



Franklin's foot goes to Philadelphia

Staff and wire reports

Tony Franklin, the place-kicking wonder from Texas A&M University, became the third draftee of the Philadelphia Eagles and the 74th player chosen in this year's pro football draft Thursday.

Franklin, unavailable for comment after his selection, was one of seven players drafted from the talent-rich Southwest Conference in the first three rounds of this year's National Football League draft.

Franklin's size 8 holds or shares 17 NCAA records, among them the most career points by a kicker (291), the most career field goals made (56) and the most career field goal attempts (101).

Franklin's SWC rival, Russell Erxleben of the University of Texas, was chosen in the first round of this year's draft. Dan Hampton of Arkansas, Baylor's Greg Hawthorne and Willis Adams from the University of Houston were also first-round selections.

Jerry Eckwood of Arkansas and Ron Lee of Baylor were picked in the third round, along with Franklin.

Hampton was the fourth player chosen in this year's draft, taken by Chicago on the Bears' first of two picks in the opening round. Hampton, a 6-2, 222-pound defensive lineman, was the leading tackler on the Razorbacks' line this past season.

Erxleben, the eleventh player chosen in the first round and the first kicker taken this year, was

choice of the New Orleans Saints. Among his accomplishments, Erxleben holds the record for the longest field goal in NCAA history, 67 yards against Rice in 1977. He also hit on 49-of-75 field goal attempts, with 11 from 50 yards or more and three from 60 yards or more in his college career at Texas.

Erxleben led the nation in punting in 1976 with a 46.6 yard average and compiled a 44.2 yard average in his college career. The 6-2, 218-pound native of Seguin is considered the best punter/place-kicker to come out of college since Ray Guy.

Erxleben sipped champagne with his parents and friends Thursday and said he is relieved he will get to play his professional football with New Orleans in the South close to his home state.

Erxleben, before being chosen by the Saints, had expected to be drafted by Philadelphia, Green Bay or Baltimore.

"Next to Dallas or Houston, that's the best I could have done," he said about going to the Saints. "I'm very happy. It's real close. It's sure where my parents can come and watch me. It's close to home, in the South and it's warm."

He said New Orleans coach Dick Nolan told him the Saints will use him both as a punter and place-kicker. He said he also approached Nolan about the prospect of being the Saints' third string quarterback, but received a noncommittal answer. Erxleben was a quarterback in high school, but was used exclu-

sively as a kicker in college despite his occasional protests.

He also said he was surprised to be chosen by the Saints.

"I talked to them last night, but I never thought they would draft me," Erxleben said. "When I played in the Senior Bowl, I was with their coaching staff, so I know them well."

"They've got an excellent facility

down there, and I'm really excited about playing there."

Adams was the first-round selection of the Cleveland Browns. The Browns acquired the rights to draft Adams in a deal with the San Diego Chargers, trading San Diego their first round pick for the Chargers' first- and second-round choices in this year's draft.

After being shut out in the second round, the SWC had three players selected in the third round.

Eckwood, a running back from Arkansas and the second Razorback chosen in the first three rounds, was the choice of the Tampa Bay Buccaneers.

Ron Lee, tight end from Baylor, was chosen by the Miami Dolphins.

Ags battle Horns

By DAVID BOGGAN
Battalion Sports Staff

It has been a long season full of heartache and rain for the Texas A&M baseball team. The Aggies will host the Texas Longhorns in the final series of the 1979 regular season, which has been postponed until Saturday because of the weather. Eleven Texas A&M seniors will see their last action before the home crowd that they have entertained for so many seasons.

The Longhorns, who have already clinched the Southwest Conference title that belonged to the Aggies the two previous seasons, bring an impressive 20-1 conference record into the series. That record has earned the respect of Aggie coach Tom Chandler.

"I think they'll win the national championship, I'll tell you that right now," Chandler said of the Horns.

"Of course, I'm not saying we're throwing in the blanket."

Chandler said that the Longhorns' pitching has been the deciding factor in the SWC pennant race this season.

"They have outstanding pitching," the Aggie coach said. "Their three starters, Ricky Wright and (Keith) Creel and Jerry Don Gleaton were all second round draft choices out of high school." Wright, Creel and Gleaton have impressive season records of 9-2, 9-1 and 9-0, respectively.

"They haven't scored a whole lot of runs," Chandler said. "But they've had timely hitting and with that pitching staff, they don't need a lot of runs."

Texas A&M second baseman Randy Woodruff, who is leading the team with a .362 season batting average, compares the Longhorns' pitching staff to the Arkansas pitchers who the Aggies faced last weekend.

"Arkansas has impressive pitching but Texas just has the raw talent," Woodruff said. "Arkansas' Steve Krueger has great finesse. But they (Texas) just come out and try to blow it by you."

"That makes it easier in one sense

because you know you can look for the fastball. That's their best pitch. But that sure doesn't make it any easier to hit."

While the Longhorns have already laid claim to the conference crown, the Aggies decide in this series if they finish in third or fourth place in the SWC. The Razorbacks are in second and Baylor has ended its season one game behind the Aggies. The Ags need two victories in this series to finish third.

"Everything is pretty much settled," Woodruff said. "We're just getting geared up for the (SWC post-season) tournament. I just hope we can be more mentally prepared (for this series) than I think we have been in the past."

Woodruff will return next year for one more try at another conference ring, but as he admits, there will be a lot of new faces in next year's starting line-up.

"A tremendous nucleus is leaving this ball club," Woodruff said emphatically. "We'll be up there next year but it will be different."

The Aggies will lose six starting seniors off of this year's team, including pitcher Mark Thurmond, third baseman Mark Warriner, catcher Buster Turner, pitcher Mark Ross, right fielder Shelton McMath and first baseman Kyle Hawthorne. Also departing will be second baseman Steve Robinson, pitcher John Pockrus, outfielder Gary Bryant and pitcher Alan Buonasera.

These seniors were members of two SWC championship teams. They also leave their mark in the record book, accounting for 10 individual records and helping set 14 team records at Texas A&M.

There is another senior leaving the Aggies this season, but he never set a record. He never caught a game-winning catch. In fact, in four years at Texas A&M, he never even went to bat for the Aggies. He is Larry Naylor, student manager, and according to Coach Chandler, "We'll miss him, too."

Saturday's nine-inning game will start at 3 p.m. Sunday's double-header will begin at 1 p.m.

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