

campus

Stadium changes cause mild problems at game

By STEVE CRITCHFIELD
Battalion Reporter

The more than 59,000 football fans who filed into Kyle Field Saturday for the Texas A&M-Houston game were met by a multitude of changes in the renovated stadium.

There were fewer gates, new ramps, small stairways and the unfinished third deck. And there were a variety of Aggie attitudes about the construction.

The three gates on the southeast end of the field and the four gates on the north handled the crowd effectively, said Fred Davidson, a gatekeeper on the north end. "I don't think it's any harder than before to get through the gates," Davidson said. "A lot of people got here about noon to avoid the crowd and we could get them in pretty quick," he said.

Davidson predicted more open gates for the future games to accommodate more spectators as the stadium continues to expand.

Sophomore chemical engineering major Mike Surman said he made it through the gates all right, but found the lines to the first level

ramps less than enjoyable.

"Those stairways leading up to the ramps were too small," Surman said. "And there were four sections of people using the same stairway." He said it took him between 45 minutes and an hour to get through the line and to his seat.

"After I finally got to the ramp, I had to walk through a section of people just to get to an aisle," said Surman, referring to Ramp S, which led into sections 136-139.

Freshman Bob Gunter had the same problem. "It took 30 minutes to get up the stairways to enter the sections," he said.

Most spectators found the second and third levels of the stadium very accessible with the new and larger ramp system. There was no noticeable confusion at the section entrances.

The third deck, what there is of it, was filled with apparently satisfied spectators.

"I really enjoyed sitting up there," said senior Tim Johnston of Houston. "I had a good view of the field, but if I sit up there again I'll bring my binoculars."

Eileen Mertel, a junior accounting major from Austin, said, "I was skeptical about sitting up there at first, but after a couple of minutes I forgot about where I was."

Both Mertel and Johnston said they thought the new level was safe. Johnston considered himself lucky for being among the first upper deck spectators.



Battalion photo by Lynn Blanco

Trick-or-treat?

Melody Jones, a senior in radiation protection engineering, is not an early trick-or-treater but was part of Texas A&M University's High School Career Day program Saturday. The high school students toured the campus; however, because of the seating problem in Kyle Field they were unable to attend an A&M game as high school students did in the past.

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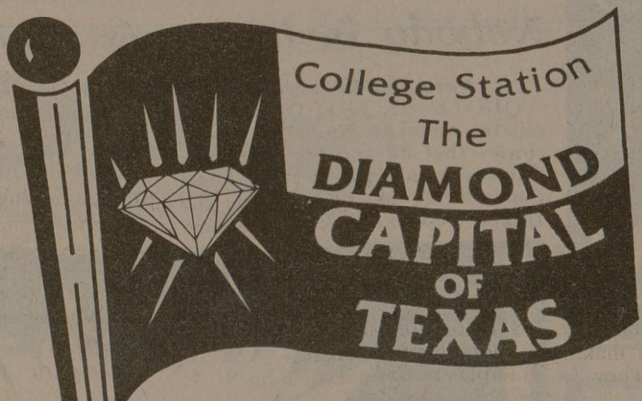
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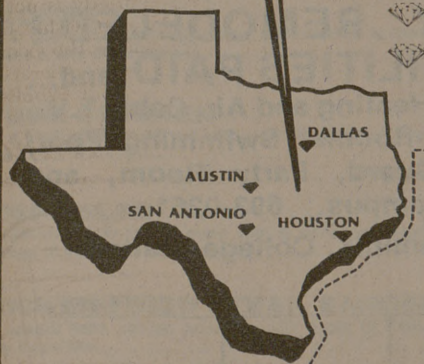
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