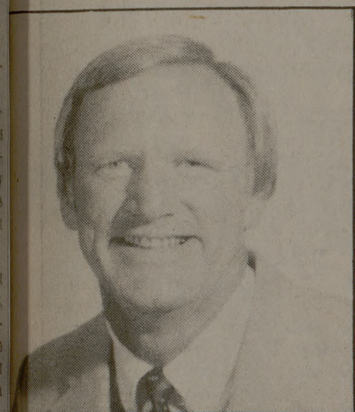


Wacker says TCU sick of losing ways



TCU's Jim Wacker
United Press International

FORT WORTH, Texas (UPI) — Jim Wacker, being about as good a public speaker as there is in college athletics, could probably talk his way out of most any difficulty.

But he cannot talk his way out of the fact that in his first year as head coach of the Texas Christian Horned Frogs his team was 1-8-2.

So, to his credit, he does not try. "Last year was the pits," he said. "We had one basic problem. We were not very good. And we found out that that is a bad basic problem to have."

Wacker, who had coached Southwest Texas to two consecutive national championships, came to TCU a year ago as one of the most enthusiastic coaches in a profession that matters to enthusiasm.

His team came close to beating a lot of teams. But it beat only one — the Rice Owls. The Horned Frogs thus continued to endure their 21st losing season in the past 24 years.

"I'm not living in a bubble," Wacker said. "I know we can't win just one game this year. This is a critical year in turning this football program around. If we don't win five or six games I'll be very upset. This is the year we have got to get things on track."

TCU made a good start at turning things around by having an excellent recruiting year, but Wacker wants to see as many of those freshmen as possible.

That means he will have to get it done mostly with the players who produced the 1-8-2 record in 1983.

The keys to that group will be quarterback Anthony Sciaraffa, running back Kenneth Davis, world-class sprinter James Maness at halfback and a defense headed by linebacker Gary Spann and nose guard Kent Tramel.

There will be a goodly number of

freshmen, including quarterback Scott Ankrom, who could well be Southwest Conference stars of the future. Help, however, is needed before the future gets here.

Wacker has thus concentrated on two areas — trying to make his players more physical and trying to make them think like winners.

"We had a meeting of coaches," he said, "and we all agreed we can't be 1-8-2 again because in two years we will be gone and there won't be any food on the table."

"We had to come up with a plan. And that plan involves what we call 'smash-mouth football.'"

"We had a clinic here last year with a lot of visiting coaches and we were embarrassed because we didn't have any players who could deliver a blow on the blocking sled."

"If you are a boxer you develop a punch by hitting the punching bag over and over again. Our players have hit that blocking sled over and over again this year. They look great hitting the blocking sled. Now we are going to find out how they look hitting other people."

"When you look back at last year we were fourth in defense in the conference and that's not bad for a crummy team. And that's what we were — crummy. We were fifth in total offense."

"But what makes the difference is what happens inside the 20-yard line. If you are a good team, you score when you get inside the 20. If you score you win, and we didn't score so we lost."

Then there is the mental approach.

"I've taken over programs that were down," Wacker said, "but never one that was this down. Last year you could see it happen when the other team would throw a long pass and score or when we would turn the ball over."

"The players would come over to the bench and hang their heads and say, 'oh, no, here we go again.'"

"Then the other team would beat the dog out of us the rest of the day. That is what we have got to get over."

In 1983 the Horned Frogs had good chances to beat Kansas, SMU, Texas Tech, Houston and Texas.

A few inches here, a single play there and Wacker's first season at TCU would have been a winning one.

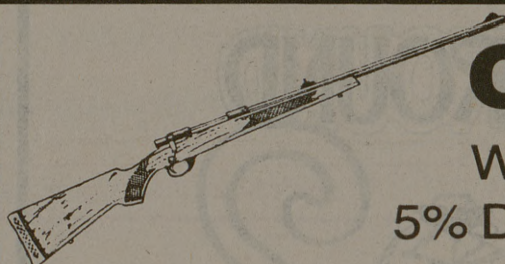
But getting the right things to happen on those few big plays could be a major hurdle to clear.

"This year they (the Horned Frog players) are bigger, faster and stronger. We have worked them very hard. It is called sacrifice and dedication. We are not going to go 1-8-2 again. Those days are over."

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The subject of this contest is to draw the ideal Aggie football player. The only limiting factors on your creativity are that the drawing must be on a legal size white sheet of paper and your own artistic ability.

Use a dark drawing material such as black ink, or a black pen so they can be reproduced in The Battalion. Drawings please.

These Aggie masterpieces will be

judged on all kinds of biased preconceptions, so enter at your own risk. But the drawing that survives the gruelling judging will be published along with the artist's name.

This contest is open to any and all students and faculty who are willing to bare their talents, or lack of talents, to all the readers. There is no limit on the number of entries you can submit.

Mail entries to The Great Battalion Sports Art Contest, The Battalion, 230 Reed McDonald Building, College Station, Texas, 77843. Deadline for drawings is Friday, August 31 at 5 p.m.

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