

photo by C. Michel Chang

## Sanders, Marshall Aggie starters against Bulldogs

by Frank L. Christlieb

**Sports Editor**  
Mike Marshall hasn't had many chances to demonstrate his skills on the football field in college.

Certainly any coach would want Marshall's 4.4 speed in his starting backfield. And a quick glance at his high school achievements would call for a closer look at Marshall's athletic talents.

Playing tailback and linebacker at Porter High in Redbird, Okla., a tiny community about 25 miles southeast of Tulsa, Marshall made all-district, All-America and was named offensive player of the year during his senior season.

But two factors worked against Marshall upon his arrival at Texas A&M.

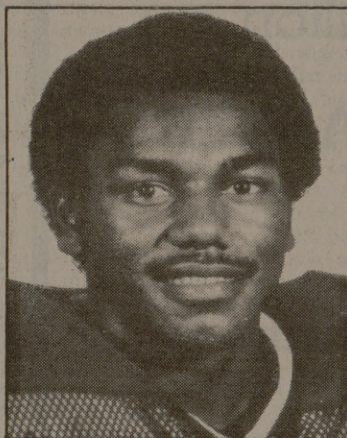
For starters, Marshall may be among the smallest running backs ever to play for the Aggies. At 5-7, 166-pound frame ever caused anyone to doubt his ability, Marshall thinks it's time to do those doubts.

And in his mind, now might be as good a time as any to start showing people what he can do.

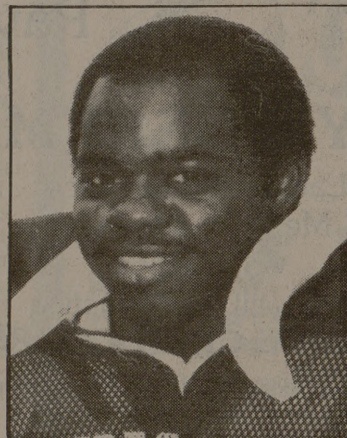
Size hasn't been Marshall's only drawback while playing for the Aggies. It just so happens that playing time in the Texas A&M backfield becomes scarce when fullback Earnest Jackson and tailback Johnny Hector are around. During three of Marshall's years with the Aggies, Jackson and Hector have been starters.

That hasn't left Marshall a great deal of running room.

But injuries to both have thrust Marshall, Thomas Sanders and several other reserve running backs into important roles in the Aggies' game Saturday with 2-0 Louisiana Tech in



Senior Mike Marshall set for starting role Saturday



Thomas Sanders will open at fullback against Bulldogs

Kyle Field. As it stands, when Texas A&M meets the Bulldogs at 6 p.m., Sanders will be the starting fullback and Marshall will be the starter at tailback for Coach Jackie Sherrill.

After spending three years on the Aggie football team without earning a letter, Marshall has finally achieved two goals during the past week. In last weekend's 61-22 victory over UT-Arlington, Marshall scored a touchdown to earn his first letter at Texas A&M, and during this week's team workouts, Marshall proved himself enough to earn a starting spot in the Aggie backfield.

"It's like a dream come true," Marshall said after Thursday's one-hour workout in Kyle Field.

Marshall, an industrial technology major, doesn't let any comments about size affect his play — or his confidence.

"It really inspires me more," he said, "because it's not the size of the player that counts, but what's inside him."

The Aggies, 43-7 winners over the Bulldogs in 1981, enter Saturday's game without the services of tight end Mark Lewis, along with Hector and Jackson. Lewis is out for the season after a knee injury sustained in the first game of the season and Hector has a slightly separated shoulder that should keep him out of action until Oct. 9, when the Aggies play Houston.

Jackson, who suffered detached knee ligaments in the Boston College game, should also return for the Houston game.

Sanders, whose career high came when he gained 72 yards against TCU in 1981, had rushed for 570 yards before the start of the season. The 6-foot, 198-pounder has gained 86 yards on 15 carries through two games.

"We couldn't hold back just because the other backs aren't playing," Sanders said. "We just have to go out and do our best."

Kubiak, who leads the South-

west Conference in total offense at 246 yards a game, said the Aggies enter this game in much the same situation as in their victory over the Movin' Mavs.

"Last week we had to prepare without Lewis and we did a good job against UTA," he said. "This week we've had to go without Johnny and Earnest, so we're kind of in the same situation as last week, with some new people starting."

Kubiak said Louisiana Tech starting quarterback Matt Duni-gan, who passed for 263 yards in the Aggies' victory last season, should try to duplicate that performance.

"He's got a heck of an arm," Kubiak said, "and he's a good little scrambler. They've got a good passing game, and I'm sure they're going to use it."

Kubiak, who has completed 45 of 79 passes for 493 yards, said he's not totally satisfied with his performance thus far.

"I've got a long way to go," he said. "I'm learning a little more each week about Coach Sherrill's system, and I'm trying to be a little more consistent."

Bulldog coach Billy Brewer said his team will be ready for a possible onslaught of passing by Kubiak and the Aggies.

"We feel like they are going to throw it often against us," Brewer said. "They are averaging 40 passes a game so far, and I don't feel like it will be any less against us."

In last year's Aggie victory, Kubiak connected with flanker Don Jones for a Southwest Conference-record 92-yard touchdown pass during the third quarter. Kubiak completed seven of 14 passes for 245 yards in the game.

Place-kicker David Hardy boots one of his four field goals against the UTA Movin' Mavs Saturday in Kyle Field. Hardy, the Aggies' leading scorer, and

his teammates face Louisiana Tech here Saturday at 6 p.m. Texas A&M enters the contest with a 1-1 record, while the Bulldogs are undefeated at 2-0.

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