

Sports

A&M harvests cream of football crop

Some of Texas', nation's top high school prospects commit to Aggies

By CHAREAN WILLIAMS
Assistant Sports Editor

You could tell by Texas A&M Coach Jackie Sherrill's mood that it was the best of times in Aggieland Wednesday.

"Anything you want guys, I'm in a very good mood," were Sherrill's first words.

And Sherrill had reason to whistle and shout.

A Cotton Bowl victory over Auburn and season-ending No. 6 ranking in the Associated Press Top 20 helped A&M scoop up the cream of the college football crop on the first signing day for the nation's high school seniors.

"There's no doubt that (the Cotton Bowl victory) helped us," Sherrill said. "Coming back from Dallas no question made a big difference in a young man's mind. We no longer have to tell a player we'll go to the Cotton Bowl. They know it's true."

The 26 players the Aggies added to their roster include the top quarterback, top receiver and top offensive lineman in Texas, making it perhaps the best A&M recruiting year since Sherrill arrived on the scene in 1982.

"I am very pleased and excited," Sherrill said. "We wanted to go after the top players. We wanted to get the players who can help us win a national championship."

"We were fortunate to sign five or six of the Top 30 players in the state and 16 or 17 of the Top 60."

Tomball's Lance Pavlas, Texas' top signal caller, heads A&M's impressive list of recruits.

A *Parade* magazine All-American, Pavlas passed for 1,636 yards last season in leading the Tomball Cougars to the state 4A championship game. Pavlas, 6-foot-2 and a native of Bryan, also compiled a 3.9 grade point average in the classroom.

"He has programmed himself to be an outstanding player and an outstanding student," Sherrill said. "The only concerns I had (about his decision to attend A&M) were that he had too many

'86 Texas A&M Football Signees

In-State Recruits

1. Lance Pavlas (QB) 6-2, 195 — Tomball (High)
2. Jeroy Robinson (LB) 6-2, 220 — Bryan (High)
3. Sean Wilson (P) 6-0, 205 — Huntsville (High)
4. Terry Price (DE) 6-4, 230 — Plano (High)
5. Mickey Washington (DB) 5-11, 180 — Beaumont (West Brook)
6. Gary Jones (DB) 6-2, 190 — Tyler (High)
7. Percy Waddle (WR) 6-2, 175 — Columbus (High)
8. Chris Work (OL) 6-4, 240 — Beaumont (West Brook)
9. Layne Talbot (PK) 5-10, 185 — Beaumont (West Brook)
10. Mike Arthur (C) 6-4, 251 — Houston (Spring Woods)
11. Mike Pappas (OL) 6-2, 250 — Houston (Memorial)
12. Bill Cavanaugh (OL) 6-4, 260 — Harker Heights (Killeen High)
13. James Marcus (RB) 6-1, 190 — Grand Prairie (South)
14. Shane Krahl (TE) 6-6, 230 — Gainesville (High)
15. Artis Whetstone (DB) 6-0, 185 — Naples (Pewitt)
16. Albert Jones (OL) 6-4, 272 — Missouri City (Willowridge)
17. Dennis Ransom (TE) 6-4, 230 — Italy (High)
18. Kevin Burnett (DL) 6-6, 258 — Kemp (High)
19. John Miller (OL) 6-3, 250 — Grand Saline (High)
20. Jody Adamek (TE-LB) 6-4, 223 — Santa Fe (High)

Out-of-State Recruits

21. Bill Peckman (LB) 6-4, 218 — Elizabeth, Pa. (Forward)
22. Mark Barry (OL) 6-7, 290 — Chicago (Main South)
23. Dexter Harrison (DL) 6-3, 240 — St. Martinville, La. (High)
24. Jayson Black (DL) 6-3, 245 — Decatur, Ga. (Columbia)
25. Bryan Edwards (WR) 6-3, 280 — Mobile, Ala. (Baker)
26. Felton Ransby (QB) 6-2, 185 — Decatur, Ga. (Columbia)

Confirmed Walk-ons

27. Travis Evans (LB) — Caldwell (High)
28. Gary Oliver (WR) — Breckenridge (High)

family members here and would go the other way."

Pavlas and Felton Ransby, from Columbia High School in Decatur, Ga., become the only quarterbacks A&M has signed since Ore City's Mark Motley joined the Aggies two years ago.

"We did not sign a quarterback last year because we felt there was only one that could come in and play," Sherrill said. "These two can come in here and compete."

Snapping the ball to the new quarterbacks will be Houston Spring Woods' Mike Arthur, the top center in the state.

The 6-4, 251-pound Arthur was first-team 5A All-State, second team *Parade* All-American and on the *Dallas Times Herald* 15-man blue chip list. Arthur's brother, Tom, was a member of A&M's Twelfth Man kickoff team in 1984.

"It's very hard to find a true center," Sherrill said. "He's an outstanding prospect."

Columbus wide receiver Percy Waddle was ranked No. 8 among Max Emfinger's National High School Scouting Service Top 100 players and was listed on every Texas blue chip list.

Waddle, 6-3, 175, holds the state high school record for career receiving yards with 3,224 and career touchdown receptions with 56. He has yet to make the required 700 on the SAT, but Sherrill is confident he will in time to be eligible for next season.

"Waddle is an outstanding receiver," Sherrill said. "He is projected as a world-class quarter miler and he has great flexibility."

A&M kept one of the state's top three linebackers close to home.

Bryan High's Jeroy Robinson,

a 5A All-State selection, had 87 tackles including eight quarterback sacks last season. The 6-2, 220-pounder can bench press 425 pounds.

"He is physical," Sherrill said. "I told him whatever he's been doing, he needed to tell our strength coach."

The Aggies also cornered the market on some of the state's best kickers — Beaumont West Brook place kicker Layne Talbot and Huntsville punter Sean Wilson.

Talbot hit 9-of-10 field goals last season, with his only miss from 50 yards out, and 29-of-30 extra points on his way to being named a 5A All-Stater.

"He'll help us out," Sherrill said. "He had an outstanding year."

Wilson, son of former Kansas City Chiefs All-Pro punter Jerrell Wilson, had a 42.3 average last season.

"He does a great job of getting the ball inside the 10 and of getting great hang time," Sherrill said. "His daddy taught him so much. We don't have anybody to coach him. If he gets out of sync, we'll call his dad to come straighten him out."

The Aggies only signed one running back, that being South Grand Prairie's James Marcus.

Marcus, 6-1, 190, gained 1,086 yards on 198 carries last season and was listed among the state's Top 100 players by *Texas Football* magazine.

Sherrill called the sleeper of the list Tyler defensive back Gary Jones. Jones was named to *Texas Football*'s Top 100 list last season.

"(Jones) has a brother at Rice who is on their world-class sprint relay team," Sherrill said. "And (Gary) is probably faster than his brother. He is a top player — one of the best we were able to sign."

The Aggies are still recruiting three players who have not yet committed and expect to sign at least one more.

"We'll keep smiling and keep on working," Sherrill said.

He said tomorrow will be a new day for the Aggie recruits and next season will be a new year.

TCU axes A&M 70-53 to remain on top of SWC

From Staff and Wire Reports

FORT WORTH — Texas Christian's Carl Lott scored 19 points and a tough zone defense carried the Horned Frogs to a 70-53 victory over Texas A&M Wednesday night, keeping the Frogs in a tie for the Southwest Conference lead.

TCU increased its record to 10-2 and remain tied with the Texas Longhorns for first-place in the SWC. The Frogs are 18-5 overall, their best record at this point in the season in 27 years.

A&M dropped to 8-3 in the SWC and 14-9 overall.

TCU, the second leading team in the nation on defense against field goals, constantly frustrated the Aggie attack.

Don Marbury, the SWC's leading scorer, got 23 points for the Aggies but they came to late to do them any good.

"The refs cheated us real bad," Marbury said. "It was a joke."

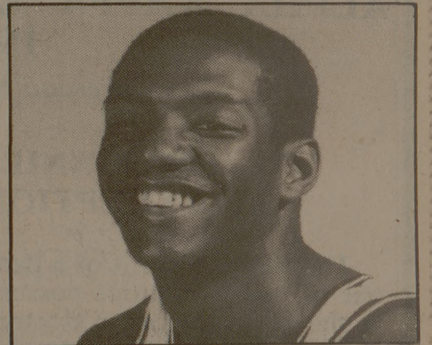
No other Aggie was in double figures. A&M guard Todd Holloway, who averages over 11 points a game, was shut out and forward Winston Crite managed only 4 points.

"We didn't play well offensively," A&M Coach Shelby Metcalf said. "We just didn't have any outside shooting. We got the shots and moved the ball pretty well, but we just didn't execute."

"The shots that we missed a good college team is supposed to make. This is the first time TCU has started in a zone (defense) and stuck with it the whole time. I imagine we'll see a lot of (zone) in our next five games."

TCU, which is now 13-0 this season in Daniel-Meyer Coliseum, entertained a sellout crowd of 7,200 fans, the first sellout here since 1983.

The Horned Frogs jumped to a 28-23 lead and put the game away when Carven Holcombe made a three-point play and Metcalf drew a technical foul.



A&M's Don Marbury

Lott made the two free throws for what amounted to a five-point play and TCU had a 14-point lead, 62-48, with just under two minutes to play.

"We saw the same thing here (in Fort Worth against TCU) for the entire game that we saw during the second half of the SMU game (in which A&M lost 58-56)," Metcalf said. "We played hard. I'm not saying we played poorly. I'm saying we shot poorly. There's a big difference."

"We've got problems. We've got to get playing well again."

Arkansas 79, Texas Tech 72 (OT)
LUBBOCK — William Mills scored 16 points and four other Razorbacks hit in double figures Wednesday night as Arkansas defeated Texas Tech 79-72 in overtime.

Mills converted a three-point play with 1:22 left in overtime to give the Razorbacks a 76-68 lead and the Hogs cruised in from there.

Arkansas ran its record to 11-11 and 3-9 in the SWC. Tech fell to 10-12 and 5-6.

The Raiders had a chance to win it in regulation, but guard Mike Nelson rimmed a 22-footer just before the buzzer with the score knotted at 66-66.

See SWC, page 14

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