

Bears driving for the Cotton

United Press International
It's finally time to admit that somebody must be trying to tell somebody else something.

In other words, if this isn't the year for the Baylor Bears, they may never have another one.

There have been plenty of clues already, what with Baylor coming back from a 21-point deficit to beat SMU and ending its jinx against the Houston Cougars. But last Saturday may have been the clincher.

At 4:03 p.m. on a glorious afternoon the Bears heard that their chief nemesis had been upset and promptly shook out of their lethargy to finally overcome TCU — a team that had moved the ball up and down the field all day.

"It's good to win when things aren't going your way," said Baylor coach Grant Teaff. "I was pleased with our ability to come back in the second half and play well."

And even though Baylor's 21-6 win over TCU was not all that over-

whelming, it puts the Bears in enviable position when it comes to the chase for the Southwest Conference championship and the accompanying trip to the Cotton Bowl New Year's Day.

The Bears had never won seven games in a row to start the season until this year and they will be heavily favored to win No. 8 next Saturday in an intersectional meeting with San Jose State.

After that, Baylor has Arkansas at home, the suddenly tough Rice Owls on the road and, finally, Texas at home.

The rest of the conference clubs will be battling each other next week in what has turned into an interesting scramble — Arkansas and Texas A&M trying to figure out what's wrong and the Rice Owls and SMU Mustangs exalting in excellent seasons.

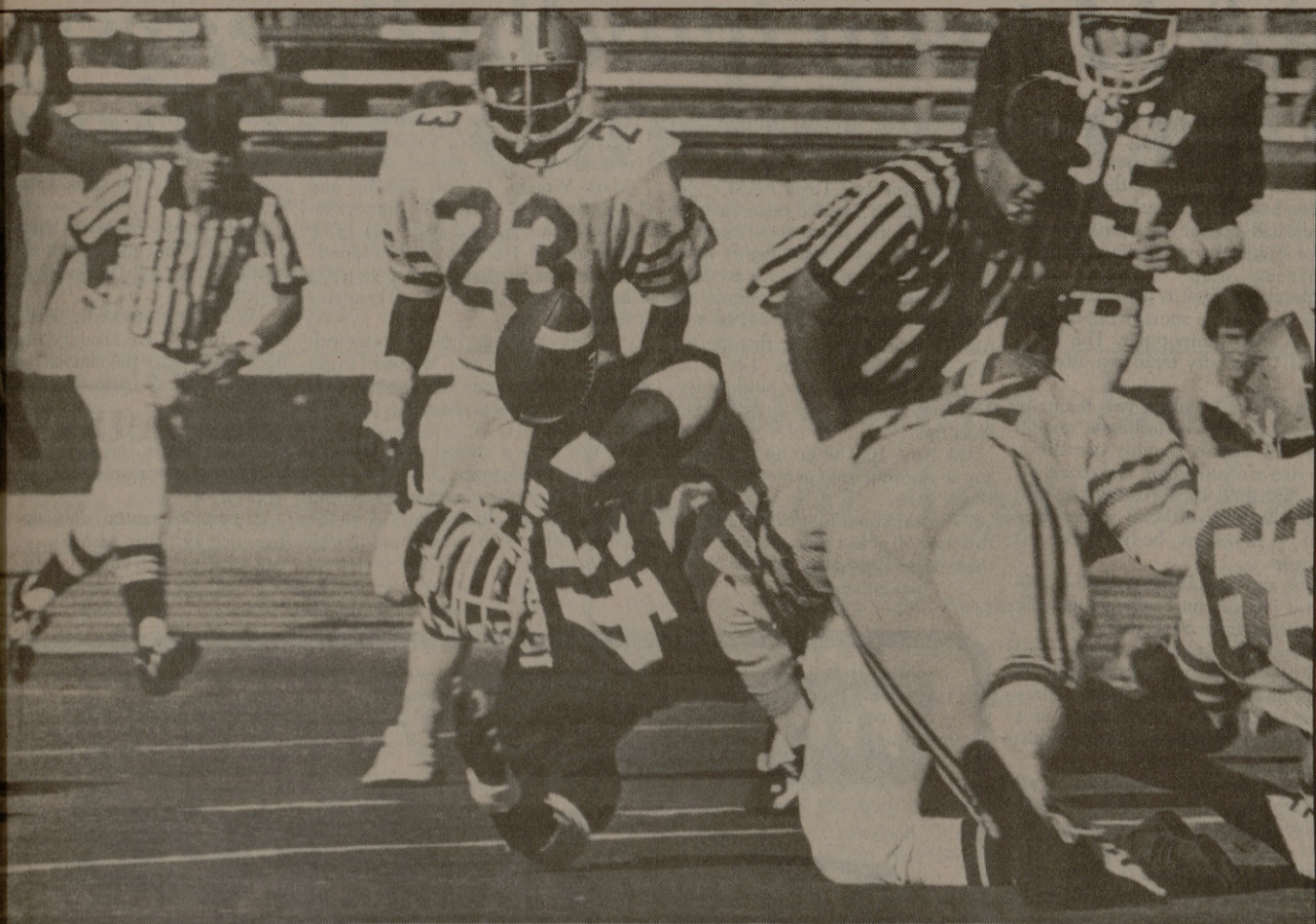
Arkansas, coming off a disappointing 24-17 loss to Houston that all but knocked the Razorbacks out of the

title picture, must host the Owls in Little Rock Saturday night.

SMU will be at home against Texas A&M, a team the Owls whipped last Saturday, 10-6. The Mustangs now can be considered a top candidate for a decent bowl bid since they — spurred by their giant win over Texas — can look ahead to a possible 9-2 record. The Aggies, meanwhile, must try to salvage something from a disastrous season and beating SMU would be a nice start.

Texas must try to come back from its loss by taking on Texas Tech in Lubbock. Tech has played only one game since Oct. 4 so if a team should ever be rested it would be the Red Raiders.

And Houston, which has shaken off a poor start to win three in a row and stay in the fight for a third consecutive conference championship, hosts the winless TCU Horned Frogs — a team that has come close to winning week after week.



Staff photo by Pat O'Malley

Another one bites the dust

Texas A&M running back Thomas Sanders fumbles the football on the Rice three-yard line early in the fourth quarter of last Saturday's game. The Aggies fell to 2-5 on the year as the

surprising Owls won the contest, 10-6. Texas A&M travels to Dallas Saturday to take on the SMU Mustangs in a game that will be televised regionally by ABC at 2:50 p.m.

Aggies, Mustangs on TV

Wilson is still optimistic

By KURT ALLEN
Battalion Staff

The Texas Aggie football team may have been mentally down after its first loss to Rice since 1973, but just when things looked their worst, the players got a little boost courtesy of the ABC television network.

That boost came Monday when ABC notified Texas A&M officials their game Saturday with SMU would indeed be regionally televised despite the Aggies' difficulties this season.

The kickoff for Saturday's contest in Dallas at Texas Stadium will thus be at 2:50 p.m. Asked Monday what he and the players thought about the game being televised, Aggie Head Coach Tom Wilson said aside from the extra money the telecast brings the athletic department, the main thing he hopes is that it will help fire up the players.

"We've played SMU on television the last three or four years now and done well each time," said Wilson. "I think it should be exciting for our players and maybe it will be an additional motivating factor for them."

Motivation at this point does not seem to be as big a problem as whether the Aggies can overcome the Mustangs' sheer power. SMU has put on awesome performances this year in beating Texas 20-6 and losing to Baylor 32-28.

Meanwhile, the Aggies have had their problems putting points on the scoreboard. They're being outscored 26-14 on the average in 1980 and have had four games (versus Georgia, Penn State, Baylor and Rice) where they failed to score 10 points or better. Wilson knows the team is in for a tough time with the Ponies.

"I'm very impressed with SMU," said Wilson. "They completely dominated their game with Texas defensively. At times, they look like a pro team as far as size. We've let him in front of even a freshman quarterback and it makes it very difficult."

Yes, it will be a matchup between an old, experienced squad and a very young one. As Wilson pointed out, some Mustang starters have been playing together for four years, which means they started as freshmen three years ago. There's no way the Aggies can match that kind of experience and cohesiveness.

"When you look at the lineups, they've got 12 seniors in their starting squads compared to only two for us," added Wilson. "They're just a very fine football team. How they managed to lose to Houston, I don't know."

The Aggies do have some pluses on their side. Sophomore tailback Johnny Hector had probably his best day against Rice with 123 yards and Texas A&M's lone touchdown. He was voted the outstanding offensive player by the Aggie coaches, while tackle Mack Moore was the outstanding defensive player with 17 tackles.

Wilson will be looking for a similar effort against SMU and is counting on sophomore starting quarterback Gary Kubiak to continue improving. He said Kubiak was an important part of the Aggies' second half comeback against Rice when they piled up 231 yards and 15 first downs.

However, despite that effort, and the fact Rice had absolutely no first downs in the second half, all the Aggs could score was six points. That's because of two missed field goals, a fumble on the three-yard line, an intercepted pass and a blocked punt.

It's those mistakes Wilson is trying to get rid of during practice this week. They're also the same execution problems which have dogged Texas A&M all year. However, Wilson is optimistic.

"These young people believe in themselves," explained Wilson. "They know they're good. I've got utmost confidence they'll make it."

As for injuries, Wilson said Earnest Jackson (ankle injury) should be back along with Leandrew Brown, Mike Little and Darrel Adams which should help bring some experience back to the Aggies.

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