

The Battalion Sports

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Horns come alive to whip Aggies

Third-quarter offensive explosion boosts Longhorns to 45-13 victory

by John Wagner

Battalion Staff
The team of the present finally showed its stuff.

After four weeks of mediocre offensive performances and near-upsets, the No. 2-ranked Texas Longhorns came alive against perennial rival Texas A&M Saturday and rolled to a 45-13 victory.

This was supposed to be one of those see-saw affairs, with enough nail-biting, nerve-racking intensity to make Alka-Seltzer an after-game necessity for the record crowd of 76,751. But while the Longhorns were scoring plop-plop, the Aggies were fizz-fizzing.

The 90th meeting of the two teams was billed as a match between the team of the present (Texas) and the team of the future (A&M). Or, as A&M coach Jackie Sherrill explained after the game, "their seniors against our freshmen."

Score one for the seniors.

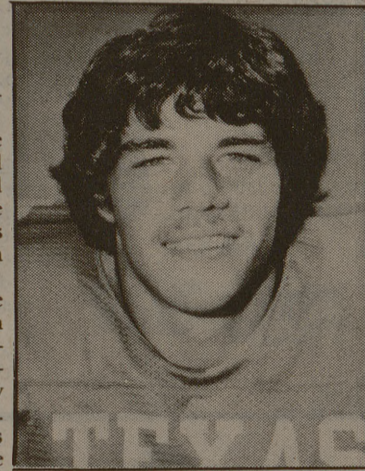
Third-string UT quarterback Rick McIvor, a senior from Fort Stockton, mosed in off the bench late in the second quarter and lit a fire under the Texas offense that hasn't been there all season. McIvor rallied the Horns from a 13-0 deficit to a 14-13 halftime lead, and the shellshocked Aggies never recovered.

McIvor supplemented his two first-half touchdown passes with two more in the second half, and equaled a UT record with his four TD passes in one game.

Add to that the touchdown scored on a double-reverse pass from wide receiver Bill Boy Bryant to Brent Duhon in the Horns' 31-point third quarter explosion, and the five TD passes in one game marked a school record.

But for a time, it appeared the team of the future would make its mark several years early. Led by freshmen Kevin Murray and Roger Vick, the Aggies jumped out to a 10-0 first-quarter lead while holding the Longhorns' once-anemic offense to only 24 total yards and no first downs.

For the Horns, forced to go against a gusting, 35 mile-per-



Texas QB Rick McIvor led Horns to 45-13 win

hour wind in the first quarter, the situation looked as bleak as the gray clouds that hovered over Kyle Field most of the afternoon. But, as most second-ranked teams seem to do, Texas found a silver lining in all that bleakness.

And they found it in the seldom-used right arm of McIvor. After Jeff Fuller intercepted a Rob Moerschell pass, Murray and the Aggies drove to the Longhorn 30 and Alan Smith kicked a 46-yard field goal to make it 13-0.

But on the ensuing kickoff, the 12th Man kickoff team was penalized for piling on and the Horns had good field position.

Enter McIvor. Going with the wind, McIvor led the Longhorns, aided by another 15-yard penalty, to their first score.

"The biggest play of the game," Sherrill said, "came when we scored to make it 13-0 and we kicked off and got called for piling on. Then we had another 15-yard penalty a couple of plays later."

With 2:10 left in the half, McIvor found Bryant — who had beaten A&M defensive back Tony Slaton — in the end zone for a 12-yard touchdown pass to cut the lead to 13-7.

All the Aggies needed was one first down to run out the

clock and take the lead into the dressing room. But two off-tackle plays netted only 4 yards, and when Murray tried to pass on third down, he was sacked back at the A&M 19. Kyle Stuard's punt traveled only 27 yards against the wind, and the Longhorns rambled in for the go-ahead touchdown three plays later with a 13-yard pass to Brent Duhon, who had beaten Slaton again.

"That last score (in the first half) really took the breath out 'em," UT linebacker Jeff Leiding said. "It was just a matter of time before (the Aggies) came back down to earth and before we just settled down and played like we should."

What the Aggies found when they did come down to earth wasn't pretty. When the Longhorns play like Leiding thinks they should, its best to just step out of the way. The Aggies wisely did.

Texas scored on its first five possessions of the second half, scoring at will and scoring with a vengeance. After the game, UT coach Fred Akers answered allegations of running up the score with an incredulous look and a "Are you serious?"

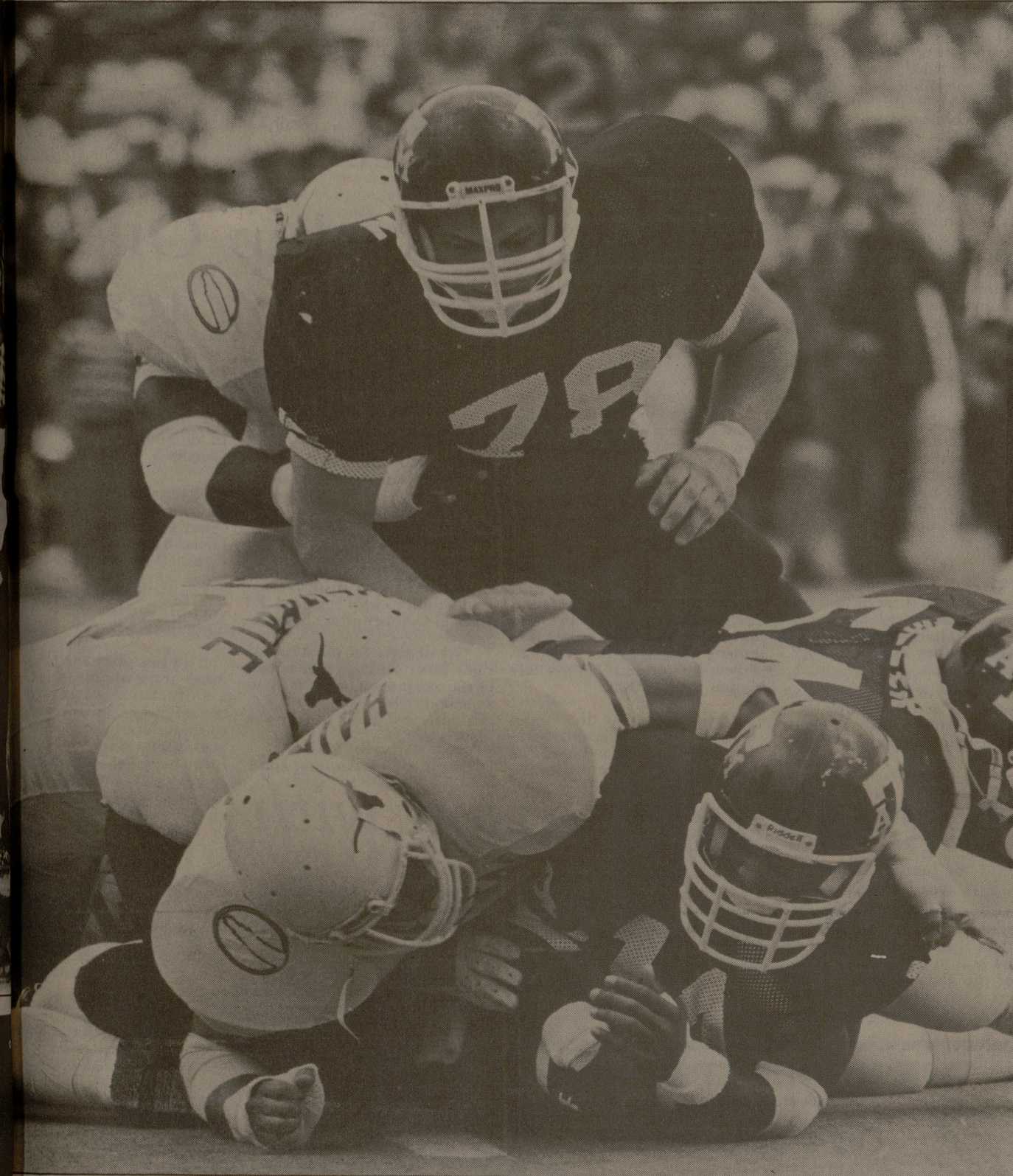
Still, to the casual viewer it might have appeared to be so. With the score 24-13, McIvor passed 33 yards for one score, 60 yards for another and the trick double-reverse pass went 41 yards for yet another. Not exactly the kind of conservative football Akers and his Longhorns are famous for.

But to Akers, it was simply a case of a much-maligned offense proving itself.

"This is the first time in a long time we really showed we were a whole football team. It seems like people have been trying to tell us we were two football teams (good defense, bad offense), but thank goodness, our players didn't listen."

"They made the big plays today," Sherrill said. "We hadn't been giving up the big plays, but we did today."

For a team of the future, however, it wasn't exactly a bad showing. Especially when the team of the present plays like a team of destiny.



Texas A&M quarterback Kevin Murray (14) is buried under Longhorn defenders John Haines and Tony Degrate during the Aggies' 45-13 loss to Texas Saturday.

Haines and Tony Degrate during the Aggies' 45-13 loss to Texas Saturday.

Dean Saito, Battalion staff

McIvor's arm gives Longhorns' offense comeback ability

by Dave Scott

Battalion Reporter

Rick McIvor quit the University of Texas football team last spring.

McIvor returned to the Longhorn squad this fall.

Many Aggie fans are wishing he had never come back.

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McIvor completed 8 of 12 passes for 170 yards against Texas A&M Saturday and four — punt 'em — four touchdowns. The strong-armed quarterback replaced starting quarterback Rob Moerschell in the second quarter and ignited an overwhelming UT comeback.

The 6-4, 210-pound McIvor threw touchdown passes of 13, 2, 33 and 60 yards to three different receivers in the win. And although it appeared he rallied the Longhorns with relative ease, his performance Saturday topped a long, hard comeback for the former high school all-American from Fort Stockton.

In 1981, as a junior, McIvor was the starting signal caller, but a shoulder injury after seven games put him out for the season. McIvor came back the following fall ready to battle Robert Brewer for the starting position but suffered a knee injury.

McIvor was redshirted last season and left school and the football team the following year to work on a friend's ranch in west Texas.

"I was frustrated and I just needed to get away from things," he said.

But he never had any inten-

tions of quitting altogether. McIvor was ready to return this fall.

"I was fired up about coming back," he said. "I was really excited because I knew we could do some things." And those things were exactly what Texas head coach Fred Akers had in mind.

Akers said he knew before the game the Longhorns might need McIvor because of his strong arm.

"I thought we might be compelled to try to throw long on them," Akers said.

But because McIvor hurt his back early last week — added to the fact McIvor had thrown just 12 passes previously this year — Akers said he was a little hesitant about using him. After the 45-13 win sparked by McIvor, though, Akers had no regrets.

"I've never seen a guy respond better to a team's needs," he said. "It is a pretty good measure of a man," Akers said referring to McIvor's successful return to the Longhorn squad.

"You don't see many people come back after some of the things Rick has been through," he said. Akers said McIvor wasn't ready at the beginning of the season. In fact, Akers said he was worried about McIvor trying to return.

"A player trying to come back like that could be a distraction, not an attraction," he said.

But Akers said McIvor learned a lot as the season progressed. "He convinced me he had a complete understanding of what we were doing," he said.

And McIvor, no doubt, convinced the Aggies Saturday.

Momentum took a walk to UT's side

by John P. Lopez

Battalion Staff

It's called momentum, but most people refer to it as "Mo."

And for almost two quarters Saturday at Kyle Field, Mo was firmly in place on the Texas A&M sideline.

The Aggies had jumped all over the Texas Longhorns to take a 13-0 lead with 2:10 left in the first half. But seconds before the end of the half, Mo decided to take a stroll — to the Longhorns' sideline.

Led by the strong arm of seldom-used senior quarterback Rick McIvor, the Longhorns scored two late second-quarter touchdowns to silence a record crowd of 76,751 and head to the locker room with Mo leading the way.

"We needed those scores near the end of the half real bad," Longhorns wide receiver Brent Duhon said. "Things were looking pretty bleak until then. That really picked us up at halftime and got us back to our old selves."

But while Mo was a welcome guest in Texas' locker room, the Aggies were wondering what happened.

"The momentum certainly changed at the end of the first half," Texas A&M head coach Jackie Sherrill said. "There's no question about that."

Texas coach Fred Akers didn't question Sherrill's assessment.

"A&M had a lot of momentum to start with," Akers said.

"We needed those scores near the end of the half real bad. Things were looking pretty bleak until then. That really picked us up at halftime and got us back to our old selves." — Texas receiver Brent Duhon

"I was thrilled when we got the field a little quieter."

And the field stayed quiet throughout the second half. Texas scored 31 points in the third quarter to stop any Aggie hopes of a comeback.

"They got a lot of breaks in the third quarter and that was it," Aggie center Matt Darwin said. "They had the momentum and we could never get it back. We had the wind in the fourth quarter, but when you're down by so much to Texas, it's hard to get anything going. They were just sprinting downfield (on pass rushes)."

And Mo was sitting on the Longhorns' bench.

"They (Aggies) had to be thinking it was their day," Texas linebacker Jeff Leiding said, "but you could sense the difference at halftime. I think

we took the breath out of them. And we kept things going in the second half and played like we should."



Dean Saito, Battalion staff

Texas coach Fred Akers and A&M coach Jackie Sherrill are all smiles after the Longhorns' 45-13 victory.

Both coaches said the second-quarter switch in momentum was a key factor in the Horns' win.