

Texas A&M

The Battalion Sports

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Spec Gammon's retirement sparks reflections

by Gaye Denley
Battalion Staff

For someone who really wanted to be a coach, Spec Gammon may have made the right decision in turning to his second home, journalism and public relations.

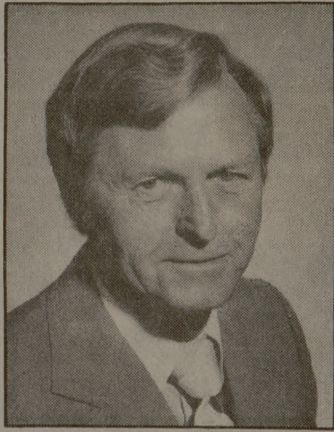
After all, the retiring sports information director has been with the Aggie athletic staff for 9 years. Few Texas A&M coaches have been so lucky.

And Harold L. Gammon has no regrets.

"I've seen too many coaches get ulcers," he said. "Their whole career depends on 19- and 20-year-old people and how they perform."

By contrast, Gammon's job depends on those coaches, since his office acts as the liaison between the media and the Texas A&M Athletic Department.

But after nearly 20 years of



Spec Gammon

writing press releases and handling the local and national media, the Oklahoma native, who announced his impending

retirement last fall, is ready for something new.

"I enjoyed my work," Gammon said. "I guess I have about a 15-year attention span in my life, because I was a sportswriter for about 15 years, and I got tired of it, and I made the change into sports information."

"I'd say up until about four years ago, I really enjoyed getting every morning and going to work, but for the last four years I've just been waiting to reach a time when I could retire."

Gammon, who will be replaced in July by current TCU Sports Information Director Ralph Carpenter, hopes to find some diversion — perhaps for the next 15 years or so — in private commission sales work.

Meanwhile, Texas A&M athletic officials can only be grateful that a particular college coach was just too busy.

"I wanted to be a basketball coach — that's what I played in high school and junior college," Gammon said. "Oklahoma State had a great basketball coach

named Hank Iba, one of the all-time greats.

"And at that time, the coaches taught classes in the health and P.E. department. He taught the theory of basketball, and he limited his classes to 20 people. I tried to get in — I was working on my masters degree — but it was full for three semesters."

So Gammon, by then recovered from a World War II injury sustained in the Battle of

the Bulge, left behind his basketball aspirations and charged ahead with his journalism degree. After a long stint as sports editor for the Odessa American, he came to Texas A&M in 1963.

Gammon said one of the biggest turning points he's seen in Texas A&M athletics was really a side effect of a major University policy shift.

"The biggest change — really a change for the better — was in

1969 when they allowed women to enter full-time," he said. "Prior to that, it was very difficult for A&M coaches to recruit athletes. So many boys just refused to go to school where there's no girls."

Such a problem seems distant in light of the Aggies' most recent recruiting crisis — the temporary confusion surrounding the January appointment of Jackie Sherrill to the dual post of

head football coach and athletic director.

Gammon says the national attention focused on Texas A&M as a result has died down.

"I think as it came out we got more plus publicity," he said. "I think our name went out across the country more, and people recognize Texas A&M now — maybe in a bad sense in one way — as a very affluent university, a university with a lot of money."

A&M hosts Tech in do-or-die series

Tom Chandler says he can only keep his fingers crossed about this weekend's make-or-break series between the Texas Aggies and the Texas Tech Red Raiders in Olsen Field.

The Aggies can't afford to lose any of their six remaining Southwest Conference games if they hope to make the four-team league tourney scheduled for Olsen Field May 14-17. The Raiders, in fourth place with a 7-5 conference record, are three

games ahead of the Aggies. Texas A&M holds down sixth place with a 5-9-1 record.

Texas Tech has a 19-14 overall record and Texas A&M has a 27-15-1 record.

"It's now or never for us," Chandler said. "We came off a good road trip and won one at Arkansas and one at Oklahoma. We've just got to go out and get with it."

SWC officials voted Thursday

to move the tournament to Arkansas if the Aggies don't qualify. However, if Texas A&M finishes in the top four, the tourney will still be held in Olsen Field.

The Texas Longhorns, who have a 7-2 league record, are in first place, followed by Arkansas with an 11-4 mark. Houston's 7-3 record ranks third, and Baylor's 6-6 puts the Bears two games ahead of the Aggies.

Rick Luecken will be the start-

ing pitcher for the Aggies in Friday night's game, which begins at 7:30. David Carroll will be Texas Tech's probable starter, and Bobby Taylor and David Flores will be the Aggies' pitchers in Saturday's 1 p.m. double-header.

Corps Commander Kelly Castleberry will throw out the ceremonial first pitch in Friday night's game, and a large representation of the Corps of Cadets will attend the game.

THE CHALLENGE

Sat. April 17th

SCAVENGER HUNT 82

* KEG PRIZES *

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TWO HEAVY HITTERS TOUCH BASES ON BATS, BALLS, AND BEER.

BOOG POWELL (Former American Baseball Great): Koichi here has been giving me a new angle on baseball. It seems the game's a little different in Japan.

KOICHI NUMAZAWA (Former Japanese Baseball Great): そう、例えばフィールドが小さめですね。

BOOG: That's right. The field is

smaller over there.

KOICHI: つまり、ショートで小さめな日本人の体格に合わせたんですよ。

BOOG: Well, now that you mentioned it, I guess you guys are kinda smaller. Does that mean you drink Lite Beer 'cause it's less filling?

KOICHI: いやー、おいしいから飲むんですよ。

BOOG: Tastes great? That's why I drink it, too! I guess we have a lot more in common than I thought.

KOICHI: その通り! どうです、日本の野球チームに入りませんか。

BOOG: Me? I'm too big to play on a Japanese team.

KOICHI: そんなことないですよ、ショートに最適ですよ。

BOOG: Shortstop?! Very funny.



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PERSONALS

HAPPY BIRTHDAY SUNDAY, KIM W.
To the best roommate and friend. Love ya, Jeanna B. 13511