

Sports

Coaches say Aggies have long way to go

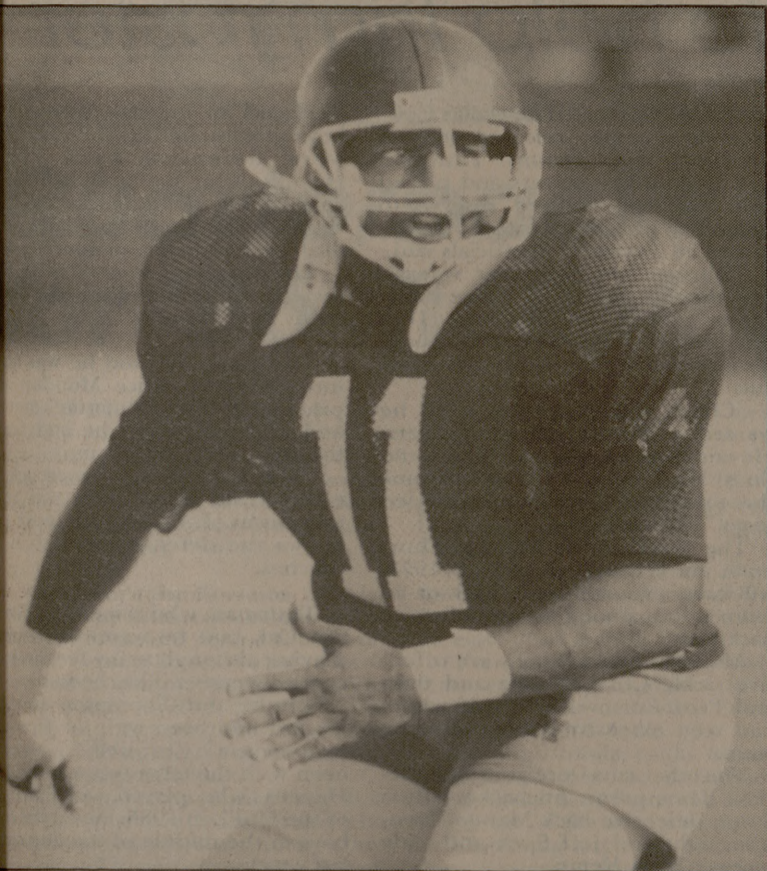


Photo by Anthony S. Casper
Texas A&M All-America linebacker Johnny Holland eyes the developing play before making a tackle during Tuesday's workouts.

By Ken Sury
Sports Editor

The grunts and groans were heard across the grass football practice field Tuesday as Texas A&M players pounded each other in the heat of an afternoon workout.

It was only the fifth day of the whole team worked out and just the second in the full pads. And Coach Jackie Sherrill said it showed.

"We're not anywhere near where we were last year," Sherrill said. "I'm just glad we're not playing for another three weeks."

"We're looking very impressive defensively. But we're a machine not oiled yet."

However, Sherrill said getting the team prepared is just a matter of time.

"Every year is not the same," Sherrill said. "You have to find your strengths to overcome what your weaknesses are."

Offensive coordinator Lynn Amedee agreed that readying a football team takes time.

"Right now it's a slow process," Amedee said. "And there's two reasons for that. One is that we're doing a lot of things in the offense, which is what you try to do in two-a-days."

"The other thing is the heat factor. What I've noticed is that toward the end of our morning workout and also this afternoon, the heat gets to the players and it slows the tempo down."

"But physically, I feel like we're in good condition and we'll be working good because of two-a-days."

Amedee added that the team has a good mental attitude.

"Our team realizes that you have to start over and play each game," he said. "You learn to do what's necessary to win each game. And our guys will do that."

Amedee said the offense's main concern is the line, which lost linemen Randy Wylie and Randy Dausin and tackle Doug Williams from last year's squad.

"We also need some more help at running back," he added, "but I think in our receiving corps and at quarterback, with Kevin Murray and Craig Stump, we're solid."

From the defensive side, coordinator R.C. Slocum said he's been pleased with the condition last year's players came back in. Slocum also said the linemen have increased their strength from last year.

While the defensive front returns all seven starters, the secondary will be a concern during workouts. A&M lost six seniors who played in the secondary last year, including Darrell Austin and Cotton Bowl Defensive Most Valuable Player Domingo Bryant.

"We're very young, very inexperienced there," Slocum said.

"But if we're long on anything," he added, "it's character. Our guys have a lot of intelligence and they're working hard in practice."

"I've been having a lot of fun coaching this year and I'm looking forward to continue having fun."



Photo by Anthony S. Casper
Aggie Keith Woodside heads up the field during team workouts Tuesday. Woodside will start at halfback for A&M this year.

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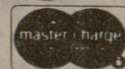
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