

Ags to play late

HOUSTON — University of Houston athletic department officials Tuesday listed their hesitance to ruffle the feathers of reserved ticket buyers and their desire to maintain a home field advantage as the reasons the Cougars' football game with Texas A&M may have to be played early Sunday morning.

Astrodome officials also said they feared the worst traffic jam in the stadium's 15-year history as fans leave a sold out National League championship series baseball game Saturday afternoon and collide with arriving football fans.

"We suggest that the football fans stay closely tuned to the baseball game and not start for the Astrodome until 90 minutes before kickoff," Astrodome executive Jimmy Fore said.

He predicted that a five-hour period needed to transform the Astrodome playing surface and stands from a baseball configuration to football would be cut to less than four hours by increased manpower.

The kickoff time will be set whenever the Houston Astros and Philadelphia Phillies complete their Saturday game, which has a 3:20 start.

Houston Athletic Director Cedric Dempsey said the football game would be played even if an extra-inning baseball game pushes his kickoff to Sunday morning.

Dempsey said "we gave some thought" to A&M's preferences to have the game moved to Rice Stadium or to Dec. 6. Those weren't accepted because "the Astrodome is our field and... we really felt mechanically it was impossible to do", he said.

Such moves would require an "equitable ticket distribution" before he would approve them.

The school revamped its priority seating in the Astrodome be-

fore this season and levied a \$100 surcharge on most yard-line season tickets, irritating many long-time fans.

An NCAA record of sorts — whereby two days are needed to play one game — is possible because priorities of negotiators trying to work out a solution last week failed to mesh.

ABC-TV okayed a move of the baseball game to an earlier time Saturday, but Baseball Commissioner Bowie Kuhn refused, Dempsey said.

A&M Athletic Director Marvin Tate insisted on playing at Rice Stadium or on Dec. 6, and Sports Information Director Spec Gammon Tuesday joked, "We're changing our workouts this week to 10:30 every night to get traumatized."

A&M refused a move of the game to Friday night, saying it would inconvenience its fans.

Houston's refusal to play the football game anywhere other than the 50,000-seat Astrodome is consistent with Coach Bill Yeoman's previous actions. Requests the past four years by Texas and Texas A&M to move their games to 70,000-seat Rice Stadium were nixed by Yeoman.

The SWC members made the Cougars play their first round of home games at 70,000 Rice Stadium in 1976 and 1977 as a condition of joining the SWC.

Yeoman said Tuesday a late kickoff presented unusual problems.

"We kicked off one time at 10 o'clock at Arizona, so the late night game is no news to us. What we do with the kids until 10 o'clock is the question," he said.

The football game is expected to be sold out, but according to Eric Langford, Texas A&M student vice-president of student services, about a thousand tickets were unsold by Wednesday afternoon.

Ag-Coog game facts

Here are some facts about this weekend's game against the Houston Cougars in the Houston Astrodome:

KICKOFF — Not determined. Depends on the NL baseball playoffs. Could start as scheduled, at 7:30, if baseball ends in three games. If baseball is in fourth game and starts about 3 p.m., the football game could start anywhere from 8:30 to 11:30 p.m.

SERIES — This will be the 19th meeting. Houston has won eight. A&M has won seven and there have been three ties. Last year when Houston won, 17-14, in College Station, it was the first time for one team to win two straight in this series.

1980 RECORDS — Texas A&M (2-2): A&M 23, Ole Miss 20; Georgia 42, A&M 0; Penn State 25, A&M 9; A&M 41, Texas Tech 21.

Houston (1-3): Arizona State 39, UH 13; Miami (Fla.) 14, UH 7; UH 24, North Texas 20; Baylor 24, UH 12.

LAST WEEK — Aggies beat Tech, 41-21, in College Station. Houston lost a 24-12 decision to Baylor in Waco.

NEXT WEEK — Aggies host Baylor in 2 p.m. kickoff at Kyle Field. Houston plays SMU in Dallas with 1:30 kickoff.

LAST YEAR — Houston staged a miraculous three-play, 59-yard drive in the final minute to claim a 17-14 win. The Cougars had a 10-lead early in the second quarter when A&M scored twice during a two and a half minute span for a 14-10 half-time lead. It stayed that way until Houston got its winning tally with 15 seconds left in the game.

COACHES — A&M's Tom Wil-

son took over the Aggie reins midway through the 1978 season. He was 4-2 for the remainder of that season, 6-5 last year and now is 2-2 in 1980 for an overall record of 12-9. Bill Yeoman is in his 19th season at Houston and has an overall record of 126-68-2.

MUTUAL RADIO — Bill Mercer and Steve Fallon will handle mike duties on a 17-station network across Texas. Abilene (KEAN-FM), Amarillo (KACV-FM), Austin (KOKE-FM), Beaumont-Port Arthur (KOLE), Bryan-College Station (KTAM), Corpus Christi (KSIX), Dallas (KRLD), El Paso (XEJP), Houston (KENR), Longview-Marshall (KOCA), Lubbock (KLLL-FM), McAllen-Brownsville (KURV), Midland-Odessa (KBAT-FM), San Angelo (KWLW-FM), San Antonio

(WOAI), Tyler (KOOI-FM), Waco (KWTX-FM).

OTHER SWC GAMES — Besides A&M-Houston, SWC schedules have Texas playing Oklahoma in Dallas at 12 noon (TV), Rice at TCU, 7 p.m.; SMU at Baylor, 7:30 p.m.; Wichita State vs. Arkansas in Little Rock, 7:30. Texas Tech has an open date.

LAST WEEK IN THE SWC — A&M beat Tech, 41-21, in College Station; Baylor beat Houston 24-12 in Waco; Texas defeated Rice, 41-28, in Houston; Arkansas beat TCU, 44-7 in Fayetteville; SMU beat Tulane, 31-21 in New Orleans.

In SWC play, Texas and Baylor now are 2-0, A&M and SMU are both 1-0, Arkansas is 1-1, Rice and Houston are both 0-1 and Tech and TCU both are 0-2.

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Netters to play in San Antonio today

The Texas A&M tennis team travels to San Antonio today to begin the fall tournament season in earnest. The McFarland Open Tennis Tournament is the first tournament of the season that will have all of the Southwest Conference teams, top-rated teams from around the nation as well as pros from the San Antonio area in competition.

The Ags men's team will consist of Reid Freeman, Trey Schutz, Max King, Brain Joelson, Jim Grubert, Ron Kowal, Tom Judson, Robert Stapper and Genearo Fernandez. The men begin play today.

The women who will play this tournament are Pam Hill, Terri Nuetze, Maylen Hooten, Liliana Fernandez, Amy Closs, Mary Hise,

Sonja Hutcherson and Ferol Hinkle.

"Pam Hill has really been playing fine tennis," said David Kent, A&M tennis coach. "She is the top player right now."

The tournament will have all the SWC schools in competition. SMU, TCU, the University of Houston, the University of Texas and Arkansas are the top rated conference schools along with A&M. Trinity University of San Antonio will be there. Trinity is consistently one of the top teams in the nation.

Kent said many pros in the San Antonio area will compete. "It will be a tough tournament with lots of good competition," he said. "We need it and are looking forward to the tournament."

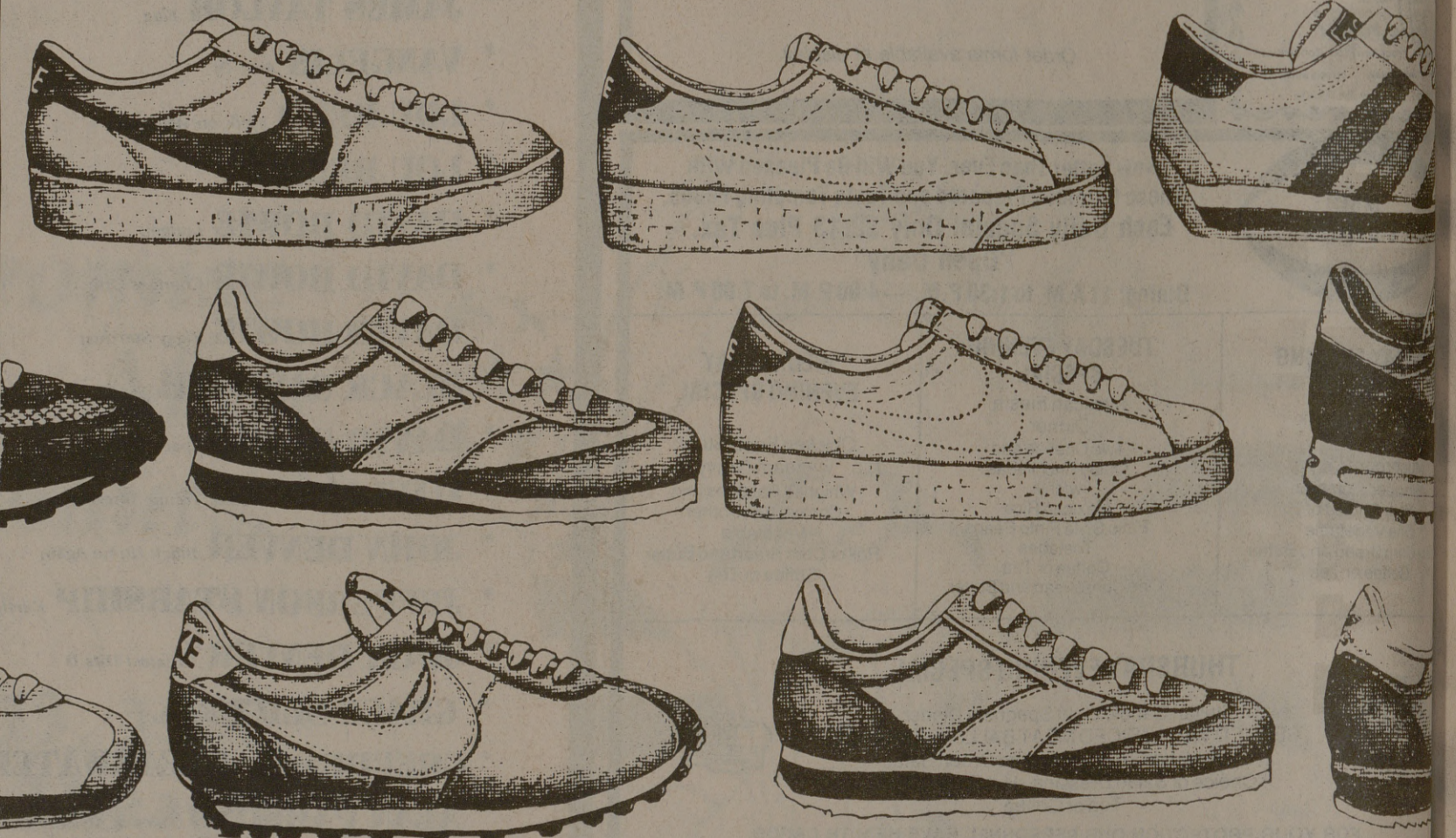
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