

Texas A&M

The Battalion Sports

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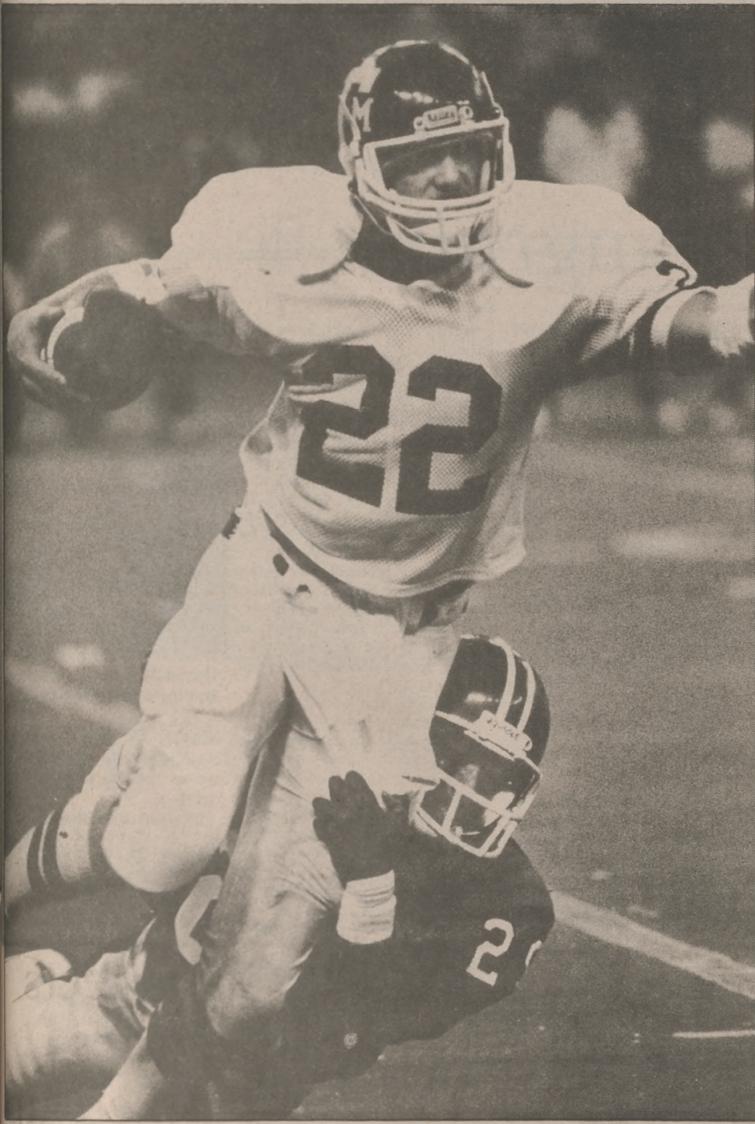


photo by C. Michel Chang

Although he's known mostly for his exploits in the Aggie defensive secondary, Billy Cannon also returns punts for Coach Jackie Sherrill. In this return against Houston, Cannon went 46

yards, but the gain was reduced to 24 yards when the Aggies were called for a clipping penalty. Texas A&M faces Baylor Saturday in Kyle Field at 2 p.m. The Aggies are 2-3 on the season.

Mysterious Baylor, A&M ready to battle Saturday

by Frank L. Christlieb

Sports Editor

From week to week, the Baylor Bears have been a Dr. Jekyll-Mr. Hyde brand of football team.

They've been something akin to a dictionary definition of the word "unpredictable" through their first five games. In fact, the fluctuation in their performance has been downright radical.

Those hard-to-figure Bears will face the mysterious Texas Aggies Saturday in Kyle Field at 2 p.m.

From the evidence presented after the Bears' two victories, two losses and one tie, it's safe to say they can be exceptional during one half of a game, but can turn around and be more than gracious to their opponents during the second half.

And the Aggies, themselves a mystery during their two victories and three defeats, have allowed mistakes and inconsistent defense to leave them tied for last place with TCU in the Southwest Conference. Texas A&M lost to the Houston

Cougars 24-20 last weekend.

The Bears, who could easily be undefeated at this point, are still searching for an antidote to their double-identity blues.

Baylor started its season with a narrow 21-17 victory over North Texas State, using quarterback Mike Brannan's running and passing to score three first-half touchdowns. But when the Bears' offense froze into a block of ice in the second half, North Texas State nearly came away victorious.

It took a Charles Benson-Keith Walters fourth-down sack of NTSU quarterback Rusty Hill at the Baylor 26-yard line to salvage the game for the Bears and Coach Grant Teaff.

Example No. 2: Baylor could have won its second game of the season, but instead, the Bears lost 21-14 to Ohio State in Columbus, Ohio. In front of 88,622 fans, Baylor allowed the Buckeyes to take a 14-0 lead, but came back to tie them late in the third quarter.

After Buckeye quarterback Mike Tomczak scored on a 1-yard run four minutes into the

final quarter, the Bears had a chance to score with 4:34 left in the game. But Brannan threw a pass straight into the hands of OSU linebacker Glen Cobb, and the Bears left Columbus with a 1-1 record.

In a 24-23 triumph over Texas Tech, the Bears had to dodge a last-minute comeback by the Red Raiders. Tech quarterback Jim Hart drove his team downfield 65 yards, topping the drive off with a 14-yard scoring run with 43 seconds left.

With the Bears ahead by a point, Red Raider coach Jerry Moore gambled on a two-point conversion attempt, but Hart's pass was swatted down in the end zone.

And to recap their last two games, the Bears blew an early 21-0 lead over Houston, settling for a 21-21 tie. In last week's game, Baylor surprised everyone by taking a 13-0 lead over the No. 6-ranked SMU Mustangs. But they forgot how to play defense during the third quarter and wound up losing the game 22-19 as Mustang quarterback Lance McIlhenny

threw three touchdown passes.

Baylor is just 13 points away from a 5-0 season and five points from a 3-0 conference record. Instead, the Bears are 2-2-1 overall and 1-1-1 in the SWC.

On the other hand, the Aggies are 38 points away from an undefeated season and 15 points away from a 2-0 conference record.

Teaff says the Bears should have a better record entering Saturday's game with Texas A&M. But he knows Coach Jackie Sherrill and the Aggies have experienced similar problems.

"For us to win against the Aggies, it'll take us not being as up-and-down as we've been," Teaff said Thursday in a long-distance telephone interview. "I think both clubs have experienced some of the same frustrations in losing close games."

Yes, the Aggies have lost close games during the last two weeks to Texas Tech and Houston. And yes, the Aggies have endured the same self-destruction as the Bears, losing a 8-0 half-

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Mangrum fits QB role well

by John P. Lopez

Battalion Staff

David Mangrum is in a sticky situation.

Until two weeks ago, he'd spent his final year at Baylor picking up splinters on the bench as the second-string quarterback behind Mike Brannan. Brannan pulled a hamstring muscle against Houston, however, which paved the way for Mangrum to inherit the starting

role in last week's game with SMU.

Mangrum doesn't want the injury to keep Brannan out of action for long, but Mangrum said he's grown accustomed to being the star of the show and isn't quite ready to exit stage right.

"I feel that as long as I keep improving and leading the team, I have a good chance of impressing the coaches into

thinking that I can be the starter," he said Wednesday in a long-distance interview. "I think I have a pretty good shot at it."

Baylor head coach Grant Teaff also said Mangrum did a good job in relief of Brannan.

"I felt Mangrum did a good job and that he'll be better from having that experience against SMU," Teaff said.

The competition between Mangrum and Brannan for the

starting spot isn't tooth and nail, Mangrum said, but is constructive and should prove to be beneficial for the team.

"There isn't any resentment between Mike and me, but we both want to play," he said. "We don't fight or anything like that, but we're two players who both want to play the same position. We just want what's best for

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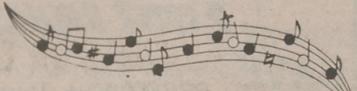
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