

Holtz wary of winless Owls' state of mind this weekend

United Press International
LITTLE ROCK, Ark. — Arkansas coach Lou Holtz said preparations for Saturday's clash with winless Rice were no different than getting ready for any other opponent.

"It hasn't been different than any other week," Holtz said Wednesday. "They're not an 0-7 team on film. On film, they're a pretty good football team and they have a very good kicking game."

Holtz told reporters in a telephone conference call that his undefeated and 5th-ranked Razorbacks consider Rice another important Southwest Conference foe. Last week, Arkansas overwhelmed Houston 38-3 for its third SWC victory.

Rice coach Ray Alborn said Wednesday his team's goal for the season had become a simple one — to win a football game.

The Owls, coming off a 49-7 loss to Texas A&M, travel to Fayetteville Saturday and will attempt an upset. Alborn said future games scheduled were of little concern to him now.

"I'm not looking beyond Arkansas," he said after being asked about Rice taking on the Razorbacks and SMU in consecutive weeks. SMU, which plays A&M Saturday, currently is undefeated and ranked 4th in the nation.

Holtz said his team, too, was not looking beyond Saturday's opponent. He said comparing is useless because "a football team is different one week to the next."

Holtz said that by the time most teams reach November, they either are trying to go somewhere or are trying to keep someone else from going somewhere.

"Their players also know they have something to achieve," Holtz said, suspecting some of the Owls may be thinking, "Let's go up there and do something we can tell our grandchildren about."

Alborn described Arkansas as

the best Razorback team he had faced in his four previous seasons at Rice.

"They can do so many things," Alborn said. "(All-America defensive end) Billy Ray Smith is a great ball player, but they've got a lot of good players to go along with him. Their team speed and mobility are awesome."

Describing Arkansas running back-wide receiver Gary Anderson, Alborn said: "He frightens me just to look at him. I think he may be the best all-purpose back in the league." Anderson this season has gained 120 yards rushing and 208 yards receiving.

Alborn said his Owls would "mix it up" on offense Saturday, combining the run and pass against the Arkansas defense that leads the nation in fewest points allowed per game and allows only about 250 yards each game.

Holtz said Rice is in a transition of becoming more of a rushing team with new starting quarterback Doug Johnson, who replaced Michael Calhoun, the starter in the Owls' first four games.

"Doug Johnson is probably one of the most powerful running quarterbacks we've faced," Holtz said, noting Johnson makes up for a lack of quickness with strong running and passing.

Alborn said: "We're either going to get better or we're going to get worse. We're not going to stay the same. Our football team has got to get better."



Eastland's weekly 'track mets' bring 8-0 record

United Press International
The numbers sound like season totals, but the Eastland Mavericks are far from finished with their 1982 Texas high school football campaign.

Their record through eight undefeated games depicts the track meet they seem to hold every Friday. They are, simply, a storm of offense — thunder and lightning.

The thunder is a Maverick ground game that has rumbled to 2,543 yards this season for an average of 318 yards per game.

The lightning is all-state quarterback Jay Hess who has passed for 1,521 yards — an average of 190 yards per game — and 17 touchdowns, bringing his varsity career total to 43 in three seasons.

The combination has meant a downpour of points and a No. 1 ranking in the United Press International Class 2A high school football poll.

Through eight games, the Mavericks have totaled 378 points for an average of just over 47 per game.

Opponents have scored 26 — an average of just over 3 per game. Eastland has engineered routs of 69-0 and 62-0.

Rodney Hess, head coach and the quarterback's father, guides a sleek scoring machine — and an experienced one.

"We don't have just real speed, but we've got real good football speed," Hess said. "All 11 of our starters look like ends and backs. We don't have any kids that are over 190. We've got real good balance."

"And our backfield and receivers are from last year. They've been playing for three years."

Through those three years, the Mavericks have gone 28-4. Last year they went 11-2 before losing to eventual state champ Pilot Point 24-14 in the quarterfinals.

And through that span, the Mavericks refined an offense which relies on the nurture the run, and on the run to score.

In addition to his 17 scoring passes, Hess has run for 10 touchdowns. Fullback James Thomas Sanders, Morton averages more than nine yards per carry. Sanders more than Hess is pleased with the 60-40 ratio of yardage to passing.

"We think that's just about right," Hess said. "The passing game sets up the run."

And, conversely, the running game opposing defenses honest and vulnerable. Striker from Hess to his talented receiver chief among them flanker Richard Feas has 34 receptions for 667 yards and 10 touchdowns.

The bottom line for Hess is the flexibility comes from potent and balanced rushing and passing attacks. And flexibility will be a key upcoming playoffs, though Hess isn't a strategist.

A man of few words, he says he'll let the team speak for itself.

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