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**SMU's Bliss looking for answers**

by John Wagner

**Battalion Staff**  
SMU basketball coach Dave Bliss looked disappointed. His Mustangs had just been defeated by Texas A&M 67-58 for their eleventh SWC loss, and he looked like a father whose son had just flunked out. Not mad, not sad, and certainly not surprised. He just looked disappointed.

Bliss stood outside the SMU dressing room after the game and answered the same old

questions, the ones he hears after every game. Yes, he thought the Mustangs played well. Yes, he thinks his team is improving steadily. And yes, he is proud of his young team for hanging in there. His words were optimistic, but his face told the entire story.

Bliss' Mustangs lost a game they were never really out of, and yet were never really in. The Ponies were able to get the ball inside, but when they did, they missed the shots. They were able

to keep the Aggies from getting the ball inside, but Reggie Roberts and Milton Woodley killed them from the outside. Try as they might, the Mustangs just couldn't win, and Bliss is wearing the strain of losing in the SWC everywhere he goes.

"Losing gets to me," Bliss said, "But I think the reward will be that much greater because of it."

Pretty optimistic for the coach of a team that's 6-16. The Mustang head coach had nothing but praise for the Aggies and junior forward Claude Riley, but he also had some good words to say about his own players.

"I'm pleased we didn't quit tonight," Bliss said. "Young players don't get disappointed

as quickly as upperclassmen." Bliss said the Mustangs' inability to make necessary defensive adjustments hurt them.

"We're kind of a young team, and some of these guys haven't even played 20 games together," Bliss said. "We're just not able to make that extra adjustment."

Although SMU held Riley to 7 points, Bliss couldn't say enough about the Crockett Rocket.

"When God invented the word 'stud' he was talking about Claude Riley," Bliss said, adding that Riley was the best defensive big man in the SWC.

Bliss also praised Mustang guard Dave Piehler for playing a smart game. When Piehler fouled out with 3:08 left in the game, he didn't look dis-

appointed — just tired. The junior from Newton, Kan., played a leadership role for SMU, bringing the ball up against the Aggies' press and scoring 12 points. After fouling Lynn Naualls for his fifth personal, he walked to the bench, ripped the tape from his wrists and hung his head in a towel.

"I should have avoided the stupid fouls," Piehler said. "I'm not sure what I was doing on the field, but I think I shot pretty well."

He was six of seven with the rebounds. Not a bad night, but that's not all. With his first basket, Piehler became the 100th player in SMU history to score 1,000 career points.



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**A&M obtains signatures  
of 27 football recruits**

by Frank L. Christlieb

**Sports Editor**

After watching Texas A&M sign 27 high school football recruits during the NCAA's first official signing date, Head Coach Jackie Sherrill says he's pleased with the results.

"I thought our recruiting went very well, especially considering the short time we had for it," Sherrill said Wednesday. "Our assistant coaches worked very hard, did an excellent job and lived up to their recruiting reputations."

"I was very pleased and certainly pleased for the assistant coaches, because they were on the road the whole time. I think it comes back to one factor and that's the credibility and reputation of the coaches — they have certainly (upheld) those. I'm looking forward to sitting down and organizing and working out the details."

Receiver coach Jerry Pettibone said the credited recruiting coordinator Dan LaGrasta for his role in the process.

"I think that Dan LaGrasta

added continuity to the recruiting effort — he did an excellent job of keeping things going during the transition period ... and did a good job of letting us know who the top players were and who we should try to get," Pettibone said.

Included in the list of Aggie recruits are two quarterbacks, two running backs, four wide receivers, six offensive linemen, one kicker, three defensive ends, one defensive tackle, three linebackers, two cornerbacks and three safeties.

Texas A&M has also enrolled defensive back Billy Brown, a transfer from San Francisco City College. Brown is 5-8, 180 pounds from Lindale.

Here is a list of the 27 recruits who signed national letters of intent Wednesday, with 40-yard dash times listed in parentheses:

- ✓Kevin Murray, QB, North Dallas — 6-1, 180 (4.6)
- ✓Lance Haverda, QB, Marble Falls — 6-2, 185 (4.6)
- ✓Jimmy Hawkins, RB, San Antonio Holmes, blue chip — 5-11, 195 (4.6)

✓Sonny Harmon, RB, Rockwall — 6-foot, 190 (4.6)

✓Jeff Bolton, WR, Stone Mountain, Ga., blue chip — 6-2, 170 (4.4)

✓Jeff Nelson, WR, Beaumont, blue chip — 5-10, 170 (4.4)

✓Shea Walker, WR, Permian, Permian, blue chip — 6-foot, 170 (4.7)

✓Tony Slaton, WR, Decatur, Ga., Columbia High School — 6-foot, 180 (4.5)

✓Mark Graham, OL, Richardson Lake Highlands — 6-4, 240 (5.2)

✓Randy Dausin, OL, San Antonio Roosevelt — 6-4, 220 (5.0)

✓Duncan Webb, OL, Nacogdoches — 6-4, 225 (4.9)

✓Randy Wylie, OL, Richardson Lake Highlands — 6-3, 220 (5.1)

✓Steve Shiller, OL, Arlington — 6-2, 220 (5.0)

✓Steve Evans, OL, Beeville — 6-3, 255 (5.1)

See A&M page 19

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