

Sports

'Team of destiny' wins another one

By Ken Sury
Sports Editor

Sow an act and you reap a habit. Sow a habit and you reap a character. Sow a character and you reap a destiny.

— English novelist Charles Reade.
Those words typify the 1986 Texas A&M Aggies.

Analysis

A&M has built a habit of winning and its come-from-behind 39-35 victory over Southern Methodist Saturday has shown the character this team possesses.

Perhaps A&M is destined to return to the Cotton Bowl.

Dropped passes, bad officiating and excellent play by the Mustangs were not enough to keep the Aggies from spoiling the Mustangs 75th anniversary homecoming game and snapping the Aggies' 0-3 record in Texas Stadium.

"Probably the best way to characterize this team is they find a way to win, somehow," A&M Coach Jackie Sherrill said. "They're not going to quit until the last second. And even then, if you let them play a little longer they're going to find a way to win."

It was not a game for the faint of heart as the teams exchanged the lead seven times. But A&M took the final lead with 1 minute, 48 seconds to play as tailback Keith Woodside caught a Kevin Murray pass and out-distanced pursuer Franky Thomas

for the deciding 34-yard touchdown.

Woodside, who wants to be known as a top-flight running back, became the game's hero thanks to his two touchdowns as a pass receiver. Woodside also grabbed a 50-yard TD pass with eight seconds left in the third quarter to cut SMU's lead to 28-23. Woodside caught five passes for 134 yards in the game.

Then the Aggies did the smartest thing they could do after Woodside's first touchdown. Murray hit tight end Rod Bernstine on the two-point conversion try to make the game 28-25. That proved to be decisive as the game progressed, because when A&M took the lead it forced the Mustangs to try to score touchdowns instead of settling for a tying field goal.

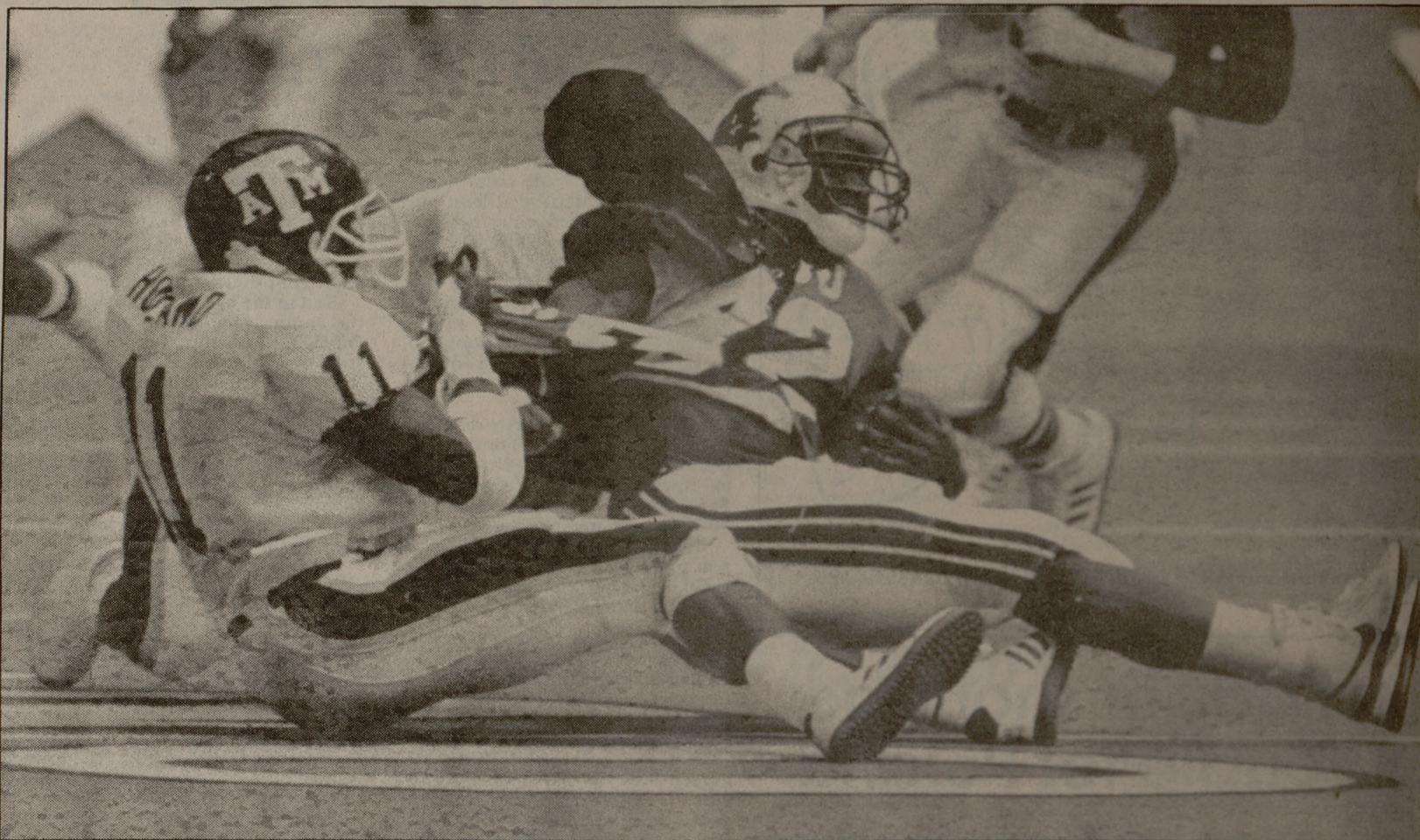
Fullback Roger Vick, whose 4-yard touchdown run in the fourth quarter gave the Aggies a 32-28 lead, had nothing but praise for Woodside.

"He's a big-play man," Vick said. "He can make those kinds of plays. It's just nice to be on his side of the ball."

The game was chock full of big plays by both sides. The SMU offense used the option to near-perfection and kept the No. 4 defense in the country off-balance for much of the game.

The 35 points given up by the

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A&M linebacker Johnny Holland (11) rips the jersey of SMU tailback Jeff Atkins as he brings him down during Saturday's

39-35 win over the Mustangs. Holland led all defenders in tackles with 14 tackles, 10 of which were unassisted.

Photo by Dean Sain



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