

Photo by JOHN MAKELY

Crowning the 'King'

SMU quarterback Don King (8) tightens his hold on the football as A&M defensive end Jay Muller

(82) and noseguard Sammy O'Brient (90) converge on their target during Saturday's game.

Aggies on road to Cotton Bowl?

bus pulled up to the intersection Sat-urday, hesitated for a moment, then the driver flipped on his blinker and turned the Aggie bus onto "College Boyl Avenue" Bowl Avenue.

Eric Franklin's 48-yard field goal with 1:48 left in Saturday's game against Southern Methodist University may have pushed the Aggies

around that corner.

It also may be responsible for keeping every chiropractor in the Brazos Valley busy for the next few

The football cleared the crossbar at the south end of the field by what seemed to be no more than half an inch and caused severe back problems for anyone wearing maroon in the stands.

When the fans who sat on the west side of the stadium left the game, they were walking with a hard lean to the right. The students, who stood on the other side of Kyle Field, weren't in any better shape. They walked down the ramp leaning hard to the left.

But Aggie fans can recover while watching their team get ready for postseason football.

A&M's 19-17 come-from-behind victory over the SMU Mustangs virtually assured the Aggies of a bid to play football over the Christmas holidays. The Aggies are now 6-2 over-all and 4-1 in the Southwest Confer-ence with an outside chance at going

to the Cotton Bowl.

Even if the Ags don't make it to Dallas for a New Year's Day game, they will most likely get a bid to one of the bowl games that have representatives conspicuously occupying the press box at Kyle Field.

The list of people wearing loud blazers with bowl emblems to be seen in the press box during the remain-ing home games will most likely include representatives of the Holiday, Sun, Bluebonnet, and Liberty bowls.

That soureds fine and good, but of course, the bowl game A&M fans want is the Cotton Bowl.

PETE HERNDON Sports Viewpoint

How do the Aggies' chances of going to the Cotton Bowl compare with the other teams in the SWC that still have a road open to Dallas?

Baylor, Arkansas, Texas and Texas A&M are still in the running. And if you rated the teams chances of making it on a scale of one to four, with one being the highest, A&M would carry No. 4.

This isn't because A&M is the weakest of the four teams; the inconsistent Texas Longhorns hold that

It is because the Bears, Razorbacks, or Longhorns can go to Dallas if they win the rest of their games. The Aggies, however, have to win the rest of their games and depend on other teams to win before they can claim the SWC crown.

For the Aggies to go, Arkansas would have to beat Baylor next week and then Texas would have to beat Baylor the Saturday before Thanksgiving. If Rice upsets the Bears, then the Aggies wouldn't have to depend on Texas and Arkansas.

The advantage that A&M does have is that both of its remaining big games, against Arkansas and Texas, are at home. Baylor gets Arkansas at home, but has to play Texas in Austin, where the Longhorns are unbeaten this season.

Arkansas and Texas each play

Baylor the week before the Aggies face the Hogs and Longhorns. Arkansas and Texas, then, have a greater incentive to beat Baylor beause they're still in the SWC race

before they play A&M.

There is still a chance the Aggies could be in "Big D" in 1986 — certainly more of a chance than there usually is at this point in the season.



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TOURNAMENT

Aggie spikers post impressive victory against Tennessee

By CHAREAN WILLIAMS Assistant Sports Editor

KNOXVILLE, Tenn. - For the

second time in four days the Texas A&M volleyball team played UT. Wednesday night the Aggies lost an important Southwest Conference match to the University of Texas. But Saturday afternoon, the Ags defeated UT — that's the University of

Against the Volunteers, the Aggies played their best match since an upset win over Purdue on Oct. 12.

A&M looked impressive in its 15-6, 15-6, 15-5 victory. As a team, the Ags hit .378 and held the Volunteers "This one felt re-

"I think we're finally starting to win. A&M Coach Terry Condon

ter prepared or if they were handling things better when they got down. But when they really want to

play, they play."

It seems that when outside hitter
Stacey Gildner goes, so go the Ags.
Gildner led A&M in hitting percentage at .533 and had 10 kills

"We flowed well together,"
Gildner said. "We're trying to figure
out why we play so well in some
matches and so poorly in others. I
guess it's just different with different

Middle blocker Sherri Brinkman had 12 kills for a .423 percentage

"This one felt really good," Brinkman said. "We were due for a big

Margaret Spence, who just started said. "I don't know if they were bet- playing in the middle seven matches

ago, continues to improve. The ju-

ago, continues to improve. The junior hit .364 with five kills.

"Sherry played well," Condon said. "She's blocking really well in the middle. Stacey played well, and so did Maragaret. Laura (Hoppe) came in and dug some balls for us. The setting was also a lot better."

And freshman outside hitter Cheri Steensma, starting for only the

Cheri Steensma, starting for only the second time this season, hit .500 and had seven kills.

"I know it's not going to be a solid starting position for me," Steensma said. "I know I'll have to work hard for it, but it felt good to start. Michelle (Whitwell) and I give each other a lot of support. We want whoever is out on the floor to do good.

However, good isn't a good word to describe Friday night's match

After an easy win in the first game, the Ags fumbled and stumbled their way through the next three games to lose 15-4, 4-15, 9-15,

"The first game we looked unstoppable," Spence said. "It seemed like we couldn't do anything seemed like we couldn't do anything wrong. Then we quit talking, communicating, setting, hitting — we stopped doing everything."

Spence had another good night in the middle, hitting .411 with nine kills. And Brinkman hit .309 with 14

But besides that, the Aggies did

little else right.
"The LSU match was a big disap"Condon said. "Hopefully that won't hurt us much (for a NCAA bid).

In a Saturday morning match,

burgh but won anyway 18-16, 12-15, Brinkman covered the entire

A&M had a few problems with Pitts-

Brinkman covered the entire floor, at times all by herself or so it seemed. With the match she had, the All-American could have almost crushed Pitt by herself. Brinkman had 19 kills, a .405 hitting percentage, 8 digs and 12 blocks.

But the Mt. Prospect, Ill. native wasn't totally pleased.

"Once we lose, we get in a losing state of mind," Brinkman said. "We need to take it for what we are.

need to take it for what we are. We're good, we've just all got to be-lieve it. It takes six players, not just

The Aggies (21-6) have got to believe it Wednesday night when they host Texas Tech in a crucial SWC



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stayed alive while the Southwest missed extra point.

Conference-leading Baylor Bears hi"I thought I had cost us the bernated for a week

A&M upset SMU 19-17, Arkansas rolled over Rice 30-15 and Texas
dropped Texas Tech 34-21. All
three winners have just one SWC
loss and are still very much alive in

Trailing 17-16, the Aggies m
to within range for Franklin's
yard field goal with less than
minutes to play for the victory. the league race.

The Aggies had to come from behind twice to beat SMU, snapping a five-game losing streak against the

ond chance after it appeared he Texas A&M, Arkansas and Texas would be the game's goat with a

> game," said Franklin. "It was redemption.'

Trailing 17-16, the Aggies moved to within range for Franklin's 48yard field goal with less than two

"It was a very big win for us," said Aggie Coach Jackie Sherrill. "We beat a great team out there." Scouts from the Sun, Bluebonnet,

Cotton bowls were on hand.

The Aggies have never been to a

bowl under Sherrill. However, Ted Nance, director of the Bluebonnet Bowl, said, "The Aggies are really looking good. They have a very attractive team this year and really draw a lot of fans where they go. We're taking a hard look at A&M's lone conference loss has

been to Baylor. The Aggies host Arkansas in two weeks. In the other SWC game, Houston,

resentative, won its first SWC game, downing Texas Christian 26-21

Baylor, leading the SWC with a 5-0 record, sat back and watched the scramble for survival in the SWC.
All eyes will be on Little Rock Sat-

urday as the Arkansas Razorbacks try to derail the Bears' Cotton Bowl express. The game will begin at 2:30 p.m. Saturday before a national television audience. Baylor has games against Rice and Texas remaining after Arkansas takes its shot.

In other games, TCU is at Texas,

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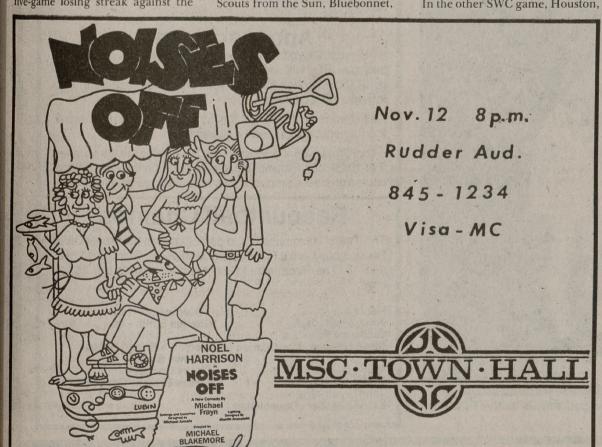
Rice is at SMU, and Texas is at Houston. Texas A&M has the week

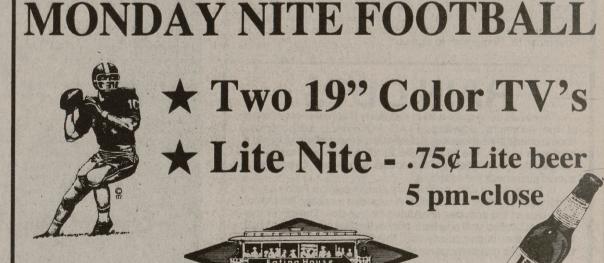
Texas quarterback Bret Stafford led the Longhorns against the snake-bit Red Raiders. The Red Raiders sank to an 0-5 SWC record.

Arkansas jumped to a quick lead over Rice and put away the improv-

ing Owls early.

And the Horn Frogs rallied from a 19-point deficit and had a chance to win until Houston tackle T.J. Turner forced a fumble in the final





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