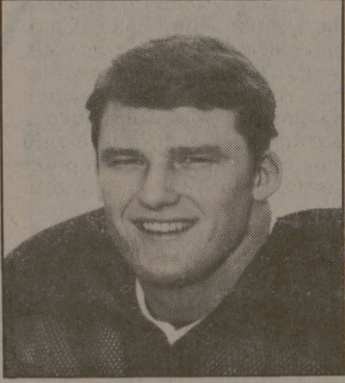


## A&M's Paine confident about new starting role

by Joe Tindel Jr.  
Battalion Staff



**Aggie tight end Jeff Paine starts Saturday against UTA**

Not until the third quarter of the Aggies' opener with Boston College were Jeff Paine's three years of determination and hard work tested seriously.

As junior tight end Mark Lewis lay on the turf, Paine realized the duty of filling some big shoes might befall him. But Paine had no butterflies.

"In a game situation, you just don't think about it," said Paine, the 6-2, 218-pound senior from Richardson. "I think the butterflies come before the game. Once the ball is kicked off, whether you're on the sideline or on the field, you're ready to go."

Such a reaction would seem atypical from a player who started out as a walk-on linebacker his freshman year, fought through many workouts without a number for his name and adapted to an alien position — tight end — before seeing any hope of playing.

Paine is just as calm about the fact that he is now the Aggies' starter at that once-alien position, and that he will indeed have to fill those big shoes left by Lewis, who's out for the season with a knee injury.

But the new starter said he never always believed if he worked hard enough for something he'd end up getting it.

"I guess there's some excitement," he said. "It's just something that I've been working real hard for for a long time."

That long time included most of his college football career — a career that wouldn't normally have a chance to begin. For one thing, Paine wasn't even a starting linebacker until his senior year in high school.

"I was not highly recruited out of high school," Paine said. I had a chance to go to a couple of small schools. I didn't have a lot of experience.

"Most guys that are in college usually started at least two years on their high school team," he said.

Size was another mark against Paine's chances as a ma-

just have to be the way they are as far as your treatment when you come in. You feel a little different.

"Just the fact that you're set apart a little bit I guess has a little mental effect," Paine said. "I think in my case I just tried to use that as a motivator — a positive thing to make me work harder and eventually reach that goal of getting a scholarship."

The next goal for Paine was to play.

It was last spring when Paine experienced his debut at tight end, and to reach his next goal he would have to perform well among tight end candidates John Kellen, T.J. Carmody, J.W. Henderson and Lewis.

By the end of spring, Payne said, he was listed as third string, behind Lewis and Kellen. By fall, with the help of 19 more pounds, Payne became Lewis' back-up.

Now the hard work has paid off for Paine, who will start at tight end Saturday evening against the University of Texas-Arlington in Kyle Field.

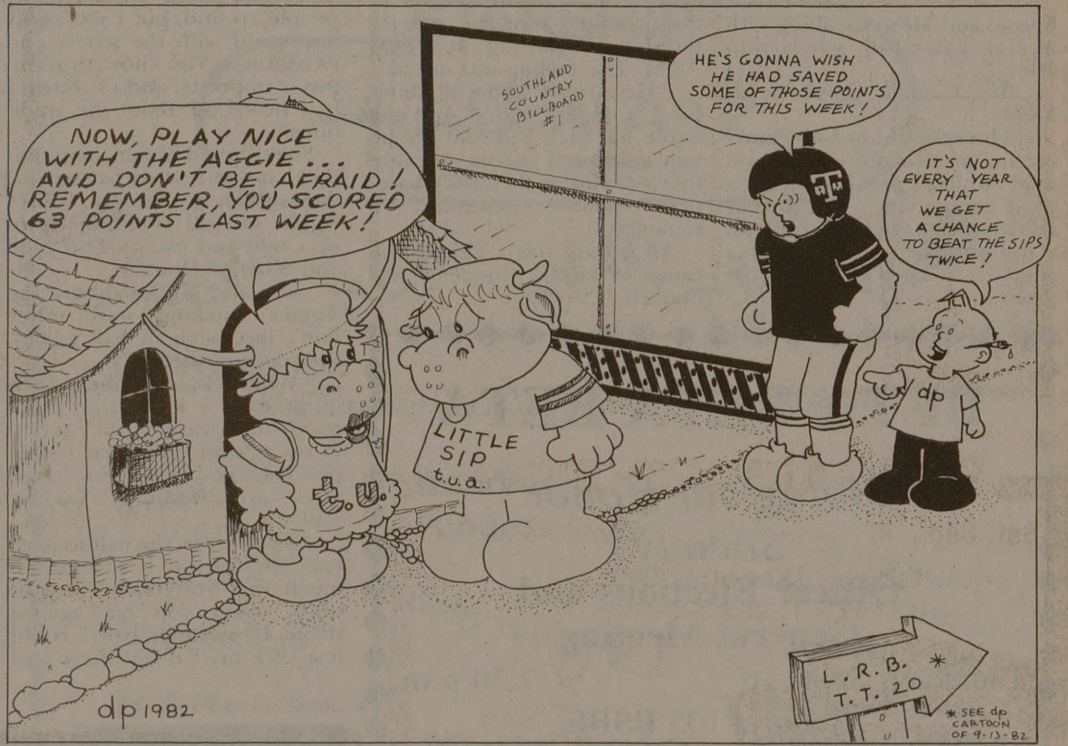
Paine said he was feeling comfortable with the position in the Boston College game, but he'll still need the playing time of the next two non-conference games to work out the rough spots.

But Paine's next "neat feeling" no doubt came his sophomore year when then-Head Coach Tom Wilson put him on full scholarship just prior to the Houston game.

Paine said being a walk-on makes the fight for a spot on the team a much tougher one mentally as well as physically.

"Mentally it's hard," he said. "There are a lot of things that

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## College ball an easy transition for Cooper

by John Wagner  
Battalion Staff

Cindy Cooper is not unlike any other 18-year-old freshman at Texas A&M. She lives in a dorm, enjoys all kinds of sports, most kinds of music, talking to people, and eating her favorite food — pizza.

But Cooper has been doing something special since she was 9 years old — something that sets her apart from most of her classmates.

Cindy Cooper plays softball. Not your average Sunday afternoon-in-the-park softball, but real live big-time college athletics fast pitch softball. And she does it well enough to start, as a freshman, at third base for the 1982 AIAW national champion Texas Aggies.

Cooper, from Bartlesville, Okla., is one of six freshman recruits that Aggie coach Bob Brock signed during the spring. Those six represent a kind of changing of the guard for Aggie softball — newcomers pushed into service, replacing the five seniors from last year's team.

So far, the transition has been smooth. The Aggies are 10-0, and Cooper is holding her own on third base.

"College softball isn't really that much different," Cooper said. "Other than getting into a new program with a different way of doing things. You have to learn how this program works, because you're used to doing things your own way. It's a little frustrating, but it's something you have to do, otherwise,

you're not playing as a team." Cooper began playing softball when she was 9 years old, in a local slow-pitch league. When she was 13, she played her first fast pitch softball on a summer team that was made up of girls ages 16-18.

From there she went on to star at Sooner High School in Bartlesville, playing third base all four years, and winning the Most Valuable Player award three of those years.

The list goes on. Cooper was Washington County Athlete of the Year once and Washington County Softball Player of the Year twice. She received scholarship offers to Oklahoma, Oklahoma State, Creighton,

See COOPER page 12

## Aggie volleyball team triumphs

The Aggie Ladies' volleyball team defeated the University of Texas-Arlington in three games Wednesday night to raise its season record to 6-0.

Texas A&M, ranked No. 15 and No. 17 in the country by two national polls, won by scores of 5-7, 15-6, 15-12 in remaining undefeated for the year.

In other Aggie sports action, the men's soccer club defeated the Sam Houston State Bearkats 1-0 at Krenk Tap Park Wednesday afternoon. Carlos Gutierrez scored two of the Aggies' goals to lead the victory.

Led by Utah State transfer Vrazel, a two-time All-America, the volleyball team utilized all 12 players on the roster during the course of the match. Linda Clausen and freshman Sherri Brinkman also

contributed greatly to the Texas A&M effort.

Coach Terry Condon cited several substitutes, including Cheryl Johnson, Maureen Dunn, Cathy Frederick and walk-on Kim Leach for their performances.

"The team played much better and was more consistent," Condon said. "There weren't as many letdowns, and teamwork and coordination are improving. An area we need to work on more is our blocking."

Condon said the team would spend the rest of the week going through lighter workouts in preparation for Friday's match at Lamar in Beaumont. That matchup will start at 7 p.m.

The Aggie Ladies will participate in the Nebraska Tournament, slated for Oct. 24-25.

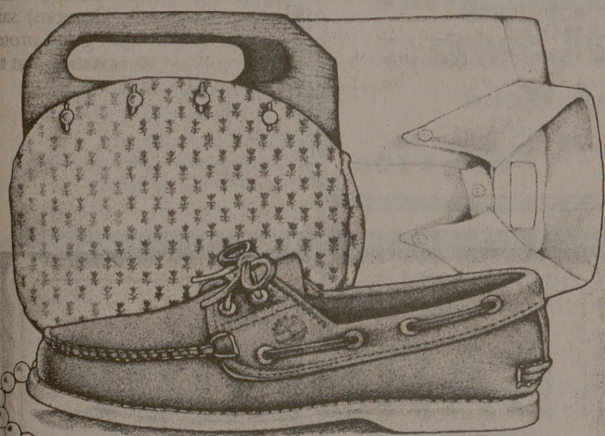
Playing in the tourney will be Nebraska, ranked No. 20 in the nation, No. 7 Cal-Santa Barbara and the No. 17-ranked Aggie Ladies.

Texas A&M will open the tournament against Nebraska Oct. 24 at 2 p.m., with Cal-Santa

Barbara and Southwest Missouri being the team's next two opponents.

In the latest poll of the top 20 teams in the country, USC held down the No. 1 spot while the Hawaii Rainbows were No. 2 in the nation.

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