

the sports

Locker room tears

Aggie players react to Bellard's resignation

By MARK PATTERSON
and
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Battalion Staff

At approximately 4 p.m. Tuesday Marvin Tate stepped before the Texas A&M football team and read a letter written by Emory Bellard to the players.

The team was in tears after what they heard.

"I just resigned as head football coach. This is the toughest thing I've done in my life. I'm asking Mr. Tate to read it to you because I couldn't keep my composure and what I want to say. You're great young men and I love all of you."

The rest of the season will be a big challenge for you. Give the coaches your best and if you can get the guys well you can play with the best of them.

"Please try to understand. I know it's tough to understand, but please try."

That's how a coach, who loved each member of his team individually, said goodbye. It ended a career at Texas A&M that lasted over six U.S. Department years.

The players were stunned by the announcement. First shock, then management.

"After playing for him (Bellard) four years I feel like I've practically lived with the man," Russell Mikeska said after the announcement. "I didn't find out about it until 4 p.m. I had no idea."

Football players are supposed to be big and strong, but there was a

lot of crying going on.

"For all those people who have written letters to The Battalion against Coach Bellard, they've got what they deserved. They don't know what kind of a man they've lost."

Defensive back Carl Grulich was just one of many Aggies who couldn't believe what had just happened.

"I'm shocked like the rest of the guys," Grulich said. "I'm having a difficult time understanding if Coach Bellard quit on his own or from pressure from the alumni and the University. I never imagined he'd resign in the middle of the season."



New Aggie coach Tom Wilson

Quarterback Mike Mosley, recruited by Bellard two years ago to become the quarterback in his wishbone offense, echoed the disbelief felt by Grulich and the rest of the Aggie players.

"This is a hard way for him to leave after all he's done for this University," Mosley said. "Somebody as popular as Coach Bellard should go out a lot better."

"I know personally he wouldn't quit. He got a lot of pressure from people who didn't know what their talking about, from the alumni mostly and the student newspaper."

"He doesn't play. Everybody got too greedy. They wanted to win every game. They have no self control."

When questioned about the day's events, offensive tackle Cody Reison said, "I don't have much to say

Offensive Coordinator Tom Wilson must step in and pick up the pieces for the rest of the season. Though the players are still stunned by Bellard's resignation they seem to accept Wilson as their new head coach.

"It's funny how you can lose a great coach and then, in the same day, gain another great coach," Mikeska said. "I have a lot of respect for Coach Wilson."

"There probably won't be any offensive formation changes, but there will be different variations on what we're doing now."

Only in his second year under Bellard, Mosley won the starting quarterback job in Bellard's offense. Some thought Mosley would leave if Bellard resigned, but the quarterback put an end to those rumors Tuesday.

"Definitely, I'm staying," Mosley said. "I like Coach Wilson and I might of had second thoughts about anyone else. I love Coach Wilson and am so happy for him."

It's the job of the entire Texas Aggie team to make something out of the situation they're facing the remainder of the season. And this strange turn of events may prove to be valuable to the team's success this season.

"I believe in this team and have from the beginning," Mikeska said. "Coach Bellard may have felt that a crisis like this would help draw us closer together. I think it will."

to The Battalion."

Defensive end Jacob Green likened the loss of Bellard to that of a family member.

"I just feel like a member of my family has just passed away," Green said. "Mainly because Coach Bellard was a member of my family. He was a big part of my family."

The resignation must be felt hardest by the 16 seniors on this year's squad. After playing three years under Bellard they must now adjust to a new coach for the last five games of their college careers.

"Every time I step on the field these last five games I'll be playing for the man," defensive tackle Eugene Sanders said about Bellard. "I started here with Bellard and I'll end with Bellard."

"He's still my head coach."

No pressure from alumni, Aggie Club official claims

By MARK PATTERSON
Battalion Staff

Most people will blame the alumni from Texas A&M for the forced resignation of Emory Bellard. But word from The Aggie Club, the athletic department's main source of revenue at Texas A&M, is that the alumni were, as a group, backing Bellard.

"As far as I know, there was no alumni pressure put upon Emory Bellard," Aggie Club Executive Vice President Don Brister said shortly after Bellard's resignation.

"I'm certain that there was no pressure put on him by any executives of the Aggie Club."

The Texas A&M athletic department receives income from four areas: ticket sales, TV-radio revenue, post-season bowl revenue and private donations. The Aggie Club donated \$785,000 to the department, yet Brister contends the or-

ganization has no input into the workings or decisions regarding Texas A&M athletics.

"The department couldn't do without us," Brister said. "Well, maybe without us, but not without the donations."

"We have virtually no pull with the department. They have their own problems without us adding to them. We have no say in any decision-making process."

As a group, The Aggie Club is silent. But individual members seem to talk with a loud voice on athletic matters. For the past two weeks rumors have been circulating that the alumni were turning against Bel-

lard and that there was a movement afoot to buy up the remaining year and a half left on his contract. The rumors may now be laid to rest.

"The rumor that there were people sending us donations to buy his contract is completely and absolutely false," Brister said. "I honestly thought that the mood against Bellard would be greater this week than it has been, but it hasn't."

"People who belong to the club usually call and ask who's hurt and won't be ready for the next game. But most of the calls this week have been to express disappointment over the fact that we've lost the last two weeks."

Aggies defeat Rice

The Texas A&M water polo team continued in its winning ways by defeating Rice 16-2 Tuesday night in the Downs Natatorium.

For the Aggies, Dutchy Kuetzen, Jim Woodman, Mike Newsom and Steve Sampson each made three goals.

Friday the Aggies play the University of Illinois Chicago Circle at 4 p.m. and Saturday at noon they play at Iowa. Both games are in Wofford Pool.

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