

Texas A&M

# The Battalion Sports

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## Cowboys ambush inept Ags, 34-15

*Sherrill says defense not to blame; Mazur says offense 'played poorly'*

by Scott Griffin  
Battalion Staff

Texas A&M head coach Jackie Sherrill said the Aggie defense was not to blame for Saturday's 34-15 loss to Oklahoma State.

"We did not execute at all on offense," Sherrill said after the game. "I felt we played very well defensively. We got the ball back plenty of times."

"In the first half we had some opportunities that we let slip away," Sherrill said. "The offense just didn't do what was necessary to win."

The offense finished the game with only 49 yards rushing, OSU had 257.

But the key statistic was Aggie quarterback John Mazur's four interceptions.

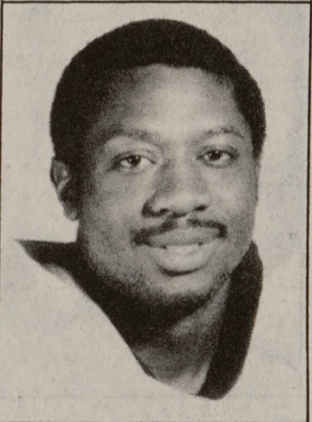
And Mazur echoed Sherrill's feelings. "Our offense played poorly," he said, "and I did a terrible job. The defense put us in a position to blow them away, but the offense just couldn't do it."

"If I'd played good," Mazur said, "we could've won it. There were a lot of times where, if I'd completed more passes, they wouldn't have pressured us so much."

"I just didn't have any zip on the ball today — I don't do that very often."

Ironically, the game started out on a high note for the Aggies. Placekicker Alan Smith, in prime form again this weekend, booted field goals from 45 and 58 yards out on A&M's first two possessions to give the Ags a quick 6-0 lead.

Then, with 2:49 left in the first quarter, Billy Cannon recovered a Jones fumble at the OSU 39-yard line — and it looked like the Aggies had been guaranteed another score.



Cowboy TB Shawn Jones burned Ags for 203 yards

A&M drove to the OSU six, but on second and goal, Mazur threw the ball into the hands of Cowboy defensive back Adam Hinds.

Then came the play of the game.

OSU tailback Shawn Jones, who wound up with 203 yards rushing, galloped through a gaping hole at left tackle and sprinted 80 yards untouched for the first Cowboy touchdown.

Explaining the defensive breakdown on the run, Sherrill said, "They (OSU) switched to an unbalanced line, so we slanted down toward the unbalanced side."

"Then they switched back to a regular line," Sherrill said, "and we didn't check the slant off in time."

The result was a quick six points for the Cowboys, and placekicker Larry Roach converted on the extra point to give OSU a 7-6 lead.

The Aggies kept making mis-

takes — and OSU capitalized on the errors. The Ags forced OSU to punt on their next possession, but returner Billy Cannon fumbled the fair catch attempt and the Cowboys recovered at the A&M 37.

Five plays later, OSU quarterback Rusty Hilger hit split-end Jamie Harris for a 17-yard TD strike.

With 37 second left in the quarter, Mazur threw another interception. Two plays later, Hilger hit Harris again for a 43-yard TD.

"We had a three-man rush, and we dropped eight people," Sherrill said. "When you do that, the safety has to get depth. But we didn't."

OSU continued the onslaught with a 76-yard scoring drive to start the second half — Roach booting a 21-yard field goal.

That drive consumed 8:07 on the clock and forced the Aggies into a hurry-up offensive game plan.

It didn't work. In the second half alone, Mazur was 3-for-12 with two interceptions.

And A&M had abandoned the running game. "When you're behind, it takes you completely out of your game," Sherrill said. "You're just trying to catch up at that point, which is what we had to do."

Meanwhile, OSU rolled to a 27-9 lead. The Ags' three extra points came with 5:46 to play.

By then, however, it was too late.

OSU defensive end James Ham ended the Cowboys' scoring when he intercepted a Mazur pass and broke loose for a 69-yard TD return with 4:30 left on the clock.

A&M's only touchdown came on a 38-yard Kevin Murray pass to Jeff Nelson with 1:05 left in the game.



Cowboy tailback Shawn Jones picks up several of his 203 yards on this sweep around the

end. The Cowboys' offensive attack and defensive strength buried the Aggies, 34-15.

## Stabler's 'rookie' mistake lets Pokes slip away with fourth straight win

United Press International  
IRVING — In a game that scientists must study for months and still not understand, the Dallas Cowboys somehow beat the New Orleans Saints Sunday.

New Orleans forced six turnovers in the second half alone and recovered seven quarterback sacks and still lost because of one bizarre play in which pro football's most experienced quarterback made a rookie mistake.

Dallas linebacker Anthony Dickerson broke through the Saints' offensive line with 1:58 to play in the game and sacked New Orleans quarterback Ken Stabler for a safety which brought the Cowboys a 21-20 victory over the Saints.

"I don't know what happened out there," said Dallas coach Tom Landry. "I don't understand it."

"We just have to thank our defense. They made the big plays when they had to."

"It's nice to have big plays

going for you and we have had them this year. But it's also nice to be able to make consistent, long drives and we haven't done that."

In addition to forcing all the turnovers, New Orleans even succeeded in blocking a Rafael Septien extra point try with 7:05 to play that for a time seemed to be the margin of victory.

The Saints, clinging to their one-point advantage, produced their sixth turnover on an interception by linebacker Dennis Winston at the New Orleans goal line with just over two minutes to play.

But on second down and five to go from his own 10-yard line, Stabler went back to pass. Not only was his decision to throw the ball surprising under the circumstances, so was the Cowboys' decision to have a blitz on the play.

Dickerson, charging in from the right side of the Cowboys' defense, had a clear shot at Stabler and dragged him down two

yards deep in the end zone.

The remarkable Dallas win began with the Cowboys scoring 10 quick points on a 4-yard throw from White to Drew Pearson and a 41-yard field goal by Septien.

New Orleans tied the contest on a 19-yard field goal by Morten Andersen and a 2-yard run by Wayne Wilson before Septien's 34-yard field goal by Septien gave the Cowboys a 13-10 lead.

But as the second half began the Cowboys' began to self-destruct. White was intercepted three times, flanker Drew Pearson was intercepted when he tried to throw on a trick play, Dallas fumbled a punt and also fumbled away a kickoff return.

Through it all New Orleans could score just 10 second-half points on a 2-yard field goal by Andersen and a 1-yard run by Wilson.

Dallas' final touchdown came with 7:05 to play as the Saints were trying to assume a 10-point

advantage. Ed Jones broke through to block an Andersen field goal attempt, Ron Fellows picked it up and ran 62 yards for a score.

But it was after that touchdown that Septien had his string of 88 consecutive extra point conversions come to a halt with Young's block.

White experienced a miserable afternoon, completing 15 of 30 passes for 166 yards with three interceptions. He was sacked for 56 yards and losses and the Cowboys total yards passing netted just 99 yards.

Despite the struggling effort, Dallas improved its spotless to 4-0 while the New Orleans Saints, who with a win would have equalled their best start ever, slipped to 2-2.

Dallas missed an excellent chance to put the game away early and then took advantage of a New Orleans mistake late in the second quarter to escape with the lead at the end of the half.

After scoring the game's first touchdown, the Cowboys held the Saints and Rod Hill's 35-yard punt return put Dallas in business at the New Orleans 27-yard line.

But two quarterback sacks and a delay penalty took the Cowboys out of field goal range.

Moments later Fellows intercepted Stabler's second pass attempt of the day and Dallas had it at the Saints' 17. But all the Cowboys could manage from that possession was a Septien field goal.

After surviving the early going, New Orleans put together two good marches to accumulate 10 points and tie the contest.

But Stabler threw his second interception of the half with three minutes to play, Dexter Clinkscales picking one off at the Saints' 11.

Again, however, New Orleans kept Dallas out of the end zone, allowing only Septien's second field goal.

## Hapless Oilers fall to 0-4 with loss to sack-happy Buffalo

United Press International  
ORCHARD PARK, N.Y. — Joe Cribbs says he has had better days.

Cribbs' statement would be hard to sell to the Houston Oilers, however, after Sunday's performance when he ran for a touchdown and gained 166 yards rushing in the Buffalo Bills' 30-13 victory over the winless Oilers.

"Statistically, it was probably my best game," said Cribbs, whose performance surpassed his previous career-high 159-yard effort against Baltimore in 1981. "But there have been days when I've had better games."

Oilers Coach Ed Biles blamed his defense for Cribbs' offensive output.

"We did not do a good job on Joe Cribbs," Biles said. "Defensively, we have ourselves to blame. We had no reactions and did not key well."

Bills Coach Kay Stephenson, however, thought some of the credit should be given to the Bills' offensive line.

"The running game was excellent," he said. "Joe Cribbs had a tremendous day running. The line really came off and controlled their (Houston's) defensive front three."

The Bills, who also snapped a 10-game losing streak against the Oilers dating back to 1967, were able to overcome an outstanding performance by running back Earl Campbell, who gained 142 yards on 30 carries.

Cribbs, who has signed a contract to play with the Birmingham Stallions of the USFL next season, carried 22 times.

The Bills, 3-1, took a 16-13 lead on a 48-yard field goal by Joe Danelo late in the third quarter and grabbed a 23-13 bulge on quarterback Joe Ferguson's 19-yard scoring pass to wide receiver Frank Lewis at 6:18 of the fourth quarter.

Houston, 0-4 this season and having lost their 11th straight game, took a 3-0 lead at 10:51 of the first quarter on a 31-yard field goal by kicker Florian Kempf. But the Bills came back with just 36 seconds left in the quarter



Oilers' Gifford Nielson sacked 7 times by Bills

when Cribbs dove over from a yard out to give Buffalo a 7-3 advantage.

The Bills took a 13-3 lead when they drove 80 yards in 10 plays, capped by Ferguson's 7-yard touchdown pass to wide receiver Jerry Butler at 12:28 of the second quarter.

Houston, capitalizing on a fumble by Bills' punt returner Robb Riddick at the Buffalo 38, drove to the Buffalo 9, but were forced to settle for a 26-yard field goal by Kempf with 20 seconds left in the half to cut the Bills' lead to 13-6.

The Oilers scored on their first possession of the second half, with Campbell going in from the 1 on a run around left end at 8:29 for a 13-13 tie.

With Houston driving late in the game, quarterback Gifford Nielson fumbled after being hit by Buffalo defensive end Ken Johnson while trying to pass. The loose ball was picked up by rookie defensive back Dave Kilson, who raced 87 yards down the left sideline with 38 seconds left in the game.

Nielson, making his first start after the Oilers traded quarterback Archie Manning and tight end Dave Casper to the Minnesota Vikings last week, completed 19 of 29 passes for 251 yards, but was sacked seven times.

## Three NFL games decided in overtime

United Press International  
The Dallas Cowboys put their knack of pulling out games in the waning minutes to the ultimate test Sunday.

Trailing New Orleans 20-13 midway through the fourth quarter, Ron Fellows scooped up a blocked field goal attempt and returned it 62 yards for a touchdown. The Saints clung to a 20-19 lead by blocking Rafael Septien's extra point attempt, but Dallas won anyway when linebacker Anthony Dickerson sacked New Orleans quarterback Ken Stabler.

The victory allowed Dallas to remain the National Confer-

ence's only unbeaten team at 4-0. New Orleans slipped to 2-2.

Dickerson's safety came after Dallas had committed six turnovers in the second half and Cowboys quarterback Danny White was sacked seven times.

But on 2nd-and-5 from his own 10-yard line, Stabler surprisingly went back to pass. Even more surprisingly, the Cowboys called a blitz on the play.

Dickerson, charging in from the right side of the Cowboys' defense, had a clear shot at Stabler and dragged him down two yards deep in the end zone.

Dallas began the game with 10 quick points on a 4-yard throw from White to Drew Pearson

and a 41-yard field goal by Septien. New Orleans tied the score on a 19-yard field goal by Morten Andersen and a 2-yard run by Wayne Wilson before Septien's 34-yard field goal gave the Cowboys a 13-10 halftime lead.

New Orleans went in front on a 2-yard field goal by Andersen and a 1-yard run by Wilson before Dallas' fourth-quarter charge.

At Minneapolis, Benny Ricardo kicked a 24-yard field goal with 7:22 left to back quarterback Steve Dils' first start and a strong defensive effort by the Vikings.

At Philadelphia, Jim Hart threw a 26-yard touchdown pass to Roy Green with 29 seconds left to lift St. Louis Cardinals to

its first victory. The Cardinals got the ball at their 48 with 2:06 remaining and drove 52 yards in seven plays for the winning touchdown.

At San Francisco, Joe Montana threw three touchdown passes, including one of 1 yard to Earl Cooper midway through the final quarter, and the 49ers' defense came up with eight sacks to drop the Falcons. Steve Bartkowski threw for two touch-

downs and scored on a 3-yard run for Atlanta.

At San Diego, Brian Sipe connected with Harry Holt on a 48-yard touchdown pass 1:33 into overtime to lift the Browns. Cleveland took the kickoff in overtime at its own 37 and won the game when Holt beat the Charger defense, caught the ball at the San Diego 5, and fell over the goalline.

At Orchard Park, N.Y., Joe Cribbs ran for a touchdown and gain