

The Battalion Sports

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Aggs gearing up for 'bowl game'



Texas A&M linemen Matt Darwin and Nathan Steadman (76) lead freshman tailback Rod Bernstine around end against TCU Saturday.

A&M coach Jackie Sherrill said UT, the Aggies' next opponent, has a defense so good 'they ought to play on Sundays'.

by Bob Caster
Battalion Staff

The Aggies are spending the week gearing up for their bowl game — which happens to be at Kyle Field this Saturday against the University of Texas. It may not be a bona fide bowl game, but the Aggies are planning to play it with no less intensity than if it were.

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Aggie coach Jackie Sherrill, in his weekly press conference Monday, said this week's game is one they "can't help from looking ahead to."

"There is no question that the Texas game will be our biggest game of the year," he said. "It's our last game, we're at home and we'll be playing before what will probably be a record crowd."

He said bleachers will be placed in the south end zone and seats will most likely be placed on the track.

If the Aggies play against the Horns the way they played in their 20-10 victory over TCU, then those extra seats may just be empty by the end of the game Saturday.

Quarterback Kevin Murray had a not-so-hot afternoon as he took charge of the Aggies in a penalty-prone game that found the offense dodging penalty flags almost as often as they dodged the Horned Frog defense.

"The penalties caused an awful lot of inconsistency in the offense," Sherrill said. "We would get one and then get another and that can't happen in a game or it will beat you. I don't think we've had a lack of concentration in practice but we can't look at things like officials do because we're not officials."

And officials are something Sherrill hasn't seemed to have much luck with since the Baylor game. But he claims he has had no problems with them.

"The coaches don't have anything to do with the officiating," he said. "I don't have any problem with any of them. They've given a good effort but they can make mistakes just like coaches. Some things that I have said have been taken out of context."

But regardless of who officiates Saturday's game, the Aggies' No. 1 enemies won't be wearing black and white but orange and white and they'll be out to cap off an un-

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Nebraska hangs on to No. 1 rating; Texas still No. 2

United Press International
NEW YORK — A week off certainly didn't hurt Nebraska's rating in the UPI Coaches' college football ratings. The Cornhuskers, top-rated since pre-season, are one win away from a perfect regular season and they remain one vote away from being a unanimous choice as No. 1.

The first nine teams held their rankings in latest balloting by the UPI Board of Coaches as three of the top five teams and seven ranked teams were idle last weekend.

Nebraska, 11-0, received 39 of a possible 40 votes and 599 points from the UPI Board of Coaches. Texas, 10-0 after a 24-21 win over No. 19 Baylor, remained second by getting the other first place vote and 549 overall points.

Rounding out the top 10 are No. 3 Auburn, No. 4 Miami (Fla.), No. 5 Illinois, No. 6 Southern Methodist, No. 7 Georgia, No. 8 Michigan, No. 9 Brigham Young and No. 10 Iowa.

Iowa moved into the top 10 after blowing out Minnesota 61-10, while Ohio State lost to Michigan 24-21 and fell from 10th to 13th.

Completing the rankings are No. 11 Florida, No. 12 Alabama, No. 14 Pittsburgh, No. 15 Boston College, No. 16 Oklahoma, No. 17 Maryland, No. 18 Air Force, No. 19 Baylor and No. 20 Virginia Tech.

Oklahoma and Virginia Tech are the only ranked teams not scheduled for a bowl appearance. The Sooners can't go to the Orange Bowl even if they beat Nebraska Saturday and decided against going to a minor bowl.

Virginia Tech cracked the ratings for the first time this season after finishing 9-2 with a 48-0 whipping of Virginia. The Hokies were under considera-

tion for the Liberty Bowl until Notre Dame finally accepted its invitation Monday.

Air Force, after a 23-22 win over Notre Dame, is 8-2 and also ranked for the first time this year with one game left.

Maryland, 8-3, rejoined the ratings by snapping a two-game losing streak with a 22-6 win over North Carolina State.

Washington, West Virginia and Missouri fell from the rankings after upset losses to unranked opponents. Washington, previously 14th, fell 17-6 to Washington State and was knocked out of the Rose Bowl; previously 15th-ranked West Virginia lost 27-16 to Syracuse and previously 17th-ranked Missouri was knocked off by Kansas 37-27.

Alabama, Boston College and Oklahoma each climbed four spots in the rankings. Alabama and Oklahoma were idle, and Boston College crushed Holy Cross 47-7.

Pittsburgh slipped one spot after a 24-24 tie against Penn State and Baylor dropped one place after its loss to Texas.

In bowl matchups, No. 1 Nebraska meets No. 4 Miami in the Orange Bowl, No. 2 Texas and No. 7 Georgia meet in the Cotton Bowl, No. 3 Auburn plays No. 8 Michigan in the Sugar Bowl, No. 5 Illinois faces UCLA in the Rose Bowl, No. 6 SMU plays No. 12 Alabama in the Sun Bowl, No. 9 BYU faces Missouri in the Holiday Bowl, No. 10 Iowa and No. 11 Florida meet in the Gator Bowl, No. 13 Ohio State plays No. 14 Pittsburgh in the Fiesta Bowl, No. 15 Boston College battles Notre Dame in the Liberty Bowl, No. 17 Maryland meets Tennessee in the Florida Citrus Bowl, No. 18 Air Force plays Mississippi in the Independence Bowl and No. 19 Baylor plays Oklahoma State in the Bluebonnet Bowl.

Saints blow big lead; chance for first in West

United Press International
NEW ORLEANS — A 76-yard punt return by Kirk Spriggs for a touchdown with 11 left climaxed a 17-point fourth quarter Monday night that lifted the New York Jets to a 32-28 decision over the frustrated New Orleans Saints.

New Orleans, the only NFL team never to have won on Monday night, needed a victory to move into a tie for the lead in the AFC West and the Saints appeared headed for a win when they opened a 28-14 advantage late in the third quarter.

But Richard Todd engineered two Jets' drives that resulted in 10 points and Springs then stunned the sellout Louisiana Superdome crowd with his sprint up the middle that carried the Jets to only their second win in their last seven games and left the Saints 0-6 on Monday night.

Morten Andersen missed a 53-yard field goal attempt for the Saints with 14 seconds left that could have sent the game into overtime. The kick had the distance but was wide left. Springs began his punt return in the middle, then veered off to the left sidelines and evaded

punter Russell Erxleben at the Saints' 35 before speeding into the end zone — where he was mobbed by teammates.

The Jets, 5-7, closed their deficit to 28-24 on an 11-yard pass from Richard Todd to Jerome Barkum with 4:20 remaining, capping an 80-yard march in which Todd twice overcame long yardage situations.

On the first play of the drive, Todd was sacked for a 9-yard loss and then, after getting the ball down to the New Orleans 27, the Jets were called for holding on first down. But Todd fought back from that setback by scrambling and hitting Lam Jones with a 26-yarder down to the Saints' 11 before finding Barkum.

Pat Leahy kicked a 37-yard field goal on the third play of the fourth quarter to pull New York within 28-17.

The clutch passing of old pro Ken Stabler and the unexpected speed of fullback Hokie Gajan had given the Saints a two-touchdown advantage.

Stabler, forced to sit out two games with damaged ribs, threw an interception on his first pass, which was returned 34 yards for a touchdown by linebacker Lance Mehl.

But Stabler, who will turn 38 on Christmas Day, shook off that misfortune to throw a TD pass to tight end Hoby Brenner of 38 yards and set up another score early in the third period

with a 35-yard toss to Lindsay Scott.

The Saints' running game then took over, with Gajan and George Rogers combining to wear down the Jets' defense.

Rogers scored New Orleans' first touchdown on a 14-yard run following an interception by Russell Gary on Todd's first pass and after the Jets tied it on Mehl's interception return, Stabler hit Brenner to boost the Saints in front again.

A 1-yard scoring run by seldom-used Marion Barber in the second quarter allowed the Jets to tie the game at intermission, 14-14.

New Orleans assumed control in the third quarter with scoring runs of 1 yard by Wayne Wilson and 2 yards by Rogers.

Rogers' touchdown, which came with 4:39 left in the third quarter, was set up by a 58-yard run by Gajan.

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To: Coach Jackie Sherrill and The Fightin' Texas Aggie Football Team:

Congratulations on your fine performance in recent weeks. As Aggie football fans, we appreciate your hard work and dedication to building a quality football program. As coaches, we see a team that is fast becoming a leading contender in the Southwest Conference. It is clear to us that when t.u. visits Kyle Field, they will face an intense, enthusiastic, and hardhitting Aggie team.

Best of luck Saturday - and beat the they outa the sips!

Gig 'em,

Gene Stallings
Gene Stallings
Texas Aggie Football Coach, 1965-1971
Assistant Coach, Dallas Cowboys

Jim Myers
Jim Myers
Texas Aggie Football Coach, 1958-1961
Assistant Coach, Dallas Cowboys

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