

Sports

Ags' Franklin just had 'one of those days'

By CHAREAN WILLIAMS
Assistant Sports Editor

Last weekend was a living nightmare for kickers in Texas. "Mr. Dependable," Rafael Septien of the Dallas Cowboys, went out and missed four field goals in last Sunday's 17-10 win over the Houston Oilers.

Oiler kicker Tony Zendjas missed a late fourth quarter field goal that would have put the Oilers ahead, 13-10.

And Texas A&M placekicker Eric Franklin wasn't immune from the "kicking bug," either.

Franklin missed a 24-yard field goal and two extra points last Saturday in A&M's win over Tulsa, 45-10.

Things haven't gone quite as expected for Franklin, so far this season. He is only 3-of-5 on extra points and 4-of-8 on field goals.

"It was a mechanical problem," Franklin said. "I have no excuses though. There were some things I was doing wrong, but not enough to miss kicks. It's time to go out and practice some more. I'll work on some specific things. I'm not worried about quantity, just quality.

"I don't feel bad with the way I'm kicking. Kickers have to have confidence. I'm ready to go out and kick some more. It was just one of those days."

Franklin's family hasn't seen too many of "those days."

Older brother Tony was an All-American kicker for the Aggies and is currently kicking for the NFL's New England Patriots. When father C.R. didn't pick up a



Photo by GREG BAILEY

Texas A&M kicker Eric Franklin (far left, #47) lines up for the only field goal he attempted against Tulsa last Saturday, a 24-yarder

first down running with the ball at Ranger Junior College, he punted away the ball.

The elder Franklin is responsible for his boys' barefoot success.

"My father tutored both Tony and I," Eric said. "He and Tony watched the kickers on television. They picked it up themselves. He had Tony to work with, so by the

time I came along, he knew what was right and what was wrong. I reaped the benefits of having an older brother who kicked."

Eric said he learns a lot from watching Tony kick.

"I stay in touch with Tony," said Eric, who is eight years younger than Tony. "I only get to see him kick on television. (The

Patriots) played in Dallas last year, but I didn't get a chance to go see him play. Whenever I get the chance, I'm glued to the TV. I can learn a lot just by watching him kick."

While Eric was watching his brother kick game-winning field goals for the Philadelphia Eagles (1979-1983), it appeared doubtful that he would even get chance to kick a college field goal.

"I had no scholarship offers coming out of high school," said the Levelland High graduate. "SMU and TCU were interested, but they never offered a scholarship. I had been an Aggie ever since Tony had been, so that's where I decided to go. Fortuna-

tely, (A&M) Coach (Jackie) Sherrill gave me a shot. He took a chance with me."

His freshman year he was the starting kicker on the JV team. It was late last season before he even got to attempt a collegiate field goal in a real game.

"There are two field goals that really stand out in my mind," Franklin said. "The 50-yarder against TCU was the first I ever attempted. I was fortunate that one went through. Then there was the 18-yarder at Texas. It was from the right hash mark, which is difficult for kickers."

Although his brother has encountered much success in the pros, Franklin said he's not counting on his foot to bring home a paycheck every week.

"Right now, I'm not thinking about pro ball," Franklin said. "If it's in the cards, I'll be there. I'll have to have a good year next year that's for sure."

So instead of thinking about wearing a NFL helmet, Franklin's dreams center around kicking in the Cotton Bowl.

"My dream right now is to just get to the Cotton Bowl," Franklin said. "I want to contribute along the way. If it comes to the winning field goal, I'll do it, but if I just get to kick an extra point there, I'll be happy."

"Kickers dream about that game-winning field goal. Not many get the opportunity..."

And Franklin said not many people want the opportunity.

"You're a hero if you make it, but if you miss it, you're the goat," he said.

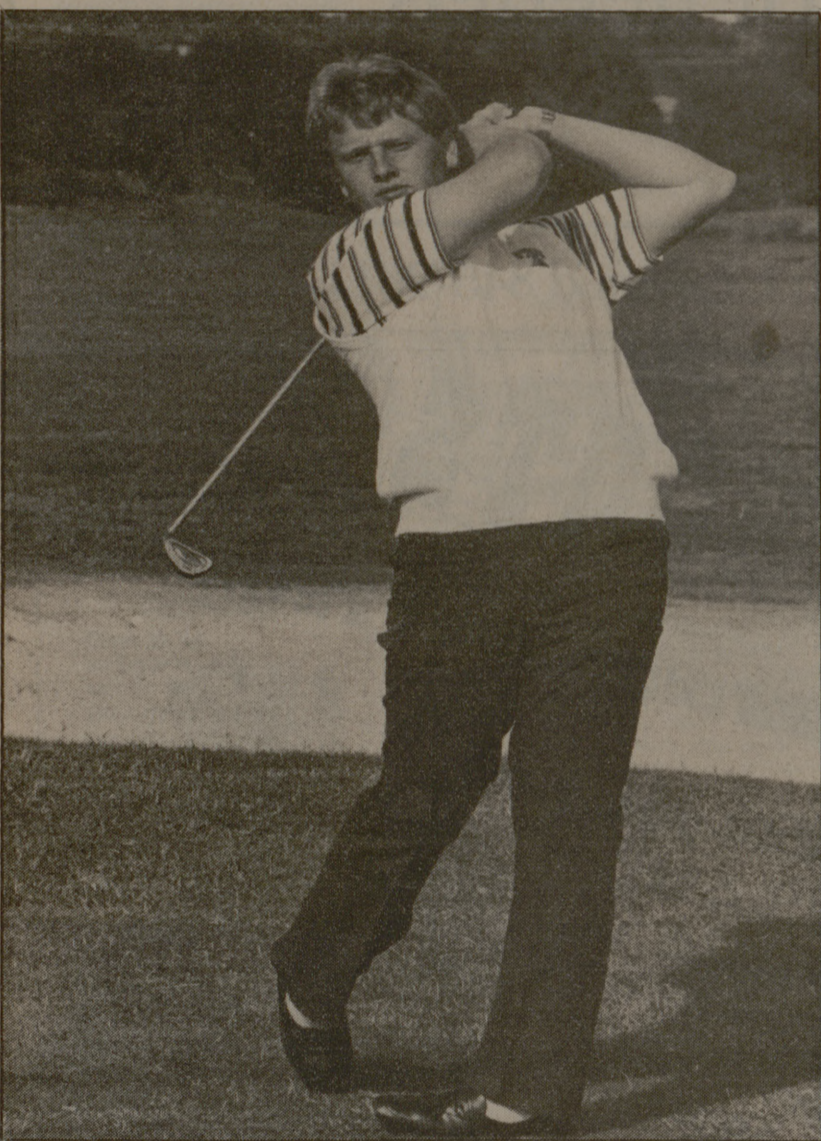


Photo by ANTHONY S. CASPER

A&M golfer Paul Mayo finishes his swing during a recent practice. Mayo, who is from Wales, is looking for an All-America year.

'Swinging out for No. 1' Mayo leaves Wales for A&M golf

By DOUG HALL
Sports Writer

For many people, golf offers friendly competition and weekend recreation.

For Paul Mayo, a junior from Newport, Wales, golf is his ticket to the United States and a chance to compete for Texas A&M.

"I wouldn't be here (at A&M) without golf," Mayo admits.

Mayo was recruited from Wales by A&M Coach Bob Ellis in 1983 on the recommendation of former Aggie golfer and native Briton Phillip Parkin.

Ellis says, "When Phillip Parkin was here... I asked him once he got here, who the best player was, besides himself, in Great Britain.

He said, 'Paul Mayo.'"

Mayo says, with his distinct British accent, "As a junior golfer, I had been reading about my peers (in the U.S.). I thought that coming to the states would be neat. It was kind of a dream, more than anything.

"When the opportunity came, I grasped the chance straight away. I didn't hesitate at all."

Accepting A&M's golf scholarship may have been the easiest thing Mayo did, upon his arrival to the States.

Not only did he have to adjust to playing golf on a collegiate level, Mayo had to adjust to the American culture and, in particular, the Aggie way of life.

"There were a lot of cultural differences," Mayo says. "It was all totally new. But the nature of A&M is so relaxing because everyone wants to know you. Really, it was easy. It

was fun trying to adapt." Adapting is something Mayo is well accustomed to.

Mayo spent his youth playing on soccer and rugby teams that were extremely competitive.

"But I finally grew out of soccer and rugby," he says. "I just got burned out and fed up."

Mayo says his family had always been involved with various aspects of golf and, after giving up on the other sports, he decided to concentrate more seriously on the game.

"I've always been very competitive," Mayo says. "I wanted to compete and win in golf. Really, I just went from strength to strength."

And "strength" is a good word to describe Mayo's 1984-85 golf season.

In fact, he played so well last year, he earned honorable mention All-America honors for A&M.

Not bad for someone who didn't start playing competitive golf until he was 16.

"I played pretty good last fall," Mayo says. "I finished in the Top 10 of a couple of tournaments and played strong throughout. I try to make the fall (playing time) low-key, but still compete on a good level. I knew that if I played good, I could

help the team."

Mayo says his fine season helped prepare him for his return to Wales in the summer, where he competed in the Walker Cup. The Walker Cup is a bi-annual amateur golf tournament, similar to the Ryder Cup in which top professional players from Britain and the U.S. compete head-to-head.

"That (last season) put me in good stead for when I went home to Britain," he says. "I won a couple of tournaments and got picked for the British Walker Cup team."

An honor Mayo calls, "the highlight of my golf career, outside of college."

Mayo says he anticipates a good year for the Aggie golf team in a tough Southwest Conference.

"By next spring I think we will have developed into a really strong golf team," Mayo says.

"Texas, Arkansas, A&M and Houston are all equally good," he says. "I think it's very even across the board. If we go about it the right way, we have every chance of winning the conference."

"We need to win golf tournaments. Every tournament we play in, we have the chance to win. My ambition for the team is to win — period."

Individually, Mayo says his '85-'86 goals are to improve upon his All-America stature, perhaps even make first team All-America, and continue pursuing his degree.

"I want to get through school and play more amateur golf," Mayo says.

"Golf has become my life, and in the future, I would see it as my life."

Bowl won't be hurt by SWC host

Officials not laughing at SWC rep jokes

By DENNE H. FREEMAN
AP Sports Writer

DALLAS — Jim Brock has heard the barber shop jokes about the Southwest Conference and the Cotton Bowl.

A sample barbed-humor newspaper comment: "The Rice Owl clinched a Cotton Bowl berth today by losing 52-0 to Southern Methodist. The Owls, the only Southwest Conference team not on probation, will take a 1-10 record against Slippery Rock into the New Year's Day Classic."

Brock, the executive-vice president of the Cotton Bowl Athletic Association, says the "coffee-shop talk" has reached his ears and it's made them burn.

Of course, the Cotton Bowl depends on the SWC for its host team in the Jan. 1 game. As the SWC goes, so goes the Cotton Bowl which has a lucrative television contract with CBS.

If the Cotton Bowl doesn't have an attractive host team, the extravaganza suffers.

Right now, the SWC and the Cotton Bowl are hurting from the Booster Slush Fund Disaster. Southern Methodist got a strong case of the BSFD's and the NCAA took scholarships away. Among other lashes it administered was

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