

SPORTS

'A Tidal wave of pressure'

Perkins says A&M bigger game than Georgia

By **BRANDON BERRY**
Sports Writer

The Alabama Crimson Tide faced a three-point deficit to the Georgia Bulldogs in the season-opener for both teams two weeks ago.

The Tide had less than a minute to do something about it.

They faced a defense that had bent, but not broken all night long.

And they faced the demands and expectations of thousands of tradition-spoiled alumni, boosters and fans unaccustomed to opening game losses.

But Mike Shula's last minute touchdown pass to Al Bell stole a victory from the "jowls" of Bulldogs and critics alike and secured a Top 20 ranking for the Tide in the process.

Alabama Head Coach Ray Perkins has found the pressure of expectations to be far from over, however.

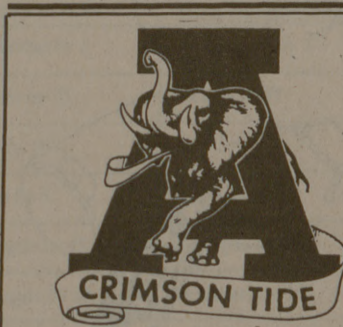
"I think the A&M game is a much bigger game than a week ago (against Georgia)," Perkins said Tuesday in a telephone hook-up. "It's important because I think Texas A&M is one of the best teams we'll play all year."

"They're better than Georgia," A&M Head Coach Jackie Sherrill agreed.

"This can be a big game for us, but it's a bigger game for Alabama," Sherrill said. "If (Alabama) loses this game, then they tear down everything that they've built up with their win over Georgia."

"Their strength is their defense, even though they won the Georgia game with their offense. They have a very mature defensive team."

The Alabama defense, complete with nine starters and an All-America hopeful at line-



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backer returning, would qualify as "mature" in any football dictionary.

The Tide "roll, roll, roll" ed over Georgia with a 3-4 defensive alignment, which emphasizes speed and the free-lancing of Cornelius Bennett (6-foot-4, 215-pounds) at linebacker.

"Taking (Bennett) and putting him where they put him (outside linebacker) allows him to be a dominating player," Sherrill said. "There's no question that there's a possibility that people are going to see possibly the two best linebackers in the country on the field Saturday in (A&M's) Johnny Holland and Cornelius Bennett. We're very concerned about how we will match up against Bennett."

Perkins said he was concerned with how the quick Tide defense, averaging 6-4 in height and 232-pounds, matches up with the monumental Aggie offensive line, which averages 6-5, 270.

"It's a bigger test (than Georgia) because they've got bigger people and more talent than we might see all year," Perkins said. "If they aren't the most talented team we play this season, they're certainly the biggest."

The third-year Bama coach said Sherrill's decision not to

name a starting quarterback until kickoff isn't really a concern because the Tide defense expected them both to play anyway.

But Sherrill disagreed.

"They can say that it won't make any difference, but that's not really true. If Alabama said they were going to start either Shula or Vince Sutton, their other quarterback who's more of a runner, you bet that would change our preparations as far as what we would do from the very beginning of the game."

"We decided Sunday who should start, but if we have anything to use as an advantage, we ought to use it."

Perkins said a much more immediate concern, than who the Aggies start at quarterback, is an A&M defense that looks experienced and potent, on paper at least.

"To me, they rate right up there with the top defenses in the country," Perkins said. "They played well enough defensively to win every game last year. That's how good they are."

A&M defensive end Rod Saddler, inside linebacker Holland and seven other returning starters hope the defense plays well enough to win this game.

"I expect Alabama to be more

wide open offensively in this game than they were against Georgia," Sherrill said.

The principal Tide "openers" are an offensive line, which averages 6-3, 258-pounds, experienced receivers and Shula at quarterback, with a year's experience and the confidence of a last-second victory under his belt.

"(Shula's) a lot more mature mentally and has more confidence," Perkins said. "His confidence is the biggest thing he's got going for him right now. He could be a good one."

And who would know a good quarterback better than Perkins, an All-America wide receiver under Paul "Bear" Bryant in the Joe Namath-Kenny Stabler days (1964-65) at Alabama?

How about Sherrill, fullback and linebacker on those same national championship Tide teams. The same Sherrill who coached Dan Marino at Pitt, as they rolled to three consecutive 11-1 seasons. The same Sherrill who will be returning to the sidelines of Legion Field as the opposing coach, rather than the prodigal son.

"I won't really have those emotions until we line up at kickoff," Sherrill said. "I've got some teeth buried at Legion Field, some blood on Legion Field. I broke my ankle on Legion Field. I'll have those emotions, but it's not going to make any difference in the game."

"It's going to be Alabama against A&M."

Saddler said, "This is what college football is all about. If we go into Birmingham and beat a team like Alabama, then we should be in the Top 20."

And build a little of that pressure along the way.

Shadow of 'The Bear' covers Maroon and Crimson teams

If you've been held in Siberia the past few weeks and haven't heard, Texas A&M opens its 1985 football campaign in Birmingham, Ala. Saturday.

While the Aggie-Tide game has gotten more pomp, grandeur and ceremony by the media, fans, coaches and players, than any game in recent A&M history, its full impact hasn't quite hit yet.

The Aggies are playing a team that is probably as close to a kissing cousin as any other in the country. Except for a national championship here and there, the teams are amazingly similar.

The winningest coach in college football, Paul "Bear" Bryant, arrived in College Station in 1954 to take over a team that hadn't been to a Cotton Bowl since 1941, a game in which the Aggies lost to the Crimson Tide, 29-21.

In Bryant's first year, A&M's only victory was a 6-0 win over Georgia.

However, in his second year the program pulled a 180-degree turn and finished 7-2-1.

Although Bryant was unable to

CHAREAN WILLIAMS
Asst. Sports Editor

lead the Aggies to the Cotton Bowl in his four-year tenure, he did take A&M to the Gator Bowl and even recorded one undefeated campaign — in 1956 the Aggies went 9-0-1, their last undefeated season.

Bryant left A&M at the end of the '57 season to take the reins at, guess where, Alabama.

Just 20 years ago, two young men named Jackie Sherrill and Ray Perkins weren't roaming the sidelines for Bryant's Crimson Tide team, they were out on the playing field. The two coaches were instrumental in the back-to-back national championships won by Alabama in '64 and '65.

In 1967, Bryant finally made it to his first and only Cotton Bowl. And that year, my friends, also happened to be the last time A&M played in a Cotton Bowl game.

The game pitted Bryant against Gene Stallings, one of his former players and assistant coaches who had become head coach at A&M.

Current A&M secondary coach Curley Hallman intercepted two errant passes by Alabama quarterback Ken Stabler to help the Aggies to a 20-16 win.

Ironically, Hallman grew up across the river from Tuscaloosa, Ala., and had dreams of playing for Bryant. When Bryant didn't knock at his door, Hallman headed to A&M to play for Stallings.

Hallman did make his way back to Tuscaloosa when Bryant finally did knock. From '73-'76, Hallman was the Crimson Tide running back and secondary coach. In '82, he returned to A&M with Sherrill.

Current A&M defensive end coach Bobby Roper was also on the

sidelines for the '67 Cotton Bowl. He was in charge of Alabama's defensive ends.

So, as you can see, the Aggies and Crimson Tide have more than "The Bear" in common.

Like a brother vs. brother rivalry, the two aren't usually mad at one another. They've only met twice and that was out of necessity — the Cotton Bowl demanded it.

In '67, the teams last met in the season finale — the Cotton Bowl. In '85, the teams meet for the first time during the regular season in A&M's opener.

The game has thus had great buildup, and for good reason.

However, the game is even more important than the press has built it up to be.

Alabama was the key opponent for A&M in '67, and they are again in '85. If A&M beats Bama, look for the Aggies in the Cotton Bowl. If the Aggies lose, look for the same old A&M team that you've seen from '68-'84.

Maybe 1967's ending was 1985's beginning.

5 FG's help Chiefs rip Raiders, 36-20

Associated Press

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — Nick Lowery tied a club record with five field goals and Bill Kenney threw a pair of touchdown passes Thursday night, leading the Kansas City Chiefs to a 36-20 victory over the Los Angeles Raiders in a nationally televised National Football League game.

Lowery tied the record of five field goals by Jan Stenerud, who turned the trick on two occasions in 1969 and again in 1971. The victory

improved the Chiefs' record to 2-0 while the Raiders, who had beaten Kansas City five in a row, dropped to 1-1.

Lowery's field goals measured 36, 22, 42, 58 and 21 yards. His 58-yard effort with 43 seconds remaining in the first half matched the longest of his career and pulled Kansas City within 14-12 at halftime. His 21-yarder 4:39 into the second half propelled the Chiefs into the lead for good at 15-14.

Kenney, who passed for 397 yards

against New Orleans last Sunday, completed 18 of 38 passes for 259 yards against Los Angeles. He threw for two touchdowns in the third period as Kansas City pulled out to a 29-14 lead.

Cornerback Albert Lewis recovered a fumble by Raider quarterback Jim Plunkett in the end zone for the Chiefs' third touchdown and a 36-14 lead with 9:48 remaining.

The Raiders scored first on Frank Hawkin's one-yard plunge with 5:59 left in the first period.

Lowery's third field goal put the Chiefs in the lead at 9-7 with 6:52 left in the first half, but Vann McElroy recovered a Chiefs' fumble on the Kansas City 30 and, moments later, Todd Christensen made a circus catch in the end zone of a three-yard pass from Plunkett for a 14-9 Raider lead.

With the outcome no longer in doubt, Jessie Hester caught a two-yard scoring pass from Plunkett with 6:52 left. The extra point attempt failed.

ROSH HASHANAH

1984-5745

The B'nai B'rith Hillel Foundation at Texas A&M wishes the Jewish University Community a Healthy and Happy New Year.

Everyone is invited to services conducted by Rabbi Peter Tarlow.

Rosh Hashanah Services

Sunday, Sept. 15, 8 p. m.
Monday, Sept. 16, 10 a. m.
Tuesday, Sept. 17, 10 a. m.

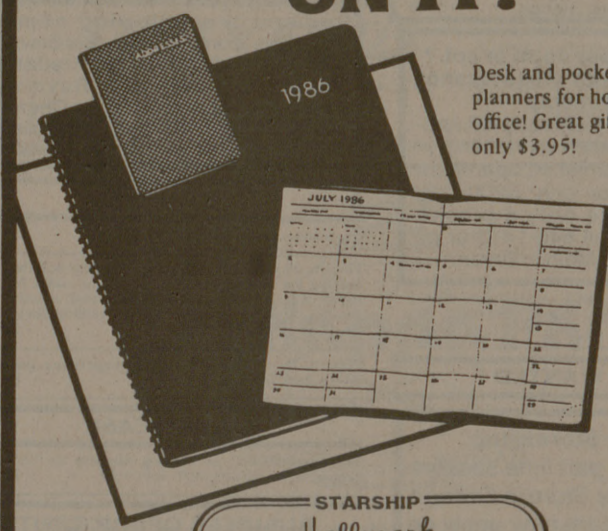
Yom Kippur Services

Tuesday, Sept. 24, 8 p. m.
Wednesday, Sept. 25, 10 a. m.
Break-the-fast, Sept. 25, 10 a. m.

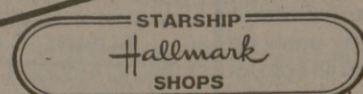
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Under the "Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974", the following directory information may be made public unless the student desires to withhold any or all of this information.

Student's name, address (local and permanent), telephone listing, date and place of birth, sex, nationality, race, major, classification, dates of attendance, class schedule, degrees awarded, awards or honors, class standing, previous institution or educational agency attended by the student, parent's name and address, sports participation, weight and height of athletic team members, parking permit information, and photograph.

Any student wishing to withhold any or all of this information should fill out, in person, the appropriate form, available to all students at the Registrar's Office, no later than 5 p.m. Friday, September 20, 1985.

R. A. Lacey
Registrar

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