

A&M's Murray finds Alabama difficult place to make return

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Asst. Sports Editor

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. — Welcome back Kevin!

Texas A&M quarterback Kevin Murray has always been competitive. At North Dallas High School, with a Milwaukee Brewers' farm club and with A&M, winning has always been upmost on Murray's mind.

So, it wasn't surprising that Murray sacrificed his body for the Aggies on Sept. 29, 1984.

He was within one yard of the goal line when he saw an Arkansas State defender in his way. Instead of going out of bounds or using the baseball slide he had learned, Murray tried to go over the top.

He broke his ankle on the way down.

Therefore 1984 was worse for Murray than anything George Orwell could have predicted.

The Aggies had been 7-2-1 in games Murray had started. He was the Southwest Conference's total offense leader as a freshman in 1983. He was also the SWC Newcomer of the Year. He had a career passing percentage of 53.7.

Murray was the Aggies' leader. A&M was expected to stumble, fall and die without him — and at first it did.

But soon Murray's replacement, Craig Stump, was guiding the Aggies up and down the field. And before anyone knew it, Stump had directed A&M to season-ending upsets of Top 20 teams, TCU and Texas.

However, like all fairy tales, Aggie fans were rooting for Murray to return to his vintage form and lead them to something they haven't tasted since 1968 — a Cotton Bowl berth.

With Murray's return came cries of "quarterback controversy at A&M." The fans, the press, the alumni, the students — everyone wanted to know who the starting quarterback would be against Alabama.

Around the campus, biology, physics and english weren't the most discussed subjects — Murray and Stump were.

In the minds of most, the job belonged to Murray. So, when Jackie Sherrill announced that he wouldn't name a starter until the first snap against 'Bama, everyone knew it would be Murray.

But, the Aggie who got underneath center Matt Wilson for the first offensive possession wasn't Murray, it was Stump.

And rightfully so. Stump finished the season on a

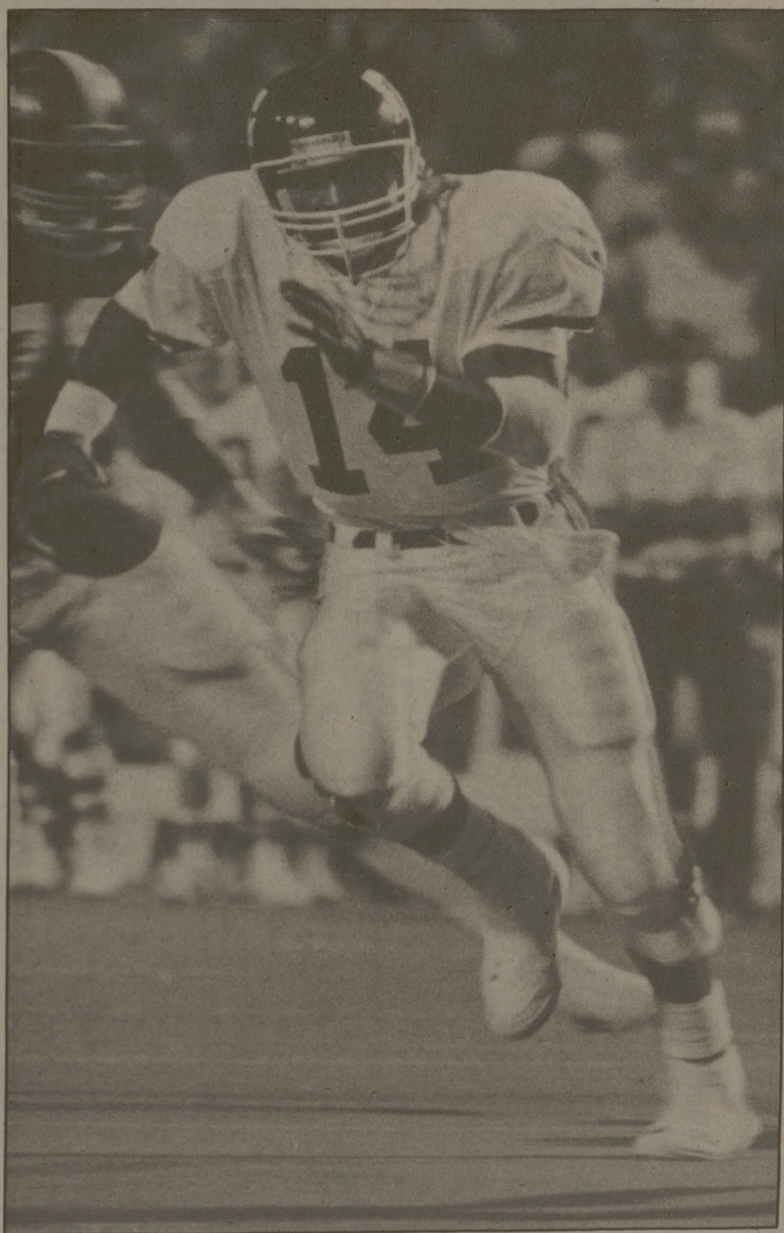


Photo by JOHN MAKELY

Texas A&M quarterback Kevin Murray made his return to the playing field Saturday against Alabama. The sophomore hadn't played since Sept. 29, 1984 when he broke his ankle against Arkansas State. Murray showed no signs of his injury as he passed for 158 yards.

winning note. He had led the Aggies. He had earned the position.

But, at the same time, Murray had only lost the position by forfeit. He had done the Aggies no wrong.

So, it was only right that both get a chance to play against the Tide.

Stump went five-for-five passing in the first quarter and part of the second. He led the Aggies to within field goal range.

With 11:15 left in the half, Mur-

ray got his chance. While he didn't get a standing ovation from the partisan 'Bama crowd, he certainly won the hearts of the Aggie fans.

His first pass was a 7-yard completion to flanker Jeff Nelson.

A good start.

Murray's third pass, a 17-yarder to Shea Walker, gave him 178 completions for his career, placing him fourth on the all-time A&M completion list.

goals of 34 and 46 yards to round out the Lions scoring.

The Cowboys, who appeared flat after their emotional Monday night victory over Washington, didn't score until the fourth quarter when Gary Hogeboom came on for injured Danny White.

Dallas Coach Tom Landry made it clear, however, that he had not soured on White.

"I don't think I'll have to make a lot of changes, unless I really don't know this football team," Landry said. "That was one of the worst third quarters I've ever seen in my life."

Hogeboom, who started at Central Michigan, fired TD passes of 11 and 44 yards to Tony Hill ran 1 yard for the Cowboys final TD with 20 seconds remaining.

Hogeboom completed 17 of 24 for 255 yards. White, who suffered a sprained thumb, finished with 23 of

38 for 226 yards and three interceptions.

"There were some fluky things happened that just went against us," White said. "We got behind early. There's no excuse for it. We just didn't react very well to what they were doing."

Hill, one of the few bright spots for the Cowboys, finished with a personal best 11 catches for 181 yards. His previous best was nine catches Oct. 14, 1984, against the Redskins. Doug Cosbie caught 11 passes for 161 yards for Dallas.

Cowboys placekicker Rafael Septien missed field goal attempts of 42 and 44 yards.

A crowd of 72,985, including NFL Commissioner Pete Rozelle, watched the game in the Silverdome. There were 2,478 no-shows.

Lions stalk, shock Pokes, 26-21

Associated Press

PONTIAC, Mich. — Darryl Rogers, fresh out of the collegiate coaching ranks, has instilled a new spirit in the Detroit Lions that has carried them to victories in his first two National Football League games.

"There's a tremendous positive attitude on the team right now," said Detroit quarterback Eric Hipple, who accounted for two touchdowns in the Lions 26-21 victory Sunday over the Dallas Cowboys. "Coach expects a lot out of us. He tries to understand us and we try to understand him."

"He doesn't throw fits. He's always in control," Hipple added.

Hipple passed for one touchdown and ran for another and a fired-up Detroit defense did the rest, forcing five Dallas turnovers and pulling off a goal line stand.

The Lions needed the turnovers because the Cowboys rolled up 554

yards in total offense to just 200 for Detroit.

"It's a tremendous thing for us to have this much success at this point," said Rogers, who came to the Lions from Arizona State last winter after Detroit fired Monte Clark following a 4-11-1 season in 1984. "Dallas came off a big Monday night, so we got them at the right time."

"Our defense played extremely well," Rogers said. "We had interceptions every way possible. The defense made the offense look good because they got them such good field position."

Hipple, who completed 10 of 23 for 141 yards, flipped a 21-yard scoring strike to Jeff Chadwick at 4:24 of the first quarter and ran 1 yard for a TD at 2:33 of the third quarter.

James Jones scored the Lions' other touchdown at 2:59 of the third quarter. Eddie Murray kicked field

Redskins use Oiler penalties to get back on track, 16-13

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The same penalty flags that allowed the Houston Oilers to soar last week were their undoing Sunday as they fell to the Washington Redskins 16-13 under a sea of yellow flags.

Last week, the Oilers were aided by a pass interference call in the end zone to come from behind in the fourth quarter to beat Miami.

The Oilers were penalized a dozen times for 111 yards, including two touchdowns that were called back and a 51-yard pass play that would have given them a first down at the Washington 9-yard line.

"We had five big plays called back. That always hurt's you, especially on the road," said Houston quarterback Warren Moon, who completed 12 of 28 passes for 137 yards and one touchdown.

"You can't give away that many big plays and expect to win," said Oiler wide receiver Drew Hill. "We beat them, we just didn't beat them on the score."

Following the callback of their sec-

ond touchdown, the Oilers still had a chance to tie, but Tony Zendejas' 33-yard field goal attempt with 4:23 to play hit the right upright and bounced wide.

"I hit it straight it just didn't break in," said Zendejas, who was traded by the Redskins to Houston this summer.

The Redskins, thrashed Monday night in Dallas, 44-14, used the power running of George Rogers and John Riggins early against the Oilers, scoring on their first three possessions. The team bogged down after the quick start but still held on for the team's first victory of the season.

"It was just a guts job, especially after a short work week where there were bad thoughts, feelings and depression," said Redskins Coach Joe Gibbs.

Gibbs admitted to some early season scoreboard watching and was genuinely pleased as the results of the Dallas loss to Detroit was posted.

"We were struggling in their for awhile," Gibbs said. "I think all of

Sunday's NFL scores: (Home team in capitals)

N.Y. JETS 42, Buffalo 3
ST. LOUIS 41, Cincinnati 27
MIAMI 30, Indianapolis 13
L.A. Rams 17, PHILADELPHIA 6
CHICAGO 20, New England 7
Minnesota 31, TAMPA BAY 16
DENVER 34, New Orleans 23
GREEN BAY 23, N.Y. Giants 20
SAN FRANCISCO 35, Atlanta 16
Seattle 49, SAN DIEGO 35

Monday Night Game:
Pittsburgh at CLEVELAND

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