

Photo by Brian Tate

Texas A&M University swimmer Steve Weaver "glides" through the backstroke in Saturday's swim meet with SMU, one of the top collegiate swim teams in the country. A&M lost

the meet despite giving SMU some of the toughest competition they have faced in years. The swim team returns to action Dec. 5 in Lubbock for the SWC Invitational meet.

## Aggie swimmers come close, give SMU scare in dual meet

By JON HEIDTKE  
Battalion Staff

It all came down to .11 of second. That was the margin of victory for the SMU men in Saturday's dual meet between Texas A&M.

Trailing by a score of 56-50, the Aggies went into the final event, the 400-yard freestyle relay, needing a win to get all seven points and to cap one of the biggest upsets in the school history.

Only once in the last 23 years, had SMU lost a dual meet and that occurred last year against Texas. True, the Ponies were without the services of all-America Steve Lundquist, but still all-America Hunter Richmond and freshman sensation Chris Weissmay were on hand to anchor SMU's fortunes.

Last year, the Ponies won every event from the Aggies and before the meet coach Mel Nash said "if we win one event that is an improvement, anything after that is icing on the cake."

And Nash almost came away with one of the most heavily frosted cakes of his life, but the Ponies used a margin of a little more than one-tenth of a second to ease away some of the glaze, but not the happiness.

But SMU's 400 freestyle relay team proved a little too much for the emotionally high Aggies by squeaking out a 3:08.456 to A&M's 3:08.561 and take the meet win by a score of 63-50.

Before the last race, Nash said he thought the absolute fastest his men could swim the relay was in 3:10.5, so he was ecstatic with the team's performance.

"The whole team performed at an outstanding level," the second-year coach said, "we had to have that kind of effort to stay close."

In the final relay, Kevin Londrigan staked the Ags to an early lead. The next swimmer, Kord Reid, took a slight lead in his 100-yard effort, but Richmond showed why he is an all-America by catching and passing Reid.

Craig Buchmann was the third Aggie swimmer and it was almost dead even starting the final 100 yards. Rick Ranzau took a slim lead into the final turn, but SMU's Weissmay had an exceptional turn and pulled into the lead. Ranzau closed the gap but ran out water as Weissmay touched first in a photo-finish.

For the meet, A&M turned in a

long list of superlatives, but Nash said the diving team, Pat Roche, Mike Hoche, Rick Walker and the crowd headed the list.

The diving team was led by the Mason twins, Kirk and John (each took seconds in events the Ponies were supposed to sweep). Roche turned in a lifetime best in winning the 200 individual medley.

Nash said Walker helped fire up the team by clipping seven seconds off his 500 freestyle time in competing as a red-shirt, and Nash also had praise for the crowd.

"They (crowd) really got us pumped," he said, "they took us to a

higher plain of competition. We couldn't have swam the way we did without them."

Almost overlooked in the day's excitement was a strong showing by the women's team, even though they lost 74-37. Shelley Carbone captured the only individual first for the Ags in the 200 backstroke.

Friday afternoon the Aggies split with TCU. The men rolled to a 67-45 victory over the Frogs, while the women lost a heartbreaking 70-66 decision.

The Aggies resume action Dec. 5 and 6 in the SWC Invitational in Lubbock.

## Oilers alone in first place

United Press International  
CHICAGO — The ingredients had to be just right for the play to work. Fortunately for Houston, coach Bum Phillips' recipe for a trick play turned out to be the key to move the Oilers into first place.

The Oilers capitalized on a fake field goal attempt with two seconds left in the first half to score the game's only touchdown in their 10-6 victory over the Chicago Bears Sunday.

After the touchdown, Houston's defense and running back Earl Campbell, who rushed for a career high 206 yards in 31 carries, did the rest to preserve the Oilers' eighth win in 11 games.

The triumph lifted Houston to sole possession of first place in the AFC Central, one game ahead of Cleveland and Pittsburgh. The Browns fell out of a tie after losing 16-13 to the Steelers.

Reserve quarterback Gifford Nielsen, who doubles as the field goal holder for Toni Fritsch, took the snap from center on the fake and "shoveled" the ball to Tim Wilson, who ran around right end for the touchdown to give Houston a 7-6 lead. Fritsch added a 29-yard field goal in the third quarter for the Oilers.

"It's a good play," Phillips said. "It's the first time I've used it this year and the last time was two years ago against New England. The de-

fense had to be just right for a block. They didn't think we would fake it."

Nielsen said the play worked because the Bears overloaded one side for a block attempt.

"It was a great call by Bum," he said. "It has to be called when the defense is trying to block it. Had they lined up straight, we would have run out the clock, took a 5-yard penalty and it would not have made a difference to Toni."

Wilson said Houston practices the play three to four times a week.

"I have to make sure I get the ball," he said. "I bumped into somebody. That's the one thing that can stop it. If you get penetration, you could mess it up."

Chicago coach Neil Armstrong, whose team remained last in the AFC Central with a 4-7 record and saw its playoff hopes all but ended, credited Houston for good execution on the play.

"We weren't lined up totally for a fake, however," Armstrong explained. "I thought we were safe."

Campbell, the NFL's leading rusher, clearly outdistanced Chicago's Walter Payton, who was held to 60 yards by the tough Oiler defense. Campbell, whose best previous day was 203 yards against Tampa Bay earlier this season, got 91 of those yards on Houston's final drive of the game after Chicago had gambled on fourth down at the Oiler 17 and came away empty.

"We just didn't have enough," Armstrong said. "We had only two series, six plays in the third quarter."

"Campbell's a great runner, especially on those draws. But I did an excellent job of blocking him throughout most of the game," Stabler said.

"The way we were running offense, it was hard to tell who was coming," said Campbell, who now has 1,300 yards with 11 touchdowns remaining.

Quarterback Ken Stabler has a good day statistically, the ball control offense was purposeful.

"We got big runs out of the type of back that can run a game. Sooner or later, he'll be one," Stabler said.

Despite Campbell and play, Chicago had its chance. Vince Evans pass was intercepted the end zone and twice failed on fourth down situations in Houston territory.

"We proved we could run the ball running and passing," Evans, who went 12 of 22 yards. "We did a good job of a great team."

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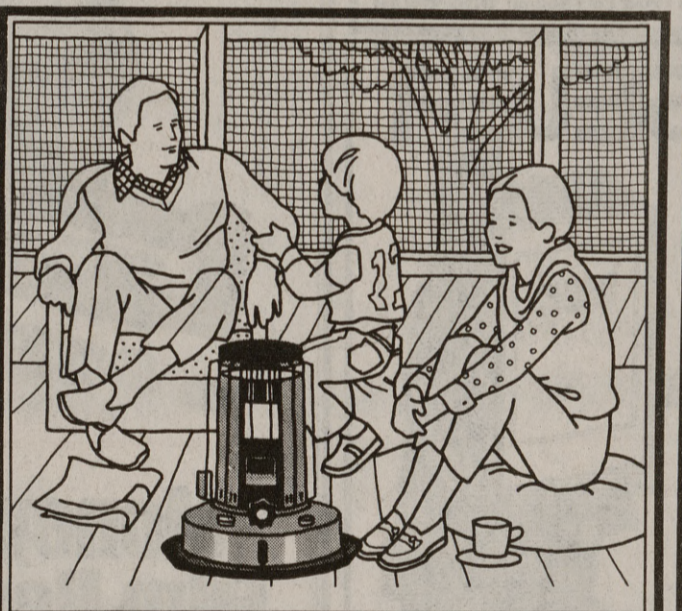
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