

the sports

Team togetherness stressed

Wilson anticipates new job

By DAVID BOGGAN
Battalion Sports Editor

In less than 24 hours, Tom Wilson learned that he had been designated as head football coach at one of the nation's major universities, taken emotionally upset team through important practice, attended meetings with various officials and organizations, accepted a multitude of congratulations from family and friends and met with an inquisitive group of reporters.

And if any of this had a wearing effect on him, Texas A&M's new head football coach did not show it as he prepared to take over the position vacated by Emory Bellard.

There have been few days in my life when the alarm clock went off in the morning and I was already awake long time before that," Wilson told reporters at a Wednesday afternoon press conference. Obviously, the excitement of the previous day had not allowed him much sleep that night. "I was waiting to get up, ready to meet a new day with such enthusiasm is exactly the kind of at-

titude it will take to provide the Texas Aggies with a winning spirit. Losing two consecutive games and a highly respected coach can have devastating effects on a football team and Wilson realizes this.

"The mental attitude of the players of major concern to us," the new Aggie head coach said, "even over and above our injury situation. The players are very upset and sad and they have a right to be. They just have to realize that this is a situation in life that happens. We have to get our heads up and go on. We have to come together in a group and stay together."

Wilson said that Tuesday's practice went well and that he was ready to accept the challenge of the head coach's job.

"I am very happy to have the opportunity to do what I'm doing," he said. "I think I've prepared for it. I'm going to throw the hat in the ring and come out fighting. That's the only way I know how to handle it."

"Everybody (in coaching) dreams of being a head coach. I've devoted a lot of attention and study to coach-



Tom Wilson

ing. Football is my life. I can think of no other thing I would want to do."

Last year, Wilson, a 1966 graduate of Texas Tech, was considered as a prime candidate to replace Steve Sloan as the Raiders' head coach.

When he was overlooked for the job, however, he admitted that he considered leaving coaching completely.

"That had been a major part of my thinking, that I was going to be head coach at Texas Tech," the former Raider quarterback said. "No question about it, I was upset."

But Wilson did not give up coaching and now he has the responsibilities of a head coach. After spending his entire coaching career viewing games from the press box, Wilson is anticipating working on the sideline against Rice Saturday.

"I'm looking forward to it like I haven't looked forward to anything for a long time," said Wilson, who was an assistant coach at Texas Tech before coming to Texas A&M in 1975. "I've been in the press box since I graduated in 1966. The only time I've been on the sidelines is in spring games and scrimmages."

"I think the biggest thing personally that I have going for me is that I work hard. I will be with the players and I know they will play for me. I believe in open manner, exciting football. We will establish our running game first and compliment it with passing. No. 1, we've got to score touchdowns."

Wilson was asked if the Aggies will

run strictly from the I-formation against the Owls.

"We are working on it seriously right now," he answered. "But that's mainly because of our injury situation in the backfield. We will still be prepared to use the wishbone."

"I don't feel like it would be smart to let Curtis (Dickey) play this week. We will hold him out of this game and prepare him for the rest of the season. Adgar (Armstrong) looked real good in practice yesterday. I believe he is 95 percent healthy." Both Dickey and Armstrong have been hampered with leg injuries in the past two weeks and have seen limited action.

What does Wilson see in his future at Texas A&M?

"That is one of those things that you just have to take a day at a time and a game at a time," he said. "I can't look beyond that. The future depends on the next five games, I'm sure."

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Post-season rivals meet tonight in Dallas

United Press International
IRVING — Professional football makes another weeknight intrusion into the nation's living rooms tonight as long as there is going to be a game, at least it ought to be a good one.

The Dallas Cowboys and Minnesota Vikings, familiar post-season rivals, will match up in Texas Stadium in a crucial beginning to the second half of the NFL season.

"I don't know if you can call this a must game for us," said Vikings coach Bud Grant. "When you are struggling every game it seems like every game is a must game. This is another week where we are trying to get our head above water."

The Vikings go into the contest two games back of the NFC Central-leading Green Bay Packers, a club Minnesota knocked off last Sunday. Dallas, with Tony Dorsett reinstated as a starting running back, move into at least a temporary lead in the NFC East for the first time in six weeks.

Dallas' defense has played well of late and the Vikings' pass-minded offense is in good hands with Fran Tarkenton.

So it will be strength against strength tonight.

"Fran has had a super year," said Grant. "I don't see any difference at all in him this year. I think the last few games he has been outstanding."

Dallas Coach Tom Landry agreed the Vikings seem to have jelled.

"They had some troubles early in the year, but they got off to a bad start. But right now they look like the Vikings of old. They won a really significant game last Sunday against Green Bay."

"I'm sure they see it within their grasp to win the division. Fran is throwing the ball as well as he has ever thrown it at this point and he is the key to the Minnesota offense."

Volleyball action
The Texas A&M volleyball team hosts Sam Houston State University in a dual match tonight in G. Rollie White Coliseum starting at 7 p.m. Coach Dave Schakel's Aggies, led by Donna Branch, Dianne Douglass and Vicki Marshall, have a 31-11 record this year.

The Cowboys have gone through an important week in their season — drawing even with Washington in the race for the NFC East crown and then apparently settling an incident involving Dorsett.

Dorsett, who was benched last Sunday for missing a practice and not letting the team know why he had missed, will be back in the starting lineup tonight.

"I am happy with our record now at 6-2 midway through the season," Landry said. "Sure, I'd like to be 7-1, but I'm satisfied."

"I don't see us going out and beating somebody real bad. We're still not playing real good, at least not at the top level we were when we had the momentum last year. But if we hit on all cylinders one of these days maybe we will be back."

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