

Aggies face 'unusual string of injuries'

By SEAN PETTY
Battalion Staff

People walking by Cain Hall, the athletic dorm at Texas A&M University, may just mistake it for a hospital these days.

The Aggies have been hit with more injuries in the last two games than they had in the previous four games.

According to Billy Pickard, A&M's head trainer, there is no real reason for the rash of injuries.

"The gods just are not shining on

the Aggies, that's all," Pickard said.

As many as eight Aggie offensive players may miss Tom Wilson's debut as Texas A&M's head coach in this week's game with Rice. Halfback Curtis Dickey, who had to be carried off the field three times last Saturday, is very doubtful with sore groin muscles, a sore left ankle and sore right knee. Center Ed Pustejovsky and halfback Temple Aday will miss the Rice game as will reserve right guard Mark Burger.

The Aggies offensive line was hit hardest with injuries against Baylor. Left guard Kyle Golson suffered a bruised knee, and his backup, Arlis James has a strained back. With Pustejovsky, Burger, Golson and James out, the Aggie coaches may be wandering around the A&M campus looking for healthy bodies. To add insult to injury (literally) Johnny Svatek was moved to the injury-prone left guard position and suffered a pinched nerve in his neck during Monday's practice.

Pickard noted the importance of injuries that is often overlooked.

"The last time we had this many injuries was in 1968," he said. "That was the team that had won the Cotton Bowl the year before. We had a ton of injuries and the team went 2-9. And that was on grass so it's not just the AstroTurf causing all the injuries."

Besides Svatek getting hurt Monday, another in a long line of injured backs went down. Freshman Roger Wiley sprained and ankle and may not be able to play Saturday.

Quarterback Mike Mosley is slightly hampered by a sore arm and was almost unable to play because of a boil which came up on his elbow Sunday.

"It's just really unusual, that boil just appeared but we gave him antibiotics and he should be ready to play," Pickard said. "But if it would have got infected, it would have affected his elbow in the joint and he couldn't have played."

"You have to feel sorry for the coaches," Pickard said. "They are shuffling guys around and can't find anyone healthy to play. We have just had an unusual string of injuries."

Pickard said that Armstrong may be ready to go Saturday and that Golson is getting better. He also said Svatek is responding well to treatment on his neck. Dickey has both groin muscles pulled but did not reinjure his knee in Saturday's game.

"I think another thing that adds to the injury problem and makes it more serious is the 30 scholarship limit," Pickard said. "You just can't have as much depth in the positions you want so that when someone does get hurt, it really hurts. And when you get as many injuries as we've had, it's just a real bad situation."

There were two players otherwise negative Baylor Dickey moved to 13th on the time Southwest Conference list, passing Texas' Steve Kicker Tony Franklin with only two more field goals to his NCAA career record of 50. Steve Little of Arkansas.

The Aggies hopefully have an easier week against the Rice this week but will need all troops healthy for the game SMU next week. In the meantime Billy Pickard and his crew are working around the clock to get enough healthy Aggies on the field for Saturday.

Dorsett to start Thursday

United Press International

DALLAS — Dallas coach Tom Landry said Tuesday running back Tony Dorsett would start Thursday night against the Minnesota Vikings and even shouldered a little of the blame for the actions which led to the temporary benching of the former Heisman Trophy winner.

Landry and Dorsett met briefly Tuesday morning before the team's workout and the Cowboys coach said he based his decision to start Dorsett on the results of that discussion.

The coach refused to say whether Dorsett had apologized to him.

"I don't talk about what I say to players in private or what they say to me," Landry said. "But as far as I'm concerned I'm satisfied with his position at this point."

"I told him he would start. I'm sure he's happy."

Landry announced his decision at his weekly meeting with the media and took the opportunity to explain his philosophy of football as a team sport.

"Football is a unique game," said Landry. "It's one of the great team games we have. Therefore the team aspect becomes a very important part of the overall concept. We win because we can work together as a team."

"This is, of course, the reason for my actions and feelings. You have to put together your best for a team as a whole."

Landry reemphasized that he benched Dorsett to start last Sunday's game with Philadelphia not because Dorsett missed a workout but because he failed to notify any team official as to his whereabouts.

"It's probably my fault that I have not completely spelled out to some of the younger players the importance of this particular type of action," Landry said.

After Sunday's game Landry made it clear that at that moment he did not consider Dorsett his starting running back, but Tuesday he tried

to soften his Sunday statement.

"I just meant that he wasn't the starter for that game," Landry said. "It had nothing to do with his potential to start with our football team. The matter has been resolved as far as I'm concerned. Tony will start Thursday night."

"The reasoning behind this is that I believe strongly Tony had no intention to hurt the team at all with the way he handled the situation. And I think Tony recognizes it at this point and therefore he will be starting Thursday night."

Landry said he was putting the matter behind him and would not discuss it further, but in doing so put in a plug for Dorsett and his potential.

"Tony Dorsett is a unique player," Landry said. "I think he has probably handled all the publicity he has had as well as anybody could

at his age.

"I hope as he matures as a person I will be justified in the confidence I have in him."

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