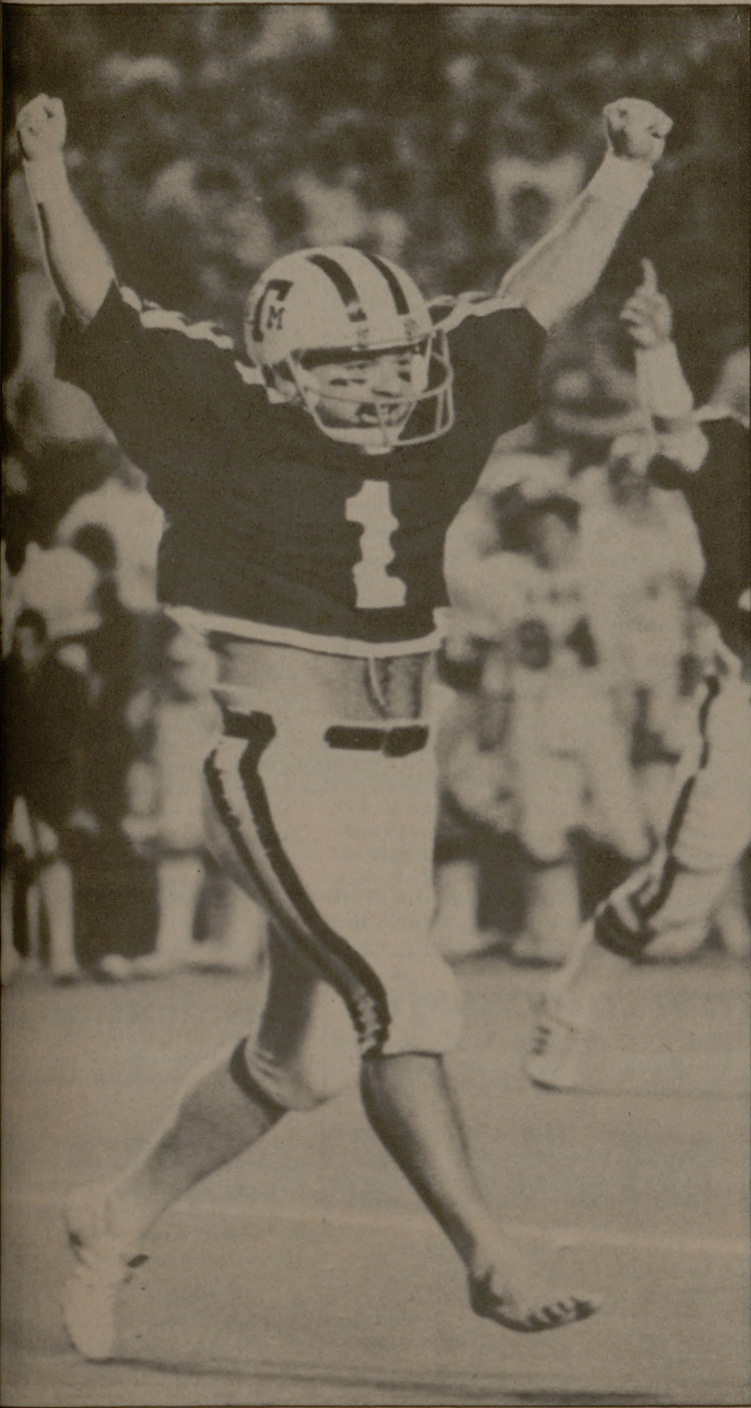


the sports

# Franklin gives Ags the edge



Battalion photo by Pat O'Malley

Texas A&M's bare-foot placekicker Tony Franklin celebrates his record-breaking field goal. With 55 seconds remaining in Saturday's game against SMU, Franklin kicked a 29-yarder that was his 54th career field goal, an NCAA record. Franklin also broke the NCAA records for most career points and most career field goal attempts. But most important, the field goal gave the Aggies a 20-17 victory.

By DAVID BOGGAN  
Battalion Sports Editor

Putt Choate had a complaint after last year's Texas A&M-SMU football game. The Mustang linebacker claimed that the Aggies intentionally ran up the score in their 38-21 victory over the Ponies. He had the same gripe after Texas A&M beat SMU 36-0 on regional television two years ago.

After Saturday's game, Choate and the Mustangs should be satisfied that the Texas Aggies did not try to run up the score on SMU in the 61st meeting of the two teams. Rather, the visitors from College Station were happy to get out of the Cotton Bowl with a skin-of-their-teeth victory. Texas A&M edged SMU 20-17, with a Tony Franklin field goal being the difference between Mustang Mania and Aggie Abandon.

With 5:02 remaining in the game and the score tied 17-17 Aggie quarterback Mike Mosley engineered a drive toward the south end zone. In eight plays the Aggies had progressed from their 17-yard line to the Mustangs' 33-yard line.

On third-and-five, Mosley took the snap and rolled left bringing the major flow of the SMU defense with him. He then looked across field and saw Russell Mikeska open on the right. Mosley flung the ball in the direction of the big tight end and Mikeska caught the pass, picking up 13 yards and a first down for the Aggies.

Four plays later the Aggies were faced with a fourth-and-three situation from the SMU 13 with one minute left to play. Enter No. 1—Franklin.

The bare-foot kicker, who came into national prominence two years ago when he kicked 64- and 65-yard field goals against Baylor and then silently and inconsistently kicked from lesser distances for a year and a half, now had the chance to be the hero once again.

As he trotted out to the Aggie huddle, Franklin raised a clinched fist in confidence. He was equally confident after the kick, raising his arms in the "good" signal as the ball sailed through the uprights 29 yards away.

Franklin's kick broke the NCAA records for most career field goals (54) and most career points (282). A Kenneth Taylor interception of a Mike Ford pass on SMU's next offensive play also assured Franklin of the first game-winning kick of his collegiate career.

"It feels great," Franklin said after the game. He praised the ef-

forts of Mosley and Mikeska on the play that set up the field goal. "Russell's catch had to be the biggest play of the game. I could have kicked it 50 yards but I would much rather kick it from 29 yards than 50 yards into the wind."

Mikeska, who has seen increased action as a receiver in the last two games, said he had not expected Mosley to throw the cross-field pass.

"I got out under the linebacker," the tight end said, "but then I slipped down. I got up and continued my route. I knew Mike was rolling left but I didn't know he was going to throw to me because after I slipped I wasn't the primary receiver." Mikeska caught 6 passes for 90 yards in the game.

This was the second win for the Aggies under new head coach Tom Wilson. Wilson said after the game that he had expected this kind of contest with SMU.

"I knew we were going to have to play 60 minutes of ball against this team," Wilson said. "And it took the full 60 minutes for it to be decided. This has to be the most exciting game I've ever participated in."

"I would like to remember this

game as a team victory. Curtis Dickey fought very hard. (Dickey had 143 yards and one touchdown after missing the Rice game with an injury.) Russell Mikeska caught the ball exceptionally well. Mike Mosley did an excellent job handling the ball club. The defense stopped SMU when they had to. Elroy Steen and Darrell Smith and all the secondary didn't give away anything easy. They made them work for it."

Yes, the Mustangs had to work for their 17 points. But the Aggies had no easy time scoring 20 either. No one was going to run up the score in the Cotton Bowl Saturday, although that undoubtedly comes as little consolation to Mr. Choate and the SMU Mustangs.

SCORING SUMMARY  
Texas A&M 7 7 3 3—20  
SMU 0 10 0 7—17

A&M—Simpson 5 pass from Mosley (Franklin kick)  
SMU—Garrett 25 pass from Ford (Garcia kick)  
A&M—Dickey 15 run (Franklin kick)  
SMU—FG Garcia 21  
A&M—FG Franklin 48  
SMU—Turner 1 run (Garcia kick)  
A&M—FG Franklin 29

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