

# SMU's Collins has pride in 'Ron Meyer's players'

IRVING — Some people describe the SMU Mustangs as 'Ron Meyer's team.' But Bobby Collins doesn't.

Meyer, who coached the Mustangs for six years, left his post after the 1981 season to become head coach of the New England Patriots. Collins coached at Southern Mississippi during the 1975-81 seasons, but then left the Golden Eagles and assumed Meyer's position as the Mustangs' coach.

And now, just because Meyer's last SMU team finished 10-1 and Collins has achieved an 8-0 record with many of the same players, comments are flying right and left about this year's bunch of 'Ron Meyer's players.' Collins disregards those remarks. In fact, he flat ignores them.

"I'm here working to make this the best situation I can with the players we have," Collins said in the Texas Stadium press box after Saturday's 47-9 victory over Texas A&M. "When people say, 'You won with Ron Meyer's players,' that doesn't bother me.

"I knew when I came down here that it was a good team. I would almost wager that Jackie Sherrill said he had great players when he got there and before the start of the season."

After a few under-the-breath chuckles from his listeners, Collins concluded his statement.

"I don't know what (Sherrill) thinks now, but I'll just bet he said that. I learned a long time ago that the years I have better football players are the years I'm a better coach."

Collins, during an informal post-game chat with reporters, looked like a relaxed and relieved man. With an entire couch to himself, Collins sat back with legs crossed and hands clasped behind his head.

If there's ever been a perfect picture of calm, cool and collected, Collins illustrated it as he assessed his team's performance against the Aggies and the Mustangs' other seven opponents.

"We have to give our players an awful lot of credit for getting their feet back on the ground and getting ready to play after beating Texas," Collins said. "It seems like at times, we lose something during the course of a ballgame, but just when that happens... they get their feet back on the ground and put it together.

"As much as we would like to be more



frank I. christlieb

consistent for 60 minutes, they still are able to come back and win in the end."

True to the form presented by several other Southwest Conference teams the Mustangs have played, Collins said, the Aggies displayed a slightly different defensive scheme. Certainly he realizes that most teams with any sense are going to make an all-out effort to counteract his two offensive bazookas, Eric Dickerson and Craig James. But Collins still can't figure it out.

"It's hard for me to imagine that teams in our conference come up and change their defenses completely to face any one team," he said. "I've never been associated with it, even as an independent with Southern Mississippi.

"In their alignments up front... (the Aggies) were playing a lot of the time with their strong safety (usually Billy Cannon) up on the line of scrimmage to give them an eight-man front. I think it can, at times, stop the run... but we have just as good a chance of getting touchdowns from our passing game as from our running game. What is that that now, nine touchdowns out of about 35?"

No Coach, that's only nine touchdowns in 38 completions for McIlhenny.

But the Aggie defense, Coach. What was so different about the defense Texas A&M showed you?

"It was a completely different defense than what we're used to," Collins said. "They work from a basic '40' defense (four down linemen), but after we've seen that from them on film, they come up here and we see a split defense.

"And it's difficult to run against, but it opens up other situations. Then when they have to adjust to that, our option plays come

through for us."

But what about your defense, coach? Don't you make weekly adjustments according to what you expect from your opponent?

"We're going to base from the same defensive alignment and the same offense in nearly every game we play," Collins said.

"But I think that we get some easy touchdowns out of it when the other teams play an eight-man front. We have to be satisfied with what they give us, and I think we definitely are.

"We've never felt that we could play very well in a changing defensive scheme, and we never have. It's been our philosophy all along that if we get in trouble, we'll go back to basics."

Obviously, the Mustangs haven't gotten in much trouble this season, since their defense has allowed only 268 yards a game. On top of that, Russell Washington and Co. have allowed opponents to average just 3.7 yards a play, good for No. 2 in the SWC. Against the Aggies, SMU allowed an average of 2.5 yards a play.

And look at the Arkansas Razorbacks, whom Texas A&M must play in about 12 days. After halting the Rice Owls in their tracks for only 86 yards in Saturday's 24-6 victory, Arkansas has allowed only three touchdowns, 35 points, 225 yards a game and 3.5 yards a play to its seven opponents.

Could be trouble, Jackie.

But enough about the defenses, Coach. Here's the question of the day:

You've alternated "Dickerjames" all season. Do you plan to abandon that policy?

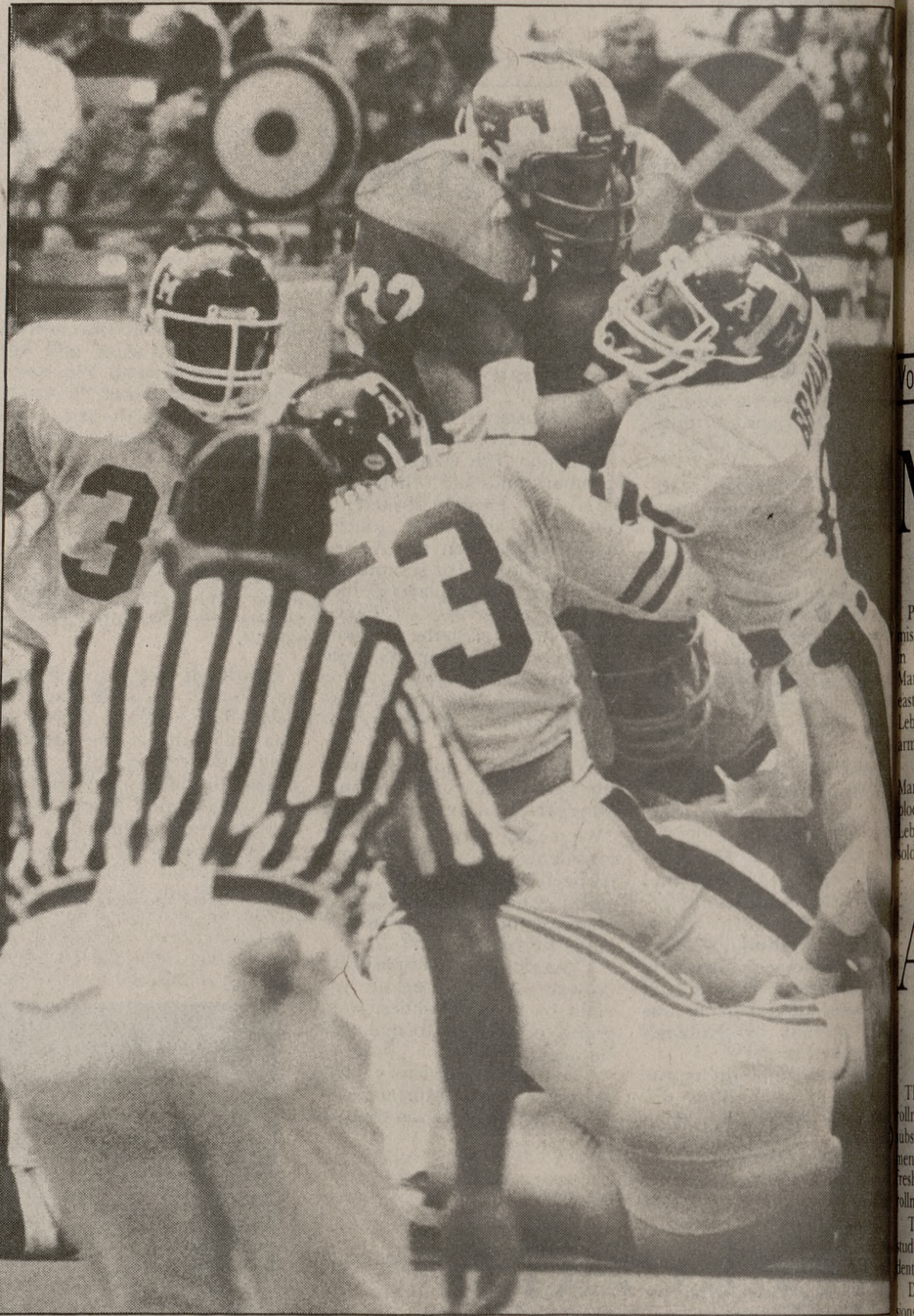
Collins sat up, uncrossed his legs and looked down while scratching his head.

"No," he said. "I think you have to be realistic about that and look at SMU's program, where it's come from and what it is. Basically, it's gotten here by alternating those two—and I really feel that's the way to go. We'll continue to alternate them and keep them fresh, so they can keep making big plays."

With all the talk about the pressure he's under as a result of inheriting a near-intact 10-1 team, Collins just had to throw in a punch line to wrap it all up.

"Maybe the pressure is getting to me," he said with a smile.

Really now, Coach.



staff photo by David Fisher

"Where do you think you're going?" Aggie free safety Domingo Bryant asks as he greets Mustang tailback Craig James at the goalline during Saturday's 47-9 SMU victory in Texas Stadium.

On this particular series, the Aggies kept James and his teammates from scoring on three straight plays from the 1-yard line. Bryant, a freshman, had 11 total tackles during the game.

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NOVEMBER

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<p>OCTOBER 31</p>	<p>1</p> <p>Australian Recreation Day in Northern Tasmania</p>	<p>2</p> <p>General Election Day! Go Vote!</p> <p>Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Every Tuesday is Taco Bell T-Shirt Day - ask us about it! Interview with Tiger Coach Ferguson, 12:30 p.m. at C.S.</p>	<p>3</p> <p>Panama's Independence Day, 1903</p> <p>Every Wednesday is Late Night T-shirt Special, Bryan</p>	<p>4</p> <p>No Bull Peace Prize awarded at Peters University in California</p> <p>Every Thursday is High School Day</p>	<p>5</p> <p>Bryan vs. Ellison, 7:30 p.m., Bryan</p> <p>A&amp;M Consol vs. Katy Taylor (away game)</p> <p>OPEN 'TIL 5 A.M.</p>	<p>6</p> <p>Richard Nixon's last press conference</p> <p>OPEN 'TIL 5 A.M.</p>
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<p>14</p> <p>Birthday of Inventor of the Steamboat, Robert Fulton, 1765</p>	<p>15</p> <p>T-shirt Club cards expire</p> <p>Preregistration for TAMU spring semester starts</p>	<p>16</p> <p>"Father of the Blues", W.C. Handy born, 1873</p>	<p>17</p> <p>Suez Canal Anniversary, 1869</p>	<p>18</p> <p>Great American Smokeout</p>	<p>19</p> <p>Preregistration for TAMU spring semester ends</p> <p>OPEN 'TIL 5 A.M.</p>	<p>20</p> <p>Texas A&amp;M vs. TCU, 2 p.m., Kyle Field</p> <p>OPEN 'TIL 5 A.M.</p>
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<p>28</p> <p>28 days until Christmas! Give tacos!</p>	<p>29</p> <p>Yugoslavia's National Holiday, 1945</p>	<p>30</p> <p>Winston Churchill born (prematurely), 1874</p>	<p>If you have a public service announcement you would like to have listed on Archie's Calendar of Events, please call two weeks in advance of the month you want your message to appear. Contact Ellen at 846-7753.</p>			