

The Dean

Texas A&M's Tom Chandler still winning after 26 years

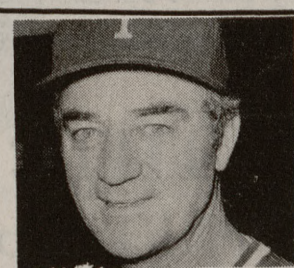
by Kellie Dworaczyk

Battalion Reporter
Tom Chandler is beginning his 26th year as Texas A&M's baseball coach—a long stay for a collegiate coach. During that time, five head football coaches, and four University presidents have come and gone.

But Chandler stays. "I like Texas A&M, and I feel we have something no one else has in the dedication and spirit here," Chandler said as he watched his team practice recently.

Chandler played high school baseball in Dallas and played collegiate baseball at Baylor. He also played professionally in 1948, 1949 and 1950 with three of the Pittsburgh Pirates minor league teams. While coaching baseball at Adamson High School in Dallas, he managed a semi-pro baseball team—the Alpine Cowboys.

Many of Chandler's players have gone on to play major league ball after being coached by Chandler. Among them is



"I like Texas A&M. I feel we have something no one else has in the dedication and spirit here. What I enjoy most is being on the field and teaching," — Texas A&M head baseball coach Tom Chandler on his 26-year career as the Aggies' head baseball coach.

Toronto Bluejays pitcher Gaylord Perry, who played on the Alpine team.

In 1959, Chandler came to Texas A&M.

"I always liked Texas A&M, and apparently they liked me," he said. Chandler said he has always wanted to be a coach.

"What I enjoy most is being on the field and teaching," he said. He enjoys baseball because it is fun to practice as well as play.

And not only does Chandler enjoy the games. He also wins. His record for 25 seasons here is 619 wins, 308 losses, and 10 ties.

But Chandler isn't only interested in winning—he also takes a personal interest in his

players and said his relationship with them is extremely valuable to him.

But it's not a one-way street. His players like him too.

"He is a very personable man," said pitcher Rock King. "He takes a personal interest in every player. He is quite a guy."

Pitcher Phillip Taylor said: "He cares what is going on. If you have a problem you can talk to him."

Chandler keeps everybody busy and emphasizes poise, spirit and competitiveness on the baseball field, Taylor said.

Chandler has seen many changes in A&M baseball in 26 years.

"There is not another sport as indicative of America as baseball," he said. If there are changes in society, similar changes will show up on a baseball team.

For instance, attitudes have changed. In his early years at Texas A&M players were more eager to learn, he said. When he came here in 1959 all Aggie baseball players were members of the Corps of Cadets, he said, and were necessarily well disciplined and there were not as many behavior problems. "Today," Chandler said, "you have to tell them on the idea—if we are going to be successful, we must have discipline, and if not disci-

plined, we won't succeed." But, he said, today's players are better than the ones before because equipment and facilities are better. The players are better because the team's year-round training program in Chandler's first few years here the team did not even have fall practices.

And when he is not on a baseball field, Chandler enjoys collecting baseball figures and autographs. A break from baseball he likes fish.

Chandler is married and has a daughter, Nancy, and a son, Tom Dean, who both attend Texas A&M. Chandler said his son hopes to coach high school athletics.

But after 26 years coaching, one might wonder Chandler is considering retiring. He said it is obviously on his mind, but he makes a year-year evaluation—he just takes one year at a time.

Chandler said he will continue to coach "as long as I can and I still have a lot of enthusiasm."

Landry enjoying win streak while it lasts

United Press International

DALLAS — Tom Landry has stopped trying to explain it all. He is just enjoying it while it lasts. And the coach of the Dallas Cowboys sees no reason why it can't last a while longer.

Dallas' comeback streak reached six in a row last Sunday and the most recent of those ral-

lies was the most improbable of the year.

The Cowboys' offense, in particular the passing game, has not performed well at all during recent weeks and Dallas keeps pulling out the games with big—almost massive—plays.

So if this scenario continues, how many games might Dallas

lost along the way?

"If we keep making the plays we are making now we will probably be undefeated," Landry said. "But I doubt we will keep this up. Right now we are just jockeying for position. You just hope to put everything in place for the stretch."

"Everything you do now is

just keeping you in contention. This team is obviously different because we have won so many games in the manner we have. But there are 16 games in this league. Just stay around a while and things will change. Nothing ever stays the same."

From the opening of the season Landry has said he is search-

ing for some consistency in team. And he hasn't seen it. While the offense was playing reasonably well early, the defense and kicking game were struggling.

Then, when the special teams began to play well and the defense picked up, the offense began to falter.

Alborn: Rice alumni pressure made his resignation inevitable

United Press International

HOUSTON — Rice University football coach Ray Alborn Tuesday said it was inevitable he was going to be fired so rather than foster a "bad scene" he resigned under pressure from alumni.

In a farewell news conference, the likeable coach defended the school's alumni and the administration despite hard feelings over being forced to

quit because of mounting losses on the field.

People inside the university said Alborn had worked out a deal to relinquish the last year of his contract, which runs through the 1984 season, so that his assistants would be paid through May, 1984, instead of being set free in December.

"I felt it was an inevitable situation," he said. "I stayed around long enough to know when you feel like a lame duck. By my staying and fighting it was going to be a bad scene for the players and the university," he said.

Alborn is a former Rice football captain who returned to the school in 1972 as an assistant coach and who became the head man in 1978 at the age of 39. He took over a program that had not had a winning season in nine years. The closest he got to turning things around was in 1980 (5-6) and in 1981 (4-7).

During 1982 and through six games this year, the Owls have won one game.

On Monday Alborn tearfully announced his resignation and said he would complete his sixth season as head coach.

He became choked up several times Tuesday as he held his first news conference following the announcement, but at the outset he was the Ray Alborn media and fans have come to know.

"I apologize for not riding into my last press conference on a white horse like James Watt did," he said, prompting laughter.

"The university and I have reached an agreement," he said, "and that is how I would like to leave it. I want to emphasize the class manner in which Rice has conducted itself during all of this."

Athletic Director Augie Erfurth declined comment on Alborn's agreement.

Alborn, who has been on with school officials and Erfurth for years over Rice's lack of commitment to compete with

best teams in the Southwestern Conference, emphasized the underlying cause of the competitive Rice football in cent years was not a lack of money.

"You've got to have money but that in itself is not the bottom line in this situation," said.

He said a recent announcement—so far unapproved—allocate \$300,000 more for the athletic department and to start courses in business were toward alleviating the frustration he has felt Saturday and Saturday.

"My regret is that there are many class people at Rice University and some of the people who have class were not as their opinions," Alborn said.

Holtz says Hogs look better, but Longhorns still 'winners'

United Press International

FAYETTEVILLE, Ark. — The University of Arkansas Razorbacks worked two hours in the rain Tuesday trying to get ready for Saturday's game with Texas, which had coach Lou Holtz calls a "game between winners."

The Hogs, giving in to severe thunderstorm warnings, moved inside for the last half-hour of practice.

"It will be a game among winners," Holtz said. "That's why TV shows up and why there are large crowds. They are winners and we are winners."

Holtz noted that the Longhorns were only 1½ victories ahead of the Hogs over the last six years.

The game between the Hogs and the second-ranked Longhorns will start at 11:35 a.m. Saturday and will be telecast to

about 70 percent of the country by CBS.

"We're starting to shape up," Holtz said after Tuesday's practice. "We're still learning, though, and we haven't peaked yet. We have an awful long way to go."

"One thing that still concerns me is Texas' success on the down," Holtz said. "Very few of their third-down plays have been third-and-short situations."

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