."

"Our No. 1 goal this year is to be eliminating the big plays—the long pass and the long run. Second goal is going to be to improve our pass rush. And our third goal is going to be to keep the team out of the end zone. That's our first goal. It's achieved when we achieve the other two."

"Overall, we will be a better defensive football team this year."



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