

## Long road ahead for Texas A&M

# Wilson praises Aggies' performance

By MARK PATTERSON  
Battalion Staff

Tom Wilson boasts a record that can claim in all of football. He's defeated and untied as a head coach. His latest victory was over the Mustangs of SMU, and Wilson is one of those same Ponies in a weekly press conference.

"I was most pleased with the way the team showed in the pressure situations we encountered against SMU," Wilson said. "Instead of splitting apart the team and going to a unit. A game like this will be a big plus for us on down the road this season."

The Aggies begin the longest part of the road next week when they travel to Arkansas to face the Razorbacks. The Aggies will need every bit of health for the contest if they are to defeat the Hogs. With the return of Curtis Dickey to the line, the Aggies will be at full strength for next week's game.

"The week layoff affected Curtis' performance in the early part of the SMU game," Wilson explained. "It's only natural that if you're hurt and miss a game you'd have apprehension about stretching out and becoming confident about what you're doing. But Curtis seemed to get stronger as the game went on."

"He carried the ball 33 times in the game and (David) Brothers carried 11 times. That's 44 times our tailback carried the ball in the game. The tailback has to do that in our I-formation attack and Curtis knows that. He needs to be strong and stay strong."

With the return of Dickey to the Texas A&M backfield the Aggies are at full strength at both running back positions. With a full stable of troops Wilson has decided on who will play what position.

"We've moved Brothers back to fullback and he and (Raymond) Belcher will play that position. Dickey and (Adger) Armstrong will play tailback. Those four will be our starting backs."

"We'll try and play both sets of backs, Dickey and Belcher and Brothers and Armstrong, but the combination really doesn't matter. Plus we have (Temple) Aday and (Holly) Wilson and the others backing these four up. So we're in pretty good shape."

The Aggies are in pretty good shape at the quarterback position with Mike Mosley at the controls. Mosley is hitting on 60 percent of his passing attempts this season while adding 280 yards rushing. And according to his coach, Mosley

is developing into a fine quarterback.

"Mike Mosley is getting better and better every week he plays," Wilson said. "He's reading coverages in the defensive secondary that usually takes a long time to learn."

"He's learned to drop back and look for his receivers and when they're covered he's going to this secondary receivers. Plus he's so dangerous when he drops back to pass because of his ability to scramble. He's really maturing as a quarterback."

One player that could not be happier about Mosley's passing success is tight end Russell Mikeska. Saturday against SMU Mikeska had his best game as an Aggie, making six catches for 90 yards.

"Russell wasn't necessarily our primary receiver on his pass patterns," Wilson said. "When Mike makes the fake into the line and pulls up to pass he has three people to throw to. We went into the game wanting to get the ball to Mikeska and the coverage dictated that we could. Mike did a good job reading the SMU defense and getting the ball to him."

"Russell is a gifted athlete with good hands and we have to utilize

his talents."

Another talent utilized against SMU was that of Tony Franklin. Franklin was called upon to kick a 29-yard field goal with one minute in the game to defeat the Mustangs. At the time his coach had little to say to the kicker.

"In that situation there's not a whole lot you can say," Wilson said. "It seems like the more you say the worse pressure you can create. So I just gave him a pat on the butt and wished him luck. And he went out and did it."

One sore spot for the Aggies continues to be David Appleby's punting. Though Appleby averaged 41.9 yards per punt Saturday many of his attempts landed short and got Aggie

bounces. Wilson poses no solution to the Appleby's problem.

"David hasn't kicked the ball well all year and David knows he hasn't kicked well," Wilson said. "Tony (Franklin) has been working on his punting in practice and I'm confident that we have two punters on this team."

"But I've seen signs that David is kicking the ball better. He's just in a slump and on occasions he has kicked well. He'll have to perform

these last three games because of the importance of the punting game. I think he'll come around. But then, I have to think that he will."

The last three games against Arkansas, TCU and Texas will determine if the Aggies' 1978 season is a success. The first on the list is Arkansas in two weeks. With an off-week this Saturday the Aggies have begun preparations for the Hogs.

"We've closed practices to pre-

pare for them," Wilson said about Arkansas. "We're getting their last three game films and I'm going to Waco this weekend to see them play Baylor. But they haven't really changed much offensively or defensively from last year."

"Our team has confidence in themselves but great respect for Arkansas. This team knows that from here on it's going to be a battle. But then, that's what football is all about."

## Dallas struggles for playoffs

United Press International  
DALLAS — The 1978 NFL season opened with the Dallas Cowboys crushing the Baltimore Colts, 30-10. Coach Tom Landry has apparently regretted it ever since.

"I don't think there is any question that the Baltimore game was the worst thing that could have happened to us," Landry said Tuesday. "Baltimore was not anywhere near the football team at that time than it is now. They were completely disgraced because of injuries and other things."

"It came so easy that it looked like we could beat the world. But we weren't playing the world."

The obvious point is that Landry's team became so complacent after that victory that trouble was almost sure to follow.

"I give you that trouble has come along and we've been a 6-3 record that leaves Dallas struggling to make the playoffs. I didn't feel that way (that his team was ready to beat the world)," Landry said. "I knew we were at a physical level, but we were not at the mental level we had to be to fight off the challenge."

"We are actually pretty fortunate where we are. At least we are within striking distance (one game behind the Washington Redskins in the NFC East)."

And, in a bit of a quirk, the Cowboys remain within striking distance thanks to those same Baltimore Colts, who upset the division leading Washington Redskins Monday night.

"I think the Baltimore win was helpful," Landry said. "I've said all along that I wasn't particularly concerned how others were playing, but that it was more important how we played."

"If we can play well enough we will get in the playoffs and that's what concerns me the most."

"But the game Monday night helps us because it gives us another shot in the East. It is in our hands now so that is encouraging. Hopefully it will motivate our players to prepare better, to play better and to

do everything you have to do better to be in the right position."

Motivation and momentum are the big issues around Cowboysland lately and Landry, like any other coach, wishes he knew how to instill such ingredients into his team.

"We have been getting a lot of theories," Landry said with a grin, "and I appreciate them."

"At the start of our season the players were playing hard. But I don't think they recognized the opposition would be so good."

"I don't think I have ever seen teams play as they have against us. Miami (a 23-16 winner over Dallas last Sunday) was motivated as if were a Super Bowl game for them."

"Until we accept that kind of a challenge we will still fall short."



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