

# The Battalion Sports

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## Family reunion

### Alumni set for clash on Kyle Field Saturday

by Frank L. Christlieb  
Sports Editor

When Jackie Sherrill walked through the front door of Cain Hall Thursday afternoon at 3, his lips immediately broke into an Aggie smile. While a mass of humanity milled about the front hall of the athletic dormitory, Sherrill didn't waste a minute searching for familiar faces with whom to reminisce about old times and prior meetings.

"George, you finally lost some weight," Sherrill said as he shook hands with former Texas A&M fullback George Woodard. "Last time I saw you, you looked like a house." Woodard didn't have much of a reply, but the Aggie football coach's joke certainly made the former Texas A&M star laugh himself as he turned toward the cafeteria to join fellow alumni for lunch.

Woodard, along with about 70 other coaches, honorary coaches, players, honorary players, trainers and yell leaders will participate in the first annual Texas A&M alumni game, scheduled for 6 p.m. Saturday in Kyle Field. Several of them arrived Thursday to take part in three days of receptions, practices, visitation and what they came to Texas A&M to have — a reunion.

After lunch, another reunited group of Aggies made it known that they were proud to be a part of what Sherrill hopes will be a tradition here for several years to come. Although several of the alumni hadn't arrived in town, those who had gathered in a Cain Hall meeting room for a welcome from Sherrill.

And the first-year Texas A&M coach couldn't help looking

a bit lost in front of the athletes, who already looked like they were having the time of their lives. Finally, a quick whistle from Sherrill brought silence to the bunch.

"I always know the ones who played for Coach (Paul "Bear") Bryant, because they were here five minutes early," Sherrill said in greeting his audience.

One player's response to the statement brought more than a

**"There's no reason this group (of alumni) can't be the strongest group there is." — Texas A&M Head Coach Jackie Sherrill, addressing a group of alumni who will participate in Saturday's alumni game in Kyle Field.**

dull roar from the other alumni athletes.

"Are any alive?" After the group had regained its composure, Sherrill continued in a more serious manner. He told the players that although they had been away from the University for five, 10 and even 20 years, they were still part of the traditions and the people who make up Texas A&M.

And he said that the Aggies' alumni game Saturday may be the spark to bring former Texas A&M students closer. With he and his assistants shooting at Notre Dame's record spring game attendance of 30,000,

Sherrill expressed confidence that the Texas A&M contest could set a standard for other schools.

"There's no reason this group can't be the strongest group there is," he said.

Thursday afternoon at 3, the alumni athletes gathered to work out on the Aggies' practice facility adjacent to Kyle Field.

But who was in the mood to practice? The players were having too good a time talking, joking and needling one another to get serious about a practice.

After one quick jog across the field and back, the voice of former Texas A&M running back Larry Stegent, who played here between 1967 and 1969, rose above a chorus of complaints about long-distance running.

"I'm going to give my scholarship up," Stegent moaned. "I don't want it anymore."

The offense went through about six or seven plays, featuring David Beal, Edd Hargett and Charlie Milstead at quarterback, and then the defense players lined up for a few snaps.

The two units had barely run five plays when a shout was heard from a distraught alumnus.

"Break time!" Someone must have heard him, because 10 minutes later, the alumni trooped off the field and into the locker room.

It might seem that these players need all the practice they can get, but from the looks of things, most of the alumni can still find their way around a football field. And from their point of view,

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staff photo by Peter Rocha

Garth Ten Napel, former Texas A&M linebacker, discusses Saturday's alumni game after a workout held Thursday afternoon on the Aggies' practice field. Ten Napel, one of 170 alumni who have returned for the game, will be an honorary coach in the game, which begins at 6 p.m. in Kyle Field.

by John P. Lopez  
Battalion Reporter

After only one practice session, several members of the Texas A&M alumni team feel confident about the upcoming spring game with the Aggie varsity.

Tony Franklin, now a kicker for the Philadelphia Eagles of the National Football League, said the alumni shouldn't be thought of as pushovers.

"I think we'll surprise some people and do all right," he said. "There are probably two or three good licks left in everyone out there. We're going to take it pretty serious and go out there with every intention of winning."

George Woodard and Bubba Bean, former Aggie running backs, agreed with Franklin, saying they're taking the game seriously and have been working out in preparation for the game. "I'm not going out there to get embarrassed," Bean said. "Losing has never been one of my strong points."

Woodard said, however, that the alumni don't really know what to expect in the game.

"Once we get a feeling of this first game we'll know a little more," he said. "Some of the guys on this team haven't even seen a football in 10 years. I think that after they get used to playing again, a little rivalry might even come up between the players and the alumni."

The players said there's more to the game than just playing in it. "I think the game is a great idea," Franklin said. "It's a great move on Coach (Jackie) Sherrill's part. I've seen people that I haven't seen since I graduated. I've missed A&M — it's been a long time since I've walked on Kyle field."

Franklin also said the game helps the Athletic Department by raising money and generating interest among students.

Bean said the game gives the alumni the opportunity to reunite with friends they haven't seen in a long time.

"I haven't seen George (Woodard) in five or six years," he said. "The friendships I had while I was here are kind of hard to let go of. It'll be nice to come here every year and see old friends."

Woodard said: "It feels good to get back and have a little fun. It's something I'm going to look forward to every year."

Bean also said that having former players participate in the spring game also makes the annual affair more interesting.

"When I was playing," he said, "the spring game was just something we wanted to get over with — we wanted spring practice to end. The alumni game makes it something to look forward to for both the players and the alumni."

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