

Sports

A&M's high-powered offense ready to explode

Mustangs will try to put dent in Aggies' 4-0 SWC record

By Homer Jacobs
Assistant Sports Editor

The Aggie yell "Military" pretty much sums up the Texas A&M offense so far in 1986.

"Woodside Left! Vick Right! Murray to Walker, we're all right! Load, Ready, Aim, Fire, BOOM! . . . Reload, A&M . . . Give us room!"

Like the yell, A&M's offense has the firepower of a World War I cannon. And like a World War I cannon, the Aggie offense has been somewhat inconsistent and imprecise at times.

But having the firepower and ability to reload with a Rod Bernstine or a Rod Harris makes the offense a squad to be reckoned with.

You better give the A&M offense room or it could blow up in your face mask. Just ask Baylor.

Although the Bears lead the Southwest Conference in total offense with 454.6 yards per game, the Aggies aren't far behind with 423. However, unlike last year, the Aggies have failed to average over 200 yards in both the rushing and passing categories.

A&M's ground attack is fourth in the conference at 187.3 yards per game, while it's averaging 235.7 through the air, good enough for second place in the SWC.

The main difference in the 1985 offense and this year's squad seems to be the relationship between the pass and the run.

Last year, the Aggies had two bangers at fullback in Anthony Toney and Roger Vick, who would wear down defenses by pounding the ball up the middle. The run would set up the pass.

In 1986, it's the opposite. It's pass first and run second, thanks to a balanced set of wide receivers and the emergence of tight end Bernstine.

Bernstine sneaking across the middle has been an opposing linebacker's nightmare and quarterback Kevin Murray's dream.

With receivers Shea Walker, Harris, Tony Thompson, Bernstine and running back Keith Woodside as targets, Murray has been able to establish himself as the premier passer in the conference.

The passing attack's capabilities were evident in the Baylor game when Murray and his receivers shredded a Baylor defensive secondary that is considered one of the top groups in the nation.

Murray also has been breaking passing records left and right. If it weren't for some dropped passes by his receivers and his interceptions earlier in the season, Murray could well have been in the Heisman Trophy hunt.

If there has been a real weakness in the A&M offense, it might be in the young offensive line.

But injuries have plagued the group from Day One. If the line can ever get healthy, it should be a good one.

The line is giving Murray ample pass protection, but the holes that Toney and Vick used to run through last year are not quite as gaping for Woodside and Vick this year.

But like the Monkees' song, that was then and this is now.

The Aggies are not the same team as last year's, but that's okay.

Last year's squad may have had a slightly more potent offense, but A&M was 5-2 at this time, not 6-1.

Winning is the bottom line, and the Aggies have been potent at that.

Overall, barring injuries, the offense should improve the next four weeks until that game when . . . BOOM! — as the offense explodes like a World War I cannon.

A&M . . . Give us room!



Photo by Dean Saito

Texas A&M fullback Roger Vick plows through Rice's defensive line to score A&M's first touchdown in last Saturday's victory over the Owls. Vick and the rest of the Aggie offense hope to be at full force against SMU in Irving Saturday.

There Are Some Things You Should Ask Bill Clements And His Campaign Workers Before You Go To The Polls Tomorrow

Why did he say that "If I had to name one state agency that was a greater waste than any other, it would have to be our institutions of higher education in this state?"

(Austin American Statement, Oct. 20, 1986)

Why did he veto agricultural reserach at the Agricultural Experement Station, Texas Tech, and West Texas State?

Why did he say that the state should raise tuition, becасue it would only cost students "half a coke a day"?

Budget Board estimated that, without a tax increase, the Texas A&M budget would have to be cut by more than a third.

GOVERNOR MARK WHITE had the courage to fight for a tax increase to keep our colleges and universities open

VOTE TO PROTECT OUR FUTURE VOTE FOR MARK WHITE ON NOV. 4TH