



New tennis center named after Smith

By RICK STOLLE
Battalion Staff

"You don't have to go far to see who has done the most for the Texas A&M tennis program," said Marvin Tate, Texas A&M Athletic Director. "Omar Smith put not only a lot of effort into the program; he put himself."

Smith is being honored Saturday by having the new A&M tennis center named after him. The "Omar Smith Tennis Center" will be dedicated at 10 a.m.

"It was a surprise," Smith said. "But I am truly honored and greatly appreciate it."

Smith coached tennis at A&M for 15 years. During his tenure, he brought tennis at A&M up from an intramural sport to a sport that awarded scholarships and was ranked nationally. His overall record as coach is 169-95-7.

Smith came to A&M as coach in 1960. It took only four years before he had A&M ranked tenth in the nation. "Richard Barker and Louis Rojas really led that team," he said. "They kept going until they didn't have anything left."

In 1969, Smith was ranked No. 11 in the nation as a coach in the World Tennis coaches poll. He said it was a big honor but his finest moments came when his players did well.

The first SWC doubles championship in 1964, the 1966 and 1969 teams and his record of holding the University of Texas winless at A&M for ten years (from 1962 to 1972) are some of the finest memories, he said. "Yet, my greatest pleasure as a coach came after my athletes graduated," he said. "Many kept in touch as they pursued their careers and that made me feel good."

Smith retired in 1974 after his team was ranked 23rd in the nation. "I

enjoyed my years at A&M and am really sharing this honor with all the players I coached over the years," he said.

Smith said he worked with some great groups of young men as coach of the team. "Many are tennis coaches or pros at various country clubs now," he said, "and I hope to see as many as I can Saturday."

"Omar Smith put his life into the tennis program," said Tate. "He had a business to run but he would always be out at the courts with the athletes." He put everything he had into the program when it was getting started, he said. He donated his time, money and effort to get the program going. "He is a grand gentleman," Tate said, "and I recommended him for the honor as Athletic Director to President Samson."

David Kent, A&M tennis coach, competed against Smith as coach of West Texas State University. "He was a fierce competitor," he said, "but was honest and had the respect of all the coaches he competed against."

Kent said he enjoyed the competition because Smith's athletes gave all they had. "He held A&M tennis together and put it on the road to being a very good program," he said.

Smith owns most of the Dairy Queen distributorship in Brazos County. He got into the business in 1948 and kept it up even as coach. "It was rough for a while but the business and tennis were worked into a tight schedule," he said. "I enjoyed it all and if I had to do it all over again, I wouldn't change a thing."

The ceremony will begin at 10 a.m. Saturday. Athletic Director Marvin Tate, President Charles Samson and Regent Clyde Wells will take part in the naming.

Whitwell hunts, rides and snags football

By RITCHIE PRIDDY
Battalion Staff

At first sight one would probably never associate him as being the athlete that he is. In fact, to some people he may appear to be nothing more than the 'good old country boy' from Cotulla, Texas that he is.

He talks of hunting, working with cattle and things most country folk talk about. He also talks of Aggie football.

His name is Mike Whitwell, and at 6-foot, 172 pounds, he is not an overly impressive figure on the football field.

A walk-on junior wide receiver for the Texas A&M football team, Whitwell is sometimes considered too small by most standards to play major college ball.

"I was worried at first because I was pretty small. I hadn't been recruited very much as far as South-west Conference schools go, I had been recruited by LSC (Lone Star Conference) schools and stuff like that," he said.

Whitwell had signed a letter of intent to play football for Angelo State University but backed out as a result of a controversy involving a visit he made to A&M.

"I told him (Angelo State head coach Hess) I wasn't going to play ball for him. So, it was two weeks before two-a-days (fall practice) and I didn't have anywhere to go. So I came here because they said that they would let me walk on," he said.

"As far as my field of study (Agriculture Education), I couldn't have made a better choice. A&M has a

really good agriculture department. But, really, the only reason I showed up here was because he (Coach Hess) got mad at me and didn't want me to come up there."

Whitwell has proed on more than one occasion that he can play with even some of the biggest guys.

During his freshman year the coaches had him running attack secondary, which is the other team's defensive secondary, against the first team offense. The running backs were George Woodard, David Brothers and Curtis Dickey.

"We were supposed to tackle them but hit them high. I wasn't going to do that. I played secondary in high school too, so I knew that if I did that I would get killed."

"About the second day," Whitwell said, "George Woodard broke through the line and was running right at me. I hit him right about the knees and I just dropped him in his tracks. He got mad, partly because he didn't think I was going to hit him and partly because I did hit him. And the coaches got mad because I hit him."

"I said, 'I'll play secondary but I'm not going to hit him high. If I hit him high he (Woodard) would break me into 15 million pieces.' About five plays later, Woodard did it again and I hit him the same way and he went down the same way. The coaches were mad, but they were kind of glad at the same time because they knew that I wasn't afraid to come in and do some stuff. And give up my body," he said. "The coaches saw that I

could play and gave me a scholarship before my spring semester."

Being as small as he is, his nickname is 'Bones', and Whitwell has been hampered by injuries throughout his career.

"I've been hurt quite a bit, but it hasn't been anything real serious," he said.

While blocking for kickoff returns in his freshman year he caught his hand on a facemask and broke his wrist causing him to miss three games.

That spring Whitwell was blocking again and broke his hand on a helmet which kept him out of spring practice.

His most serious injury occurred during the 1979 football season but kept him out of only two games. The injury came during an open week in practice as he was catching a pass. He went up to catch the ball and was hit low by a defensive back.

"By the time my feet got above me

and my head was going back toward the ground I was relaxed and waiting to hit the ground. A guy that I didn't see came in and stuck me right underneath my arm. It broke a couple of ribs and punctured my lung. I was out two games for that. They got a flak jacket for me though, and I got to play against TCU and Texas," he said.

Aggie receiver coach Dick Rader described Whitwell this year as: "Playing the best of all of the receivers we have at the time. He's made some big catches for us. He's almost a seven-foot high jumper (he won the state high jump title in high school with a jump of 6-8) and is probably the most consistent receiver that we have."

"He's worked real hard over the summer getting ready for the season and so far has been able to stay healthy. We look to him for some big plays this year," Rader said.

When he is not playing and not in school Whitwell spends some time at home on his 5,000-acre ranch.

"I was born and raised on a ranch and I love to hunt. I'm a hunter. I'm at home when I'm on the ranch. By myself, or in my truck, or working cows or just hunting. That's how I feel most comfortable."

"When I leave here I miss back home and work on the ranch. I don't know if I can't see myself working everyday. I don't know if I like people that much or I just like people that much."

"I haven't ever thought of doing anything else except back. I enjoy the outdoors to do anything else. But, I'm comfortable when I'm playing too. The fans and all that don't bother me there. I like the game because I like the game."

WE SUPPORT **CELL 5 BLOCK 5**

TAMU-MSC-TOWNHALL-BOB HOPE

BUT IF YOU'RE NOT GOING — CAN'T GET TICKETS — CAN'T AFFORD THE PRICE — OR WOULD JUST RATHER PARTY

WE'RE DOING OUR THING

FOR ONLY \$3⁰⁰ GUYS AND \$2⁰⁰ GALS

FREE DRAFT BEER

ALL NIGHT LONG

PLUS ALL THE OTHER GOOD THINGS THAT ALWAYS HAPPEN AT CELL BLOCK 5

TONIGHT 8 TILL MIDNIGHT



779-7642

Beat Penn State!

AGGIE BEER BUST

25¢ BEER

6 P.M. to Midnight FRIDAY before Yell Practice

DANVER'S RESTAURANT

693-6119 201 Dominik College Station



ALL YOU CAN EAT BUFFET

before the game 11 a.m.-2 p.m.
All the PIZZA, CHICKEN & SALAD YOU CAN EAT.

for only \$2⁹⁹

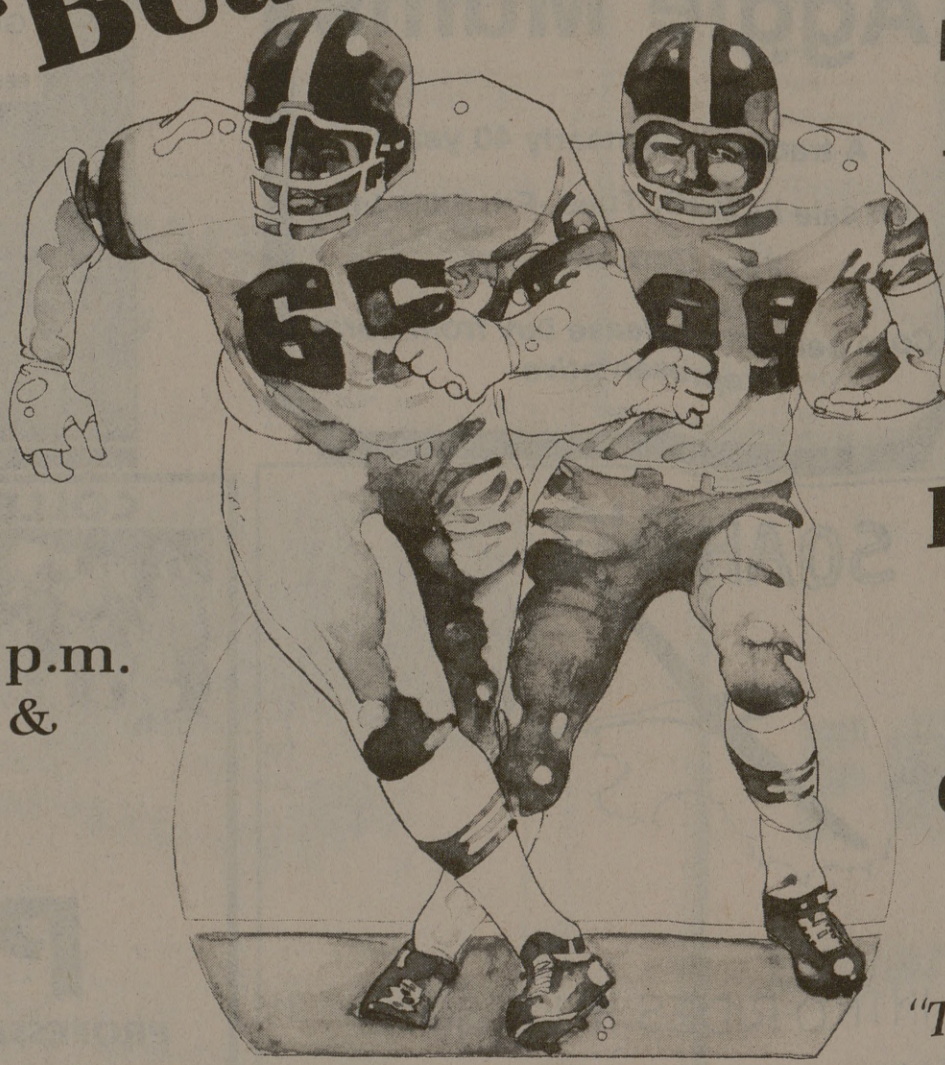
OPEN LATE

FRIDAY AFTER YELL PRACTICE.

807 Texas Ave.

696-3380

"Beat The hell Out Of Tech" Weekend



BEER PITCHERS

after the game from 6-10 p.m.

ONLY \$1²⁵

"There's No Pizza like a Pasta's Pizza! We guarantee it!"