

Texas A&M
The Battalion Sports

November 12, 1982 Page 11

Going to War

Sherrill says Aggies to pass against Arkansas

by Frank L. Christlieb
 Sports Editor

Before the start of the season, Lou Holtz didn't know what to think about his Razorback football team. After finishing an 8-4 season with a 31-27 loss to North Carolina in the Gator Bowl during 1981, Holtz returned 16 starters, but had this to say in a preseason kickoff luncheon:

"I wish I was in a good mood about the upcoming season, but I'm not. I think we have an awful lot to prove to ourselves as well as to some other people."

But it's hard to tell whether the straight-faced Holtz was purposely trying to sound unexcited or if he really had doubts about his squad. As his Razorbacks, 7-1 on the season, enter Saturday's 7 p.m. matchup with the Texas Aggies in Little Rock's War Memorial Stadium, Holtz hasn't found much to doubt about his squad.

Throughout the season, Arkansas has led the Southwest Conference in total offense and defense, while the Aggies are fifth in offense and last in defense. But after last weekend's 24-17 loss to Baylor, Holtz said the letdown came at a crucial time during the Hogs' race for a Cotton Bowl berth.

Holtz held stiff workouts for his team all week in preparation for the contest with Coach Jackie Sherrill's Aggies, who are 4-4 for the season. Earlier in the week, the Razorback coach said: "I don't know how the players will respond to the loss. But I know how they had better respond."

On the other side of the coin, Texas A&M has had two weeks to recover from the wounds inflicted by the league-leading, No. 2-ranked SMU Mustangs. But quarterback Gary Kubiak, who's been nursing a chipped ankle bone and a sprained hip

since that 47-9 loss to SMU, is still listed by Sherrill as "very doubtful."

Sherrill said that Kubiak probably would not play and that a decision would be made by today as to whether the quarterback would make the trip to Little Rock.

Razorback running backs Gary Anderson and Jessie Clark returned to practice late this week after sustaining injuries against Baylor, and Holtz said: "Both of them moved better than I thought they would. We should be at full strength Saturday."

Clark had been sidelined with a hip pointer and oral surgery, while Anderson was out for two days with a sprained toe.

The Arkansas coach said he and his staff have been preparing their players with the notion that Kubiak will start Saturday. At a press conference

Wednesday, Holtz said: "Given all the clues, Kubiak will play. If he plays, I would expect them to throw a great deal, and if he doesn't, I expect them to run a lot of options and play-action passes. You really are defending ghosts."

After Thursday's team workout, Holtz said: "If they have time to throw, they'll usually complete it. We'll have to get a good rush without blitzing. If we have to blitz, they can take advantage of it."

Sherrill said the Aggies, with sophomore John Elkins at the controls, will stay with a pass-oriented offensive attack.

"With the defense Arkansas runs, you're going to have to throw the football," Sherrill said. Baylor, which compiled 403 yards and 24 points against a defense that had been giving up 225 yards and 6 points a game to its opponents, wound

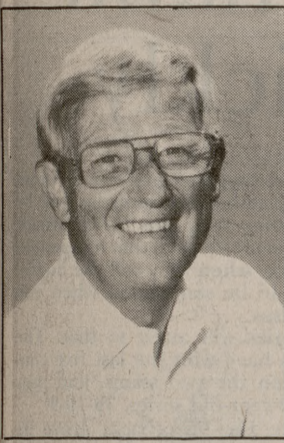
up the game with 239 passing yards from senior Mike Brannan.

The Arkansas defense is led by senior all-America defensive end Billy Ray Smith, who gave the Aggies trouble in last year's 10-7 Arkansas victory in Kyle Field.

On the other hand, Holtz predicted A&M would "run every defense known to man" against Arkansas. He said the Aggies controlled the line of scrimmage during the first half of the loss to SMU, but fell behind because of turnovers.

Holtz said earlier in the week that his players appeared to be in poor spirits after the Baylor loss. But Holtz changed his tune later in the week, saying: "They won't be tight Saturday. They were awfully tight on Tuesday and Wednesday, which is why I

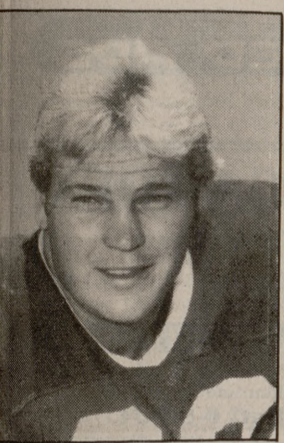
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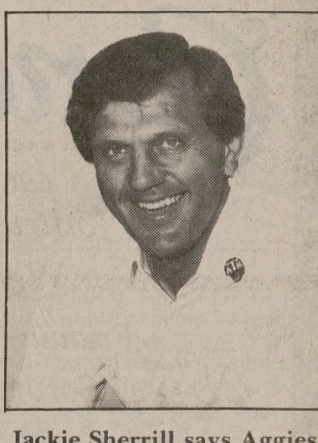
Arkansas' Lou Holtz looks for Gary Kubiak to play



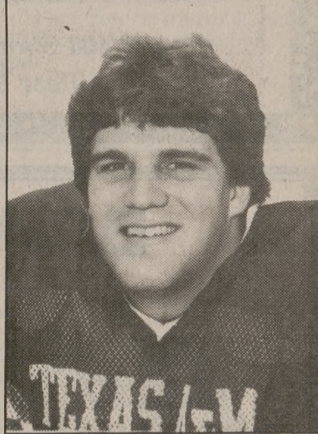
Billy Ray Smith leads Hog defense, No. 1 in league



Ron Faurot is Razorbacks' other anchor on defense



Jackie Sherrill says Aggies will employ passing game



John Elkins ready to start at QB for injured Kubiak



Tom Jones should get nod as Arkansas' starting QB

Faurot an effective 'unknown'

by John P. Lopez
 Battalion Staff

Ever since the first day Billy Ray Smith set foot on the University of Arkansas campus, his name and the Razorback defense have been all but synonymous.

Smith has started every game at defensive end for the Hogs since the first day of his freshman year and has been the most dominating lineman in Arkansas football history.

Consequently, ever since Ron Faurot first set foot on the Arkansas campus a year later, he's been playing in Smith's shadow. But Faurot doesn't let all the hullabaloo over Smith's extraordinary talent bother him.

Faurot just lines up every

Saturday and does his job like the doctor who assists Michael DeBakey — vitally important, but not in the limelight. And more often than not, the job Faurot does on his offensive counterparts is just as good as that of any defensive end in the conference.

Except for Smith, that is. Faurot can't seem to get away from the ominous presence of Smith, not even at home, where Faurot and Smith have been paired as roommates. But Faurot said there isn't any animosity between the two defensive bookends.

"Billy Ray and I are really great friends," he said in a long-distance interview. "He's a really great player and you have to re-

spect him for it. I've learned a lot from him.

"It's kind of funny because whenever someone calls our room, most of the time they want to talk to him, so I kid him about all the publicity he gets. But he takes it real well — none of it has gone to his head."

Faurot added that even though the Hog defense centers around Smith, there are several other players who are responsible for Arkansas' successes on defense this year.

"Going into the season, there were a lot of question marks on defense," he said. "But our linebackers have come through, and our secondary has been playing pretty tough so far, too. There's no doubt that Billy Ray is impor-

tant to us because he's just a great player and an inspiration to everyone, but people have to realize that there are 10 other guys out there, too."

Although Faurot's play might not be as well-chronicled as Smith's, Faurot has had a great year while playing on the weak side of the defensive front.

"Billy Ray usually plays on the tight-end side of the line and that's usually the strong side," Faurot said. "So he's almost always in the middle of the action. I try to contain the run on the other side and get a good rush on the passer."

"I guess I've had a pretty good year so far, but there's always room for improvement. I'd still like to improve my strength

and my pass rush."

Faurot said he hopes his pass rush technique starts getting better Saturday against Texas A&M, but he added that it'll take a great effort to break through the Aggie offensive line.

"A&M has had a pretty tough year," he said, "but they're really a good team. Injuries have hurt them all year, but I'm sure they'll be well-prepared when they take the field Saturday."

"Even with the injuries, I think they've improved over last year, and we barely beat them then. I remember last year I had a tough time with (Aggie tackle Tommy) Robison. He's a big ol' boy and he's real strong."

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