

the sports

Aggies have guns loaded, Bellard says

By MARK PATTERSON
Battalion Staff
"We had an excellent open date," coach Emory Bellard said Tuesday at his weekly press conference. "We had good practices and got what we wanted accomplished. But now it's time to go back to work."

And the work facing the Texas Aggies this week is disposing of Boston College on Saturday, the second game of the year for both ball clubs. After their 37-10 victory over Kansas the Aggies took a week off to recover while the Eagles from Boston opened season play last week in a 18-7 loss to the Air Force.

"There's no way to evaluate whether having an off date hurts or helps your club," Bellard continued. "But having a week's rest allowed our injured players the time they needed to get back to full strength."

The walking wounded for the Aggies after the Kansas game included linebacker Doug Carr and halfback Adger Armstrong with bruises above their ankles, and guard Doug Holmes with a bruised shoulder.

"We expect Doug (Carr) to be back to full speed by game time this weekend as will Doug Holmes," Bellard said. "Adger is still bothered on cuts to his left but he hasn't had to miss any work in practice. We'll just have to wait and see if he can go Saturday."

"David Appleby (punter) sprained an ankle yesterday (Monday) in practice. It was on his kicking foot and he's another we'll just have to wait and see how he feels Saturday. But if he can't kick Tony (Franklin) will do our punting."

Franklin's performance, and the entire kicking game for the Aggies,

was below expectations against Kansas. This is one area that Bellard and his staff concentrated on in preparation for this week's contest.

"We've concentrated on the kicking game from the mental aspect during practice this week," Bellard said. "We stressed having the center, holder and kicker all working together as one unit to function more smoothly. In order to do so we had to allow David Beal (holder and second

string quarterback) free from some of his other duties in practice.

"But we're not too concerned. Tony hit 20 of 22 tries from 50 yards out yesterday, so they're ready."

"We also concentrated on improving our punt and kickoff coverage and our blocking on runbacks. We're going to try and make something out of our kicking game this season."

The Aggies will try and get revenge against the Eagles in their

match-up this weekend. In their only other meeting, back in 1973, Boston College hung a 32-24 loss on the Aggies in Kyle Field.

Last year Boston College ended with a record of 6-5 and hired a new head coach, Ed Chlebik, for this season. Incorporating a new offensive attack the only hint of what the Eagles might run this weekend is what they tried in last weeks loss.

"They had timing problems last week (six fumbles) but that can be expected with a new system on opening day," Bellard said. "But looking at the films you can't help but think they were winning the contest. They do have a big, strong football team."

"Offensively they're a throwing team with a crop of good receivers and a very competent quarterback in Jay Palazola. One of their running backs, Anthony Brown, has speed and quickness that will cause us all

kinds of concern. And with mobile people up front blocking him we'll sure have our hands full."

"When Coach (Tom) Williams scouted them last weekend he said all the fans and sportswriters were talking about was Texas A&M next week's game. So they're going to be ready for us come Saturday. They'll have their guns loaded, some pretty good firepower, then, so will we."

Randle's size (or lack of it) no handicap

If Floyd Randle has his way this season, Aggie opponents will spend a lot of time finding out the hard way that size has nothing to do with the ability to tackle.

In his senior year as Texas A&M's weakside linebacker, the 6-foot, 205-pound Randle is confident that "size won't be a problem" when it comes to tackling the opposition.

"I realize that we may be the

smallest group of linebackers in the Southwest Conference, but we're probably also the fastest bunch around," Randle said. "As I see it, it's not whether a person is big or small, but whether or not he's got the desire inside himself to be aggressive and go after the ball carrier. I think folks need to remember that the people blocking for the other side are going to have just as much trouble finding holes for their ball

carriers as I will tackling the runners. Because of our linebackers' speed, though, I think we'll have the edge."

Randle and his philosophy has certainly been successful over the years. Electing to go to Blinn Junior College, the Brenham High all-district standout won a spot on the all-conference list both years at Blinn and made junior college All-America his second year. Playing mostly middle linebacker, Randle found time to grow up from 175 to 205 pounds. He also found out he had excellent speed. While still at Blinn, the swift defender ran the 40-yard dash in 4.4 seconds and was consistently able to run 40 yards in 4.5 seconds.

"That's really how I got to play for A&M," Randle said. "It was my speed that got me here."

After transferring to Texas A&M from Blinn, he was switched by the coaches from his old middle linebacker spot over to weakside

linebacker to take advantage of his speed. Randle found the change in

position "not too difficult. The main problem I had was getting used to the minor weekly changes in our defensive alignment to offset opponent's offenses," he said.



Floyd Randle

the intensive spring practices," Randle said.


Randle made the most of the season opener against the University of Kansas. Despite the heat, he made ten tackles and opposing players fits all afternoon.

"I expect that I'll probably have at least ten tackles a game and I can average 15 tackles a game, especially later in the season," Randle said. "I'm the guy who attacks through the line and gets the ball carrier. If I keep the pressure on the opposition, I'm not going to have any holes to run through for a big gain."

As for the future, the linebacker speedster intends to wait until he is drafted to play pro ball. "I'm sure if I'm drafted, they'll switch me to cornerback," Randle said. "If he doesn't play pro ball, Randle figures he'll finish his degree in Physical Education and get a job. But for now, all his attention is focused on Boston College and the Southwest Conference race down the line."

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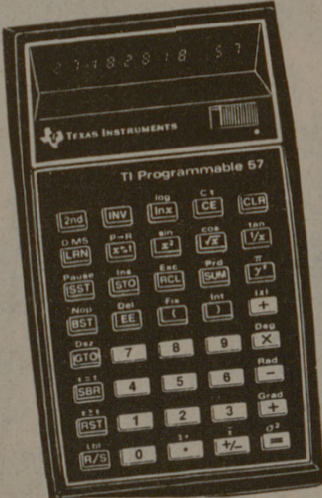
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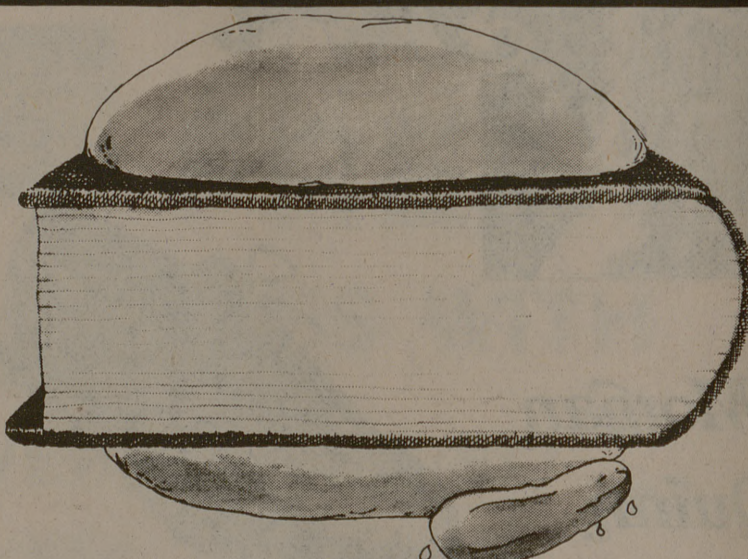
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