

Sports

Defense comes alive in second half comeback

Aggies open up with exciting win over Bears

By RITCHIE PRIDDY
Sports Editor

The Texas Aggies could well be a team to be reckoned with in 1981. Saturday afternoon in Berkeley, Cal. the Aggies stood up for themselves and played to their potential in one of the most difficult situations they will encounter this year.

After having almost every opportunity to blow the game in the first half the Aggies roared back the second half and shut down the powerful run and shoot offense of the California Golden Bears and pulled out the game by

a slim 29-28 margin.

The Bears, who unveiled their highly-touted run and shoot offense, almost took the game away from the Aggies early on as they jumped out to what seemed an almost unsurmountable lead in the first half. But, reminiscent of last year's Arkansas game, in which the Aggies lost 27-24 in the last few seconds of the ballgame, the Aggies came roaring back in the second half and held the Bears to 88 yards total offense and only five first downs in the second half. Most of those yards came in their final drive of the game.

The difference in the second half was the ability of the offense to control the ball. The Aggs had the ball a total of 13 minutes and nine seconds the third quarter and 10 minutes and three seconds the fourth.

It was a different story in the first half as the Bears opened the game with a 74-yard scoring drive that culminated with a 30 yard scoring strike from quarterback Gale Gilbert to wide receiver Floyd Eddings. Cornerback Greg Williams was defending on the play but never really had a chance for the ball as Eddings streaked passed him for the td. Eddings caught three touchdown passes on the day to tie a California record. He finished with three catches for 103 yards. The big play of the drive was the Bears surprise fourth down pass from the punt formation, good enough for 20 yards and a first down.

The Bears held the Aggies on downs and after a 37-yard punt by Buzzy Sawyer took over again on their own 23. This time the defense came alive as defensive ends Paul Pender and Jon van Sant batted down two successive passes. On fourth and four safety Jeff Ful-

ler broke through the line and blocked Mike Ahr's punt and returned it 15 yards to the Bear 23-yard line. It appeared the Aggies would tie the game but their drive stalled on the Bear 13-yard line and placekicker David Hardy booted his first of three field goals from 29 yards out to make the score 7-3.

The Bears got back on the board again to up their lead to 11 when second team quarterback J. Torchio replaced the injured Gilbert and dove in from the two.

The Aggies didn't give up, though, and on their next possession drove to the California 24-yard line before the drive stalled by running back Thomas Sander's fumble. On the next play, however, Fuller jumped in front of a Torchio pass intended for Orinn Ford and returned it to the Bears 31-yard line. Five plays later Kubiak lofted a high pass to flanker Don Jones for the touchdown to make it 14-9. Hardy's extra point was blocked by defensive tackle Reggie Camp.

The Golden Bears weren't through with their aerial show as they quickly drove 80 yards in seven plays to make the score 21-

9. This time Eddings again burned Williams for a 11-yard td catch.

The Aggies were forced to punt on their next series but Marriet Ford mis-handled Sawyer's punt and Kermit Foster jumped on the ball for the Aggies at the Cal 45.

Five plays later the Aggies were on the board, this time Sanders went out following a 27 yard scamper by Jackson.

The Bears scored for the final time with 1:19 left in the half on a 67-yard scoring strike from Torchio to Eddings, who cut between safety Billy Cannon and Williams.

Using Sanders and Hector, quarterback Gary Kubiak took the Aggies from their own 39-yard line to the Cal 11 with 17 seconds remaining in the half but under-threw split end Mike Whitwell and Richard Rodgers intercepted in the end zone to kill the threat.

Trailing 28-16 going into the locker room at the half, the Aggies had their work cut out for them if they were going to make a comeback.

The Aggies moved the ball well against the Cal defense, finishing the half with over 200 yards total offense (167 rushing, 43 passing). California, using the run and shoot quite effectively, accounted for 337 yards, 288 through the air.

The second half was a complete turnaround for the Aggies as they ran up 274 yards in total offense to

just 88 for the Bears. The Aggies finished with 443 yards to 393 for the Bears.

Running backs Earnest Jackson and Johnny Hector accounted for most of the offense for Texas A&M in the first half. Jackson ran for 120 yards on 15 carries through the middle of the California line, carrying several would-be tacklers along the way. Hector ran nine times for 53 yards but came alive in the second half. Both backs left the game several times with minor injuries but still managed to finish with 125 yards, respectively.

The Aggies seemed nervous throughout the first half and mistakes proved costly on more than one occasion. The secondary had its share of troubles containing the Bear's four quick receivers and still be able to react to the run.

Upon the second offensive series of the second half, though, one sensed immediately that it was going to be a different ball game. The Aggies, behind the cool leadership of Kubiak, drove 88 yards in 10 plays to pull within five points of the Bears. Sanders and freshman running back Ronald Watkins played most of the second half due to minor injuries to Hector and Jackson.

It was the Aggies the rest of the way as the defense completely dominated the Bear's offense. The offense was free to do almost anything it could against the Bear's

defense but mistakes and one-sided David Hardy field goal kept them to only 13 points the half.

Hardy connected on a 36-yard field goal to bring the score to 26 with 3:02 left in the third quarter, but missed his next attempt when he kicked holder Whitwell's hand. On the next session the Aggies drove to California 10-yard line in their defense stiffened, forcing Aggs to settle for another field goal. The 30-yard field goal by Hardy, his third, gave the Aggs the lead for the first time in the game.

Halftime adjustments will to win accounted for Aggies strong showing the second half according to coach Tom Wilson. Wilson was quick to get team the credit for the fought victory.

"Our defense didn't give us a big play the second half like the first half. We made minor adjustments at half but the main thing was we executed better the second half."

"We made some mistakes which you'll make in the first game, and we can't be satisfied with that. But, the thing I'm most pleased with was the football team had the confidence. There was never a time, that they thought they weren't going to win this game."

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Alabama, Georgia prove they have what it takes

United Press International

Alabama and Georgia showed Saturday that they do, indeed, belong ranked among the best college football teams in the country. Miami of Florida, using some unexpected mettle, showed that maybe it belongs up there, too.

Ken Coley and Ken Simon triggered a first-half ground explosion that carried No. 3 Alabama to a 24-7 victory over Louisiana State and No. 8 Georgia got 161 yards rushing from All-America Herschel Walker to crush Tennessee 44-0.

But unranked Miami, using a late field goal by Danny Miller, earned some respect by defeating No. 16 Florida 21-20.

Miller's winning kick, a 55-yarder with 40 seconds remaining, was his second of the game and capped a furious comeback by the Hurricanes, who began the second half trailing 14-3.

Backup quarterback Mark Richt zipped a 55-yard touchdown pass

to speedy receiver Rocky Belk to bring the Hurricanes to within two points, and after the Hurricanes' final drive stalled on the Florida 38, Miller kicked his wind-aided winner.

Meanwhile, Alabama overcame two early mistakes to run up a 17-point halftime lead and then turned things over to its defense in shutting out LSU until only 13 seconds remained in the game.

Alabama beat LSU for the 11th consecutive season and brought Paul "Bear" Bryant his 307th career victory. Bryant, beginning his 37th year as a head coach, needs only eight more victories to surpass the record of 314 held by the late Amos Alonzo Stagg.

Coley, a junior and one of three quarterbacks used by Bryant, directed the Tide's wishbone attack to 270 ground yards in the first half.

The 44-0 drubbing Georgia handed Tennessee was the worst loss ever for the Vols in the Southeastern Conference and tied a 51-7 defeat at the hands of Vanderbilt in 1923.

Quarterback Buck Belue, who completed 10 of 15 passes for 140 yards, hit Lindsay Scott with the first of two touchdown tosses from 15 yards out late in the second

quarter. Then, after freshman Kevin Butler's 36-yard field goal to start the third period, teamed with Scott again for yard scoring toss.

In other games involving top 20, No. 9 Pittsburgh trounced Illinois 26-6, No. 13 Florida beat Louisville 17-0, No. 15 Mississippi State topped Memphis 20-3, No. 19 Brigham Young whipped Long Beach State and No. 20 Baylor was upset by Lamar 18-17.

At Pittsburgh, junior Dan no shook off a bad first half for 204 yards and two touchdowns and lead the Panthers to a 20-0 over Illinois. Marino, had completed 14-of-33 passes with three interceptions, hit Dwight Co with a 19-yard TD pass and connected with Julius Dawkins 23-yard scoring toss.


At Tallahassee, Fla., rookie back Billy Allen scored on a 10-yard touchdown run and Stockstill hit wide receiver Hester with an 11-yard scoring pass to lead Florida State. Rendina added a 24-yard field goal as Florida State had to against a strong Cardinal defense which held the Seminoles scoreless for the middle two quarters.

At Jackson, Miss., sophomore quarterback John Bond directed two touchdown drives and Moore kicked a pair of field goals to guide 15th-ranked Mississippi State to victory. The team spoiled the debut of Tigers coach Rex Dockery.

At Houston, sophomore quarterback Audrey McMillan's touchdown runs carried the 10th-ranked Cougars. McMillan's short dives came after the favored Cougars marched on nearly identical drives of 70 and 75 yards in the first half. The Tide kept close to the Cougars through the scrambling and passing of Robin Gabriel, son of former great Roman Gabriel.

At Waco, Texas, Mike Mark kicked a 42-yard field with 10 seconds left to give Lamar the set over the defending Southeastern Conference champions. Marino game-winning kick upstaged the 41-yard field goal by freshman Marty Jimmerson that had given the Bears a 17-15 lead with 1:19 left in the game.

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