

the sports

Aggs prepared for BYU bombing

By MARK PATTERSON
Battalion Sports Staff

Saturday night at Rice Stadium, the pressure will be on Elroy Steen, John Dawson, Dan Davis and Leandrew Brown. It will be the job of those men who make up the Texas A&M defensive secondary to shut down the aerial attack of quarterback Marc Wilson and the rest of the Brigham Young Cougars.

Wilson led the Cougars to the Western Athletic Conference championship in 1977, completing 59 percent of his passes for 2,418 yards and 24 touchdowns. But Wilson played sporadically in 1978, suffering a knee injury in BYU's third game of the year. His replacement, Jim McMahon, stepped in to take control of the team and direct it to the WAC title and the Holiday Bowl.

Wilson, entering his senior season, is considered one of the finest quarterbacks in the nation. BYU head coach LaVell Edwards is sure he'll go high in this year's pro draft.

"There's no question in my mind that he has the ability to play pro ball," said Edwards, who also coached Gifford Nielsen at BYU who is now the Houston Oilers' backup quarterback. "If he plays up to his capabilities this season, he'll be a potential first-round draft choice. He just has all it takes to play pro ball."

But what he doesn't have is an appendix. Wilson suffered an attack of appendicitis three weeks ago and worked out with the team for the first time Monday.

"Wilson will start Saturday," Edwards said. "He's getting stronger every day he's worked out. He's not as far along as he would have been normally but I hope he can play the entire game."

"My main concern is the heat. I don't know if he has the endurance to play the entire game."

If Wilson can't go the distance, Edwards will be forced to play McMahon. Edwards had hoped to redshirt McMahon (a junior) this season. But if Wilson proves incapable, the junior may be called upon to fill in.

"It's pretty rare that you find a team with two quarterbacks as talented as those two," Texas A&M head coach Tom Wilson said about the BYU pair. "Both are right out of the mold of pro quarterbacks."

"BYU runs a tough offense. They use multiple sets and we'll see every possible look on defense. Their quarterbacks do a great job of throwing to their backs and just throwing in general. We have to keep them from getting the quick strike."

"It has been more of a mental preparation this week for us. There's no way, in a week, we can show our defense all the looks that they'll see against BYU."

Steen will start at the free safety position for the Aggies with Dawson at strong safety, Davis at right corner and Brown at the left corner. Brown will be starting in front of the injured Carl Grulich.

"Carl twisted an ankle back in two-a-days and hasn't fully recovered," Wilson said. "He'll see a lot of playing time but we'll start Brown."

"Feel good about Elroy at safety (from cornerback last season). He's playing better than anyone in the secondary for us. Dawson's never played strong safety before, but we're confident in him. Seeing if he can do the job is just another question we need to get answered."

The questions ought to be answered quickly. The Cougars will come out throwing the ball often against the untested Aggie secondary Saturday night.

"We're going to come out and match up our strengths to the Aggie weaknesses," Edwards said. "We attack coverages, not personnel. We try to force the opposition into coverages that we can predict."

Since the Aggies had the coaching change, they've gone to a different attitude on defense. They run more zone coverages and don't gamble as much on pass coverage.

The Aggies will attack with Mike Mosley at quarterback, Curtis Dickey at tailback and David Brothers starting at fullback. Freshman Gary Kubiak will back up Mosley, with freshmen Johnny Hector and Earnest Jackson, along with Temple Aday, backing up Dickey.

"A lot has been said about the freshmen running backs and I've said a lot," Wilson admitted. "But I've neglected to talk about Temple Aday. Aday is a solid back and he'll be our No. 2 tailback Saturday."

Junior David Hill is listed as the backup fullback for the BYU game. Missing from the list of fullbacks is George Woodard. Wilson feels Woodard still hasn't recovered sufficiently from the broken ankle he suffered a year ago.

"George isn't ready to assume the role of a starter for us," Wilson said. "He hasn't gotten to the point that we can depend on him to play every down. His leg is still hurting him and it may be three or four games until he's ready to go."

Kickoff at Rice Stadium is scheduled for 7:30 p.m.

Aggie tickets up for grabs

The Houston Astros are not the ones having problems getting tickets to come to their games. The Texas A&M students, for some unknown reason, are not buying many tickets to Saturday's Aggie game against BYU in Houston.

At noon Thursday, only 7,000 tickets had been sold to Texas A&M students, according to Associate Athletic Director Wally Groff. That figure is far below what the athletic department had expected.

"We were anticipating over 10,000 tickets being sold to the students," Groff said. "The slow sales may be blamed on the students' being around, adding and dropping, trying to get the semester started."

"Today and tomorrow, after the students settle down and start thinking about the weekend, ticket sales ought to pick up."

Groff said the ticket office would remain open until 4 p.m. this afternoon with general admission student tickets being sold for \$4.25 and guest tickets at \$8.50.

Tickets can also be purchased the day of the game at Rice Stadium.

Richard, Astros rout Padres

United Press International HOUSTON — J.R. Richard fired a three-hitter for his ninth straight complete game and Houston led across runs on an RBI double by Luis Pujols and a two-run home run by Craig Reynolds Friday night to score a 2-0 triumph over the San Diego Padres.

The win allowed the Astros to maintain their half-game lead in the West.

Richard, 16-12, struck out nine batters and did not walk a batter in breezing to his ninth win in his last 10 decisions. The right-hander has not needed relief help since July 25.

Carlos Cabell doubled to open the second inning and moved to second on a deep fly ball before scoring the first Houston run by sliding under the tag of catcher Bill Fahey.

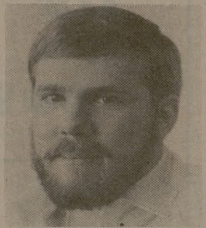
Pujols' grounder to second base, followed by a sacrifice bunt by Richard and an intentional walk to Cesar Cedeno loaded the bases in the fourth inning. Padres starter and reliever Bob Owcinko, 4-10, then pitched Puhl on six pitches to boost Houston's lead to 2-0.

Richard ran his season strikeout total to 258 and his string of consecutive innings without surrendering an earned run to 37. Since the Star break his record is 9-2.

Batt Pix



Sean Petty



Mark Patterson



dp

WEEK 1

Texas A&M-Brigham Young	A&M by 3	A&M by 9	A&M by 10
Baylor-Lamar	Baylor by 16	Baylor by 24	Baylor by 14
Houston-UCLA	Houston by 6	Houston by 3	UCLA by 3
Rice-SMU	SMU by 21	SMU by 21	SMU by 21
Texas Tech-USC	USC by 7	USC by 10	USC by 18
Dallas-San Francisco	Dallas by 10	Dallas by 13	Dallas by 10
Houston-Pittsburgh	Houston by 2	Pittsburgh by 4	Pittsburgh by 7
Oakland-San Diego	San Diego by 6	San Diego by 3	San Diego by 1
Tampa Bay-Baltimore	Tampa Bay by 13	Baltimore by 2	Baltimore by 3
Atlanta-Philadelphia	Philadelphia by 3	Philadelphia by 6	Philadelphia by 9

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