

**SPORTS**

# Ags' QB remains a mystery

## Sherrill doesn't want to aid Tide's preparation

By PETE HERNDON  
Sports Writer

The biggest news at Texas A&M's pre-game press conference Tuesday was not what was said, but what wasn't said.

Texas A&M Head Football Coach Jackie Sherrill said his coaching staff decided Sunday not to tell the media, or Alabama, who the starting quarterback will be for the season opener Saturday.

Sherrill wants to make the Crimson Tide's defensive coaches do a little extra homework by making them worry about both Craig Stump and Kevin Murray.

"They (Alabama) have to go back to 1983 to see Murray on film," Sherrill said. "They can say they won't make any adjustments, but that's not really true."

Sherrill said that, as far as the Aggies are concerned, the quarterback situation is "not a big deal" because everyone knows that both Stump and Murray can and will play.

"In-house everybody knows what's going on," he said. "It's the out-of-house people that have to keep guessing. But if you guys (sports writers) can give me a good reason for telling you who it is, I'll do it."

Since no one could give that reason, Sherrill asked reporters not to try to coax any information out of the A&M players.

Even though Sherrill wouldn't talk much about the '85-86 Aggie quarterbacks, he didn't mind talking about the Alabama quarterbacks he played with some twenty years ago.

Sherrill said he got his start in coaching, although he didn't know it at the time, when he was a fullback at Alabama.

"We were playing Georgia Tech my sophomore year with (Joe) Namath at quarterback," Sherrill said. "It was third and goal on the half-yard-line and he (Namath) called a slant, but I told him to run a (quarterback) sneak and he did."

Namath scored on the play and 'Bama went on to win.

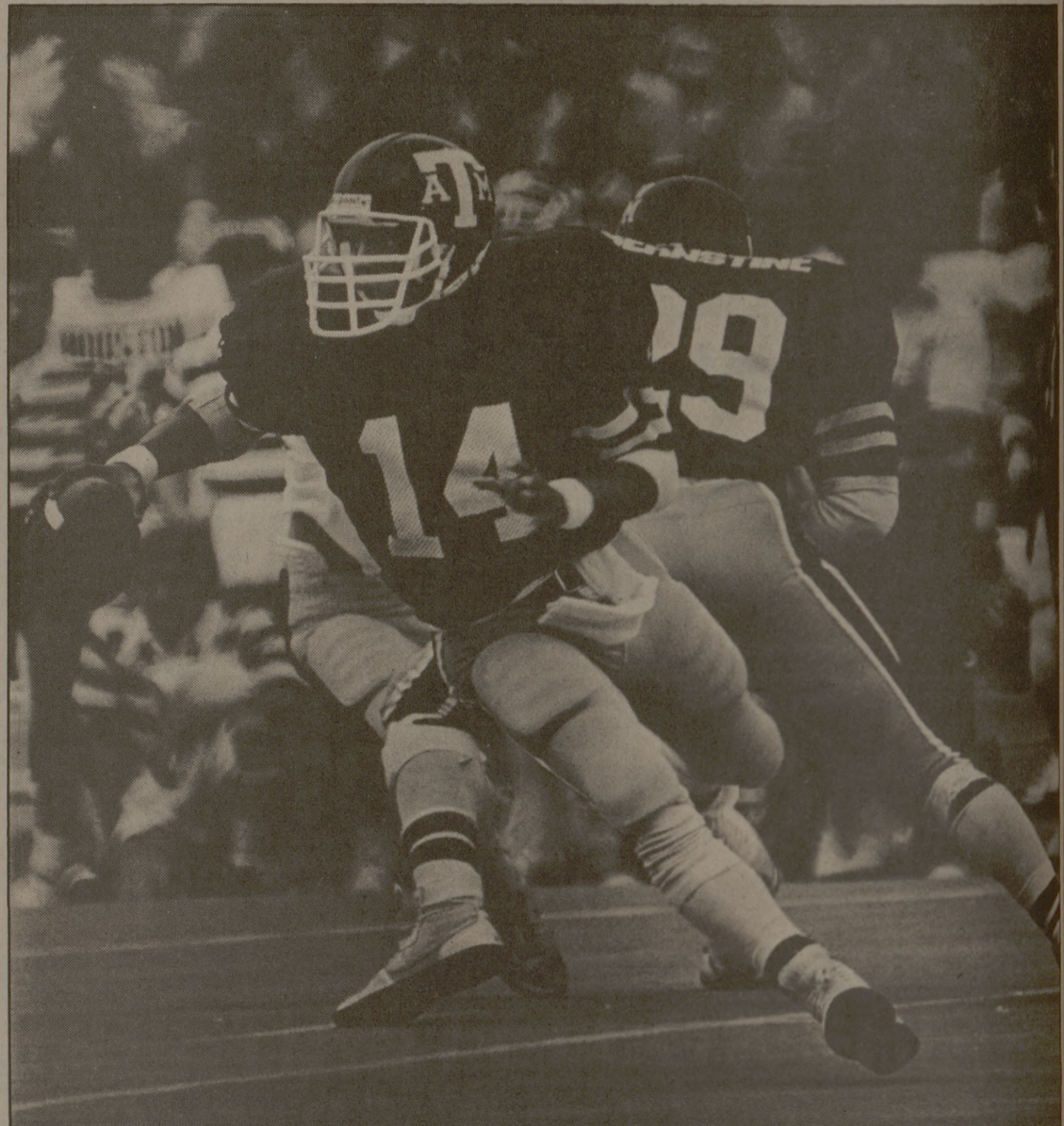
Though he may have helped Namath, he wasn't quite so nice to former NFL All-Pro quarterback Ken Stabler.

When Stabler was a freshman at 'Bama, Sherrill took Stabler to a barber shop to get an "A" shaved on his head. Sherrill noticed a two-foot curb across the street that had accumulated a large pool of water from a rainstorm.

Moments later, Sherrill quipped, Stabler was lying "belly-up" in the water, flailing his arms and legs and doing a fairly good "dying roach imitation."

"I'm a dying roach," the future All-American quarterback yelled, "I'm a dying roach!"

But it didn't take long for Stabler to figure that he would get tired of



Texas A&M fans will be left wondering who the Aggies' starting quarterback will be until the first snap of the Alabama game Saturday. Kevin Murray (above) is battling Craig Stump for the job.

being a "dying roach" before Sherrill would get tired of laughing. So, Stabler finally just lied still.

"I'm a dead roach, damn it," Stabler panted.

Sherrill's inspiration to tell this story seemed to stem from Alabama Head Football Coach Ray Perkins' remark that Sherrill was "footloose and fancy free" during their college football days together at 'Bama.

"He (Perkins) was already married and had started a family," Sherrill said. "He didn't get his share of the finer things in (college) life."

But Sherrill said that, after play-

ing for Alabama's legendary coach Paul "Bear" Bryant, he and Perkins have a lot in common.

"You had to have certain qualities, or you didn't make it," Sherrill said, referring to Bryant's four-hour practice sessions. "Football had to be important to you. Winning had to be important to you."

And the importance of winning this game, for both Alabama and A&M, cannot be understated.

"Believe it or not," Sherrill said, "this is a bigger game for Alabama than it is for us. If they lose, it'll tear down everything they've done."

"Right now they're in their '85, '86 overlap years and were in our '85, '86, '87 overlap. So there's the point now that we should be nervous."

But the Aggies need this game as bad as the Tide does.

Even though a coach with a national championship to his credit shouldn't need to prove anything to anyone, Saturday's game will be special for Sherrill.

"He (Bryant) had a great respect — and you could tell it — for his players that went off and did some things," Sherrill said.

# Still one and counting for Reds' Rose

Associated Press

CINCINNATI— The chase goes on.

In his first opportunity to break Ty Cobb's 57-year-old mark of 4,191 lifetime hits, Pete Rose came up empty Tuesday night. He went 0-for-4 against San Diego.

"I wasn't nervous," said Rose, the Cincinnati Reds player-manager. "I've made more outs than anyone. I wasn't nervous. I might have been trying too hard."

Rose tied Cobb last Sunday in Chi-

cago, going 2-for-5. He did not play in the opener of a 10-game homestand Monday night against San Diego because the Padres threw a left-hander, Dave Dravecky.

But, on Tuesday night, before a packed house of 51,045 at Riverfront Stadium, Rose took his place in the lineup at first base against Padres right-hander LaMarr Hoyt.

Hoyt had not pitched since Aug. 18 because of arm trouble, but he got Rose out three times. And rookie right-hander Lance McCullers got

him the final time in the game, in the eighth inning, when Rose lined out hard to the gap in left-center with a runner on second.

"The only time I swung the bat good was the last time I got up," Rose said. "If it had stayed straight, it might have been a base hit in the gap, but it hooked back toward the fielder and made it an easy play."

McCullers, who was making only his 11th major league appearance since being called up Aug. 9, said he got behind Rose in the count, 1-0,

then came back with a fastball on the outside part of the plate.

"I was scared at first because I thought it might carry," McCullers said. "The pitch was down and away and he hit it good."

In his first at-bat, Rose popped the shortstop. He flied out lazily on the left the second time up, then blooped another one to the shortstop. It was the fifth time in his past nine games Rose has gone without a hit, and he is now hitless in his last six at-bats.

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