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by Jeff Millar & Bill Hinds



**Cowboys extending their feast**

Dallas to make first trip ever to Cincinnati

**Associated Press**  
CINCINNATI — The Dallas Cowboys are looking for another extended Thanksgiving feast Sunday when they make their first-ever trip to Cincinnati.

The Cowboys would like to stretch their November holiday into a two-game winning streak that will thrust them into the playoffs. Dallas is 14-3-1 on Thanksgiving and an even more impressive 16-1 in their following games, coming on nine days of rest.

The history of the Cowboys says this is our time of year," defensive back Everson Walls said. "And the way we're playing offensively and defensively right now, it is going to be hard for anyone to beat us. We didn't sneak into this situation we're in now."

The Pokes' situation includes a 9-4 record and a one-game lead in the NFC East as they prepare for the inconsistent Bengals.

Dallas has demolished its last two opponents after being embarrassed 44-0 by the Chicago Bears. The Cowboys recovered with a 34-17 victory over Philadelphia and a 35-17 victory over the St. Louis Cardinals on Thanksgiving Day that helped put them in command in their division.

Quarterback Danny White said the Cowboys must put their desire for revenge against the Bears on hold while they concentrate on more pressing matters.

"I would love to get another shot at the Bears," White said. "We will be thinking about the Bears — there's no way around that. But our focus will still have to be on Cincinnati this week."

White has led the two-game resurgence with seven touchdown passes. "His confidence is back, but it took a while," Dallas Coach Tom Landry said. "He's playing well and he has to perform at that level for us to win the (NFC) championship."

The Bengals, too, are in the midst of an offensive renaissance. Second-year quarterback Boomer Esiason threw three touchdown passes Sunday as Cincinnati rolled up its highest point total of the season in a 45-27 victory over Houston.

The victory left Cincinnati at 6-7, tied with Pittsburgh a game behind the division-leading Cleveland Browns.

Bengals Coach Sam Wyche thinks his players will have to view themselves as equals in order to win the first game between Cincinnati and Dallas since 1979.

"This is not 'America's Team,'" Wyche told his players this week. "They are not anything special over any other (team). We're going to attack the Dallas Cowboys. We're not going to sit back and say, 'Oh, there comes Tony Dorsett right there. I've seen him before. You don't do that.'"

**Texas' wins over A&M no longer a certainty**

From the end of one year to the beginning of the next, there used to be certain things you could count on.

For instance, that old man with the white beard was guaranteed to show up in your chimney on Dec. 25.

And on Jan. 1, you could expect the Longhorns from Texas to be pulling a plow and harvesting Cotton in Dallas.

But, oh my, how times have changed.

No, Virginia there's not a Santa Claus — it's your money that'll be spent during the commercialized time we still call Christmas.

And those Longhorns? They've become accustomed to

**CHAREAN WILLIAMS Sports Viewpoint**

No prisoners are taken. In the first 85 years of the A&M-UT football series, there was little doubt which team would win. In a typical four years at Aggieland, an A&M student would be lucky to ever beat Texas more than once.

The wins for the Ags would be close ones — 22-21, 7-0, 10-7 — sweet, but not sugary enough to cleanse the salt in the wounds.

The defeats were, for the most part, painful, lopsided affairs — 52-14, 34-14, 57-28.

Forget the bowl games and winning records (as few and far between as they were for the Aggies). What mattered was those pesky Horns.

The Ags looked like they might turn things around in 1980, winning 21-13 in Austin. But in the next three years, UT outscored them, 119-42.

In '84, it looked like another blowout. The Horns were headed for a bowl game, and the Aggies were supposed to be going home to think about their losing record and next year.

But something happened Dec. 1, 1984 in Austin.

It was a blowout, but the Horns were the ones that screamed to a halt.

After UT's collapse in the Freedom Bowl, Freddie's bunch wasn't expected to do much in '85 — fourth or fifth in the SWC was the consensus of most sports writers and SWC coaches.

A&M was picked third or fourth.

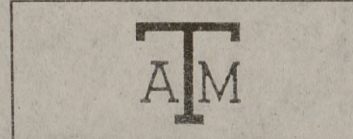
However, someone forgot to tell the "experts" that football is played on grass (whether it be fake or real) and not on paper. And someone forgot to tell the

state's arch-rivals where they were supposed to end up in the standings.

On Thanksgiving Night, it was the Aggies and Horns playing for the outright SWC championship. Texas was expected to reap the benefits of the "Horn of plenty."

But when the Aggies went up 14-0 early in the second half, it was the A&M fans who began chanting, "We want Cotton!" and unveiled a SWC champions banner.

In the fourth quarter, it was apparent which school was "better" in '85.



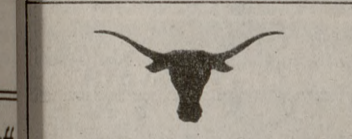
It really didn't matter which university had the most National Merit Scholars, the richest alumni or the most library books. All that mattered was who had the most points on the Kyle Field scoreboard when the clock reached zero.

After the gun sounded, signaling a 42-10 A&M win, the Longhorns were uncharacteristically left "waiting until next year" — awaiting next year's game to reestablish their powerhold.

The UT general (Fred Akers) was rumored to be in trouble. He had lost "The War" for the second straight year.

"I hope you understand the lack of smiles," Akers said. "These guys are fighters and right now they're hurting like hell. We wish Texas A&M the very best of luck and we'll see them in Austin next year."

When Gen. Douglas MacArthur said, "War is hell," he must have been thinking of A&M and Texas.



Mickey Mouse, Disneyland, Astroworld and Bluebonnets. Their name is no longer synonymous with Southwest Conference Champion and Cotton Bowl bid.

The table was turned last year (after A&M upset Texas, 37-12)," Texas A&M Coach Jackie Sherrill said.

Almost every school in the SWC uses the game against Texas as a measuring stick for its season. If you beat the Horns, the season is a successful one, even if your record isn't.

And, for A&M, it means even more.

The two largest schools in Texas — a state known for the biggest and the best — are competitive in everything. Arguments over who has the most students to who has the prettiest mascot can be heard from Austin to College Station, and vice-versa.

If you are an Aggie, beating the Horns in anything is a good enough excuse to create a national holiday. So naturally, anytime the teams meet on the football field, stand back — way back. World War III is underway.

**Paterno wants playoff to decide No. 1**

**Associated Press**  
NEW YORK — Coach Joe Paterno of top-ranked Penn State thinks the best way to settle college football's annual national championship debate is with a post-bowl playoff involving four teams.

"Absolutely," Paterno said, "we ought to be doing in our sport what we do in every other sport under NCAA auspices. The 1,500-meter swimming championship is decided head to head. Wrestling, lacrosse, soccer, volleyball, gymnastics ... you wouldn't have people looking at gymnasts in different parts of the

country and then voting on who's the best."

"Undeclared Penn State's Jan. 1 Orange Bowl date against No. 4 Oklahoma, to be televised by NBC, is being touted by some as a showdown for the national championship, even though second-ranked Miami will be playing Tennessee, No. 8, in the Sugar Bowl and No. 3 Iowa will be at the Rose Bowl, playing 14th-ranked UCLA.

Paterno is flattered but also aware of his team's bittersweet bowl history in Miami.

Three times before, in 1969, 1970 and 1974, Penn State has taken per-

fect records into the Orange Bowl. Each time, the Nittany Lions won the game and then sat back and saw other teams crowned national champions.

"I hate to see anybody voted out of a national championship," Paterno said. "It's happened to me three times. I felt if we had played (the teams that finished No. 1) on the field, we'd have won."

Paterno's plan would not eliminate the bowls. "They must be included. They've been too good to college football," he said.

"What I would do is take four teams after the bowls based on com-

puter ratings, power indexes or maybe selected by a media panel, and on the first Saturday after New Year's, have them play semifinals and a week later the finals.

"That would give two teams 14 games and two teams 13 games. They're doing it in Division IAA, Division II and Division III, playing 14 games. We could do the same."

Paterno was asked about taking players away from classes for an extra two weeks that a playoff would require. He said that was not a problem with most schools on winter breaks or between fall and spring terms at that time of year.

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