

SPORTS

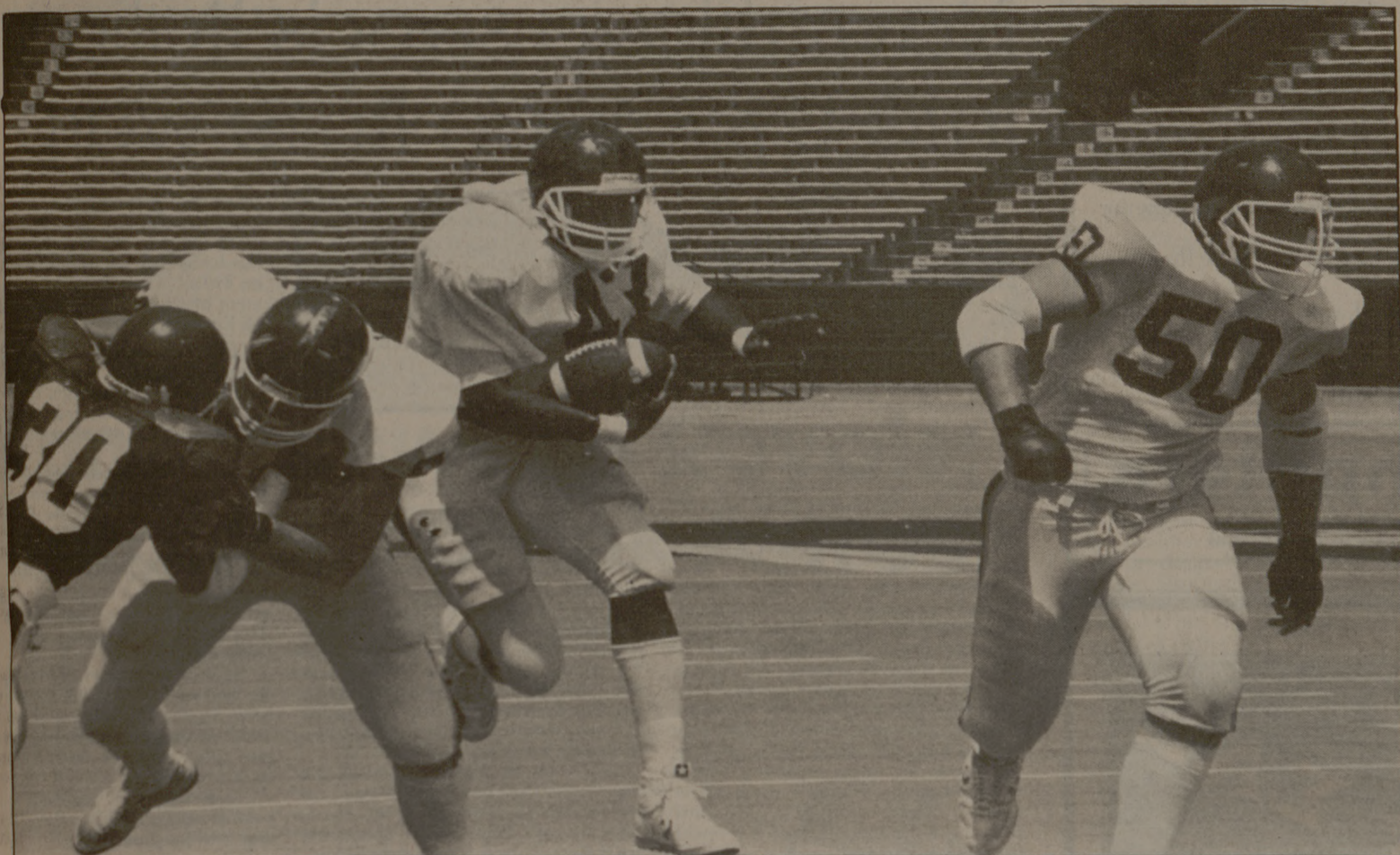


Photo by ANTHONY S. CASPER

Texas A&M tailback Roger Vick (43) follows center Matt Wilson (50) and a block by Randy Dausin on Alex Morris (30) during the Aggies intersquad scrimmage Saturday at Kyle Field. Vick switched positions with Anthony Toney, now the Ags' starting fullback.

# Ag football looks best on paper

If I've heard it once, I've heard it a thousand times during my stay in the "twin cities" this summer.

Everytime someone finds out I'm sports editor of The Battalion, I get asked THE question that's on the minds of every diehard, gung-ho, "red ass" Aggie football fan around this time of year.

THE question? Simple. "How are the Ags gonna do this year?"

The answer? Not so simple. If you've looked at the various college football preseason outlooks that have hit the newstands recently, you understand what I mean.

Heading into Jackie Sherrill's fourth season as head coach, the Aggies have been picked to finish in nearly every one of the nine spots available.

Dave Campbell's *Texas Football*, the source I always refer as the "Texas football bible," predicts A&M will end up third behind SMU and Arkansas. *The Sporting News* picks the Aggies seventh and *Sports Illustrated* goes somewhere along those lines as well.

At the opposite end of the spectrum, *Athlon's Southwest Conference Football* sees a SWC championship and a Cotton Bowl birth in the Aggies' near future.

So, depending on who you talk to, what you read and how much of it

**TRAVIS TINGLE**  
Sports Editor

you actually believe, it becomes even harder to make any prediction about any team, especially the Aggies.

If I've learned anything in my three years of working on The Battalion sports desk, I've learned one thing — "unpredictable" is A&M's middle name when it comes to athletics, especially football.

And the 1985 Aggie football team is no exception.

There's an old Aggie joke that goes something like: "Did you hear that the Aggies are going to replace the artificial turf on Kyle Field with paper instead of grass?"

"Why? Because the Aggies always look better on paper."

On paper, the '85 Aggies strength has to be the defense, where A&M loses only two starters from a year ago.

All-SWC performer Johnny Holland returns to lead the Aggies' potentially destructive linebacking corps, along with John Roper, Larry Kelm and Steve Bullitt. Rod Saddler, who fills the left defensive end position vacated by All-American Ray Childress, is back to join Sammy

O'Brien and Jay Muller on the Aggies' three-man front.

Add to that a secondary, two-deep at every position with game experienced personnel, and it's easy to see why some sports writers have assessed the Aggies' defense as one of the best in the conference in '85.

However, when you look at A&M's offense, the paper begins to crinkle.

The '85 Aggies feature a new offensive coordinator, Lynn Amedee, and, as you would expect, a new offense.

Amedee doesn't like to call it the "run-and-shoot," but that's what it's been compared to the most.

Amedee uses the word "controlled" to describe an offense that essentially has the quarterback and the receivers reading defenses and reacting accordingly.

You'll see the Aggies line up with two runningbacks or one runningback, two receivers or four receivers, double tight ends or no tight ends. You name it, the Aggies' new style of offense has got it.

The new offense also has something else — two quarterbacks fighting for one job.

Ah, there's the rub. Since a team only needs one on the field at a time, it's up to the Aggies' coaching staff to choose either Craig Stump or Kevin Murray. Both have proven they're winners.

I hate to say it, but this sounds like a "quarterback contro..." no I can't say it, but it sounds like the same problem a certain team in Dallas has with two guys named Danny White and Gary Hogeboom.

The Aggies may have a lot of new formations and two capable quarterbacks, but they also lack speed at wide receiver and depth at runningback.

Roger Vick and Anthony Toney have swapped positions, Vick moving to tailback and Toney switching to fullback. Both return for their senior seasons and both are listed as starters. They're both solid backs, but their speed is questionable.

Keith Woodside backs-up Vick and Ira Valentine backs-up Toney. Both have potential, but don't have much playing time to show for it.

Shea Walker and Jeff Nelson give the receiving corps stability, but, after that, the game experience wears pretty thin with Greg Dillon and Jeff Holley the only proven performers.

The Aggies are, however, blessed once again at tight end. Rod

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