



David Boggan
Sports Editor

New line about Aggie defense?

What was that old line about the Aggie defense of a few years back? I believe it went something like this, didn't it:

"On the tackle for the Aggies, Fields, Marshall, Dean and the rest of Aggie defense."

Yes, that was it. And the year was 1975, the same year the Aggies ranked first in the land in total defense and rushing defense. Edgar Fields, Tank Marshall, Jimmy Dean and the rest of the Aggie defense, most notably Ed Simonini, Robert Jackson, Garth Ten Napel, Pat Thomas and Lester Hayes, all of whom have played professional football of varied duration since leaving Texas A&M.

There were two consensus All-America players and five consensus all-Southwest Conference players on that 1975 Aggie defense. It was a defense that, in 11 games, allowed only 104 points, the lowest in the conference that year. And what a glorious year it was for Aggie football. Glorious until Arkansas and USC, but that is another story.

The following year, graduation took its toll of the Aggie defense. Simonini, Ten Napel and Thomas had departed. And so had all-conference defensive end Blake Schwartz. Enter Eugene Sanders, a 255-pound sophomore transfer who played defensive tackle at Washington as a freshman.

Marshall, Fields, Hayes and Jackson made the 1976 consensus all-SWC list. Coach Melvin Robertson's defense finished fourth in the nation in total defense and second in rushing defense. But Houston and Texas Tech had hit the Aggies where it hurt during that 9-2 season—right in the secondary.

Unfortunately, the Aggies' defensive problems were to get worse in 1977. Finishing fifth in the conference, Texas A&M allowed 196 points to be scored last season. No one wearing maroon was mentioned for SWC defensive honors.

"Our defense last year was young and less talented than a few years earlier," Coach Emory Bellard said before the 1978 season began. "We gave up a lot of big plays and touchdown passes last year. This year we will be more talented in the defense."

The Aggie coach is not known for understatement but in this case most talented would have been appropriate. Last week, Texas A&M once again boasted the best defense in the country. The Aggies slipped to second in total defense this week after allowing Texas Tech 290 yards total offense. But the Aggies have the best rushing defense, passing defense and total defense in the SWC. The Aggies have given up an average of 160.2 yards per game while their nearest competitor, Arkansas has allowed an average of 203.7 yards per game.

There is one man who has been there through good times and bad, Eugene Sanders. The Louisiana native has started with a good Aggie defense and he has started with a bad Aggie defense. He now has some very definite ideas about the last Aggie defense he will start with.

"We have the chance to be the best defense since I've been here," said the senior, who has gained 13 pounds and two years of experience since coming to Aggieland.

"We were No. 1 last week with a lot of unknown names, like Carr at middle linebacker, Zachery at end, Little at strongside linebacker and Steen at cornerback. A few years ago we had names that everybody recognized like Jackson, Fields, Dean and Marshall. We don't have the size and strength that the defense had in 1976 but we make up for it in quickness. Other than that, I can't find any differences between the two."

If Houston Cougar quarterback Danny Davis has his way, he won't find any difference between this Aggie defense and the last Aggie defense he faced, in 1976. It was Davis who handed the Aggies their first loss two seasons ago with a 21-10 Cougar victory. Davis completed 11 of 19 passes for 173 yards and three touchdowns against Texas A&M in that game.

Saturday we will find out if Davis will repeat that performance or if a new line about the Aggie defense will be created.

"On the tackle for the Aggies, Sanders, Green, Carr and the rest of the Aggie defense."

Houston, Buffalo both need victory

United Press International
HOUSTON — The Buffalo Bills and Houston Oilers match frustrations Sunday, and each team knows it must win or begin thinking of next season.

"I am bitter about the way things have gone," Oilers center Carl Mauck said. "There are two ways the guys on this team can go now, and one of them isn't pretty."

Mauck was upset because the Oilers' record is 3-3 and he thinks it should be better.

The Oilers dominated Oakland with a ball-control ground game led by rookie Earl Campbell for 56 minutes last Sunday, but they lost in the last minute.

Buffalo enters the game after being embarrassed. The New York Jets rang up 35 first half points by

toting interceptions, punts and passes for touchdowns Sunday.

"We are trying to tighten up, but we have some very, very young players in there," said first-year Bills head coach Chuck Knox.

The Bills have not beaten Houston since 1966, and they have not played in the Astrodome since 1969. They should fare no better this Sunday, judging by comparisons of the clubs.

The Oilers rushed for 205 yards against Oakland and have pushed their per-game rushing yardage to 161 as they kept the ball away from Oakland and Cleveland in the last two games. Buffalo's defense is 13th against the rush in the American Football Conference.

Buffalo's passing offense, built around quarterback Joe Ferguson, is its offensive strength. Houston's

defense, however, ranks second in the AFC.

The Bills, 2-4, cannot afford to fall farther behind the two AFC East Division leaders. The Bills are already two games back.

Houston coach Bum Phillips said five or six defeats was the maximum for his team, if it is to be a playoff contender.

Because of the Pittsburgh Steel-

ers first start in the AFC Central Division, the Oilers must win and hope for help. The Steelers, 6-0, go to Cleveland, 4-2, Sunday and then host the Oilers the following weekend.

Houston is missing offensive left guard George Reihner for the first time in 20 games, and the Oilers have patched up the hole with players they would like to keep in reserve.

Rookie running back Terry from Oklahoma State and a year fullback Curtis Brown on the Bills' backfield, and an equally as inexperienced linebacker.

Houston's running offense kept defenses so off-balance last five games that opponents rush has not sacked quarterback Dan Pastorini once in the five games.

Batt Pix

Week 6



David Boggan



Mark Patterson

GAME	Score	Score	Score
Texas A&M-Houston	Texas A&M by 11	Texas A&M by 9	Texas A&M by 11
SMU-Baylor	SMU by 6	SMU by 11	SMU by 11
Rice-TCU	TCU by 7	TCU by 6	TCU by 6
North Texas-Texas	Texas by 15	Texas by 8	Texas by 8
Texas Tech-New Mexico	Texas Tech by 4	Texas Tech by 4	Texas Tech by 4
Pitt-Notre Dame	Notre Dame by 6	Notre Dame by 7	Notre Dame by 7
USC-Arizona State	USC by 20	USC by 17	USC by 17
Buffalo-Houston	Houston by 10	Houston by 13	Houston by 13
Dallas-St. Louis	Dallas by 13	Dallas by 21	Dallas by 21
Chicago-Denver	Denver by 8	Denver by 12	Denver by 12
Last week's record	9-1	8-2	8-2
Season percentage	.780	.680	.680

Bears prepare for SMU

United Press International
WACO — The Baylor Bears concentrated on pass defense this week to prepare for SMU's effective pass attack.

The Mustangs travel to Baylor Stadium Saturday to meet their second conference opponent, the winless Bears.

SMU, under Southwest Confer-

ence passing leader Mike Ford, is 2-1-1.

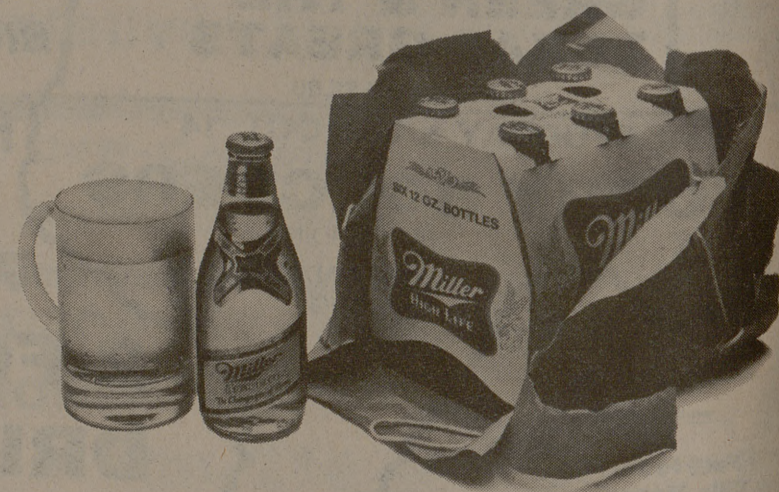
"Ford is an outstanding passer and runs his offense well, but we will be ready for him," Baylor Coach Grant Teaff said Thursday.

Baylor co-captains for the 2 p.m. game will be quarterback Steve Smith and tackle David Sledge on offense and linebacker Jerry Harrison and cornerback Steve Brothers on defense.



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