

# Sports

## A&M spikers start '87 with scrimmage

The Texas A&M volleyball team will hold a maroon-and-white scrimmage tonight at 8:30 p.m. in G. Rollie White Coliseum.

The 1987 season officially begins Wednesday when the Lady Aggies host Lamar University at 7:30 p.m. in G. Rollie White Coliseum.

Bryan Eagle sports writer Larry Bowen and KBTX sports director Jeff McShan will serve as coaches in tonight's scrimmage.

A&M will try to make the NCAA playoffs for the third consecutive year after posting a 23-14 record in 1986. The Lady Aggies will have to do it with a young team, however. Five seniors, including All-Southwest Conference players Margaret Spence and Stacey Gildner, are gone. The 1987 roster includes six freshmen, four sophomores, two juniors, and only one senior.

"We have been very pleased with how our practices have gone," A&M Coach Al Givens said. "We've been particularly pleased with the way our younger players have been learning and responding. There have been some bright spots, and our players have responded to the challenges that are available."

## A&M magic has come and gone in SWC, Cotton Bowl campaigns

By Hal L. Hammons  
Assistant Sports Editor

The Aggies' role in the ritualistic pandemonium that we all know as the Southwest Conference "Race for the Space in the Cotton Place" has taken on several looks in my tenure here the last three years.

A&M's has been a football team that functions in waves. When it has been good, it has been very, very good; when it has been bad, well, ... chaos in maroon jerseys.

### Viewpoint

When I arrived on the scene in September 1984, Texas A&M was "The Team to Watch." We were predicted to finish third or higher in the race. Several sportswriters across the state were on the "Aggie Cotton in '85" bandwagon.

Most of the preseason hopes were riding on the shoulders of one Kevin Murray, a redshirt freshman who was everybody's pick for SWC Newcomer of the Year.

Well, Aggie hopes proved to be a bit premature that year. A&M began the season against the University of Texas-El Paso, a school which could hardly be mistaken for Oklahoma, or even its Austin sister school. A UTEP field goal that bounced off the upright in the closing seconds was all that salvaged a 20-17 victory.

Equally unimpressive victories over Iowa State and Arkansas State showed us all that preseason hype is

not always merited. And Murray went down in the Arkansas State game with an ankle break.

Another redshirt freshman named Craig Stump finished out the season, as the Aggies finished a lowly 6-5 for the year.

All was not lost, however. Texas Christian and the Killer Frogs, everybody's new Team on the Rise, came into town and had their plane full of Cotton hopes hijacked by a team that was ready to start playing the game like they were capable of playing it.

Five days later in Austin a new Aggie tradition was born, as Stump led A&M to a brilliant 37-12 victory over a Texas team that would have finished the season tied for first in the SWC with a victory.

Hopes were riding high again the next fall, as a recovering Murray and practically all of the previous year's team were predicted to win the conference by a few more people than the year before. The consensus was still third place, though.

A&M Head Coach Jackie Sherrill had recruited more than players in the off-season, though. The Aggies acquired a new offensive coordinator in Lynn Amadee, and the change proved to be just the recipe needed for the Aggie offense.

After an opening-game loss to Alabama, in which the offense basically did not know the new system, A&M kicked into an overdrive gear the rest of the conference did not have. A loss to Baylor in Waco proved to

be the only blemish in a magical conference season.

When the A&M team was "humping it" to "The Spirit of Aggieland" at the Cotton Bowl the next New Year's Day, there was an aura surrounding the stadium and, I would imagine, College Station as well. A feeling of invincibility. Like a kid jumping off the tree limb into his father's arms, knowing of the danger but with no fear at all that any harm could possibly befall.

That day it was academic which team was on the other sideline; A&M was going to win the game. And they did, despite 127 yards rushing from a baseball player named Bo something.

The next year was different. Everyone was expecting the Aggies to win it all, and with the exceptions of games at Arkansas and Louisiana State, they did.

But the magic was not there that season, just the talent. And at the Cotton Bowl against Ohio State, it became very apparent.

This year is like 1985 again. Preseason hopes are again cautiously high on a team with a lot of youth and question marks. Will the magic strike again?

History would indicate that First Game Fever will afflict the team Saturday against LSU. If that trend is reversed, look for a fantastic Aggie campaign in 1987 that will lead to a Cotton Bowl berth and a spot reserved in The Associated Press' Top 10 for many years.

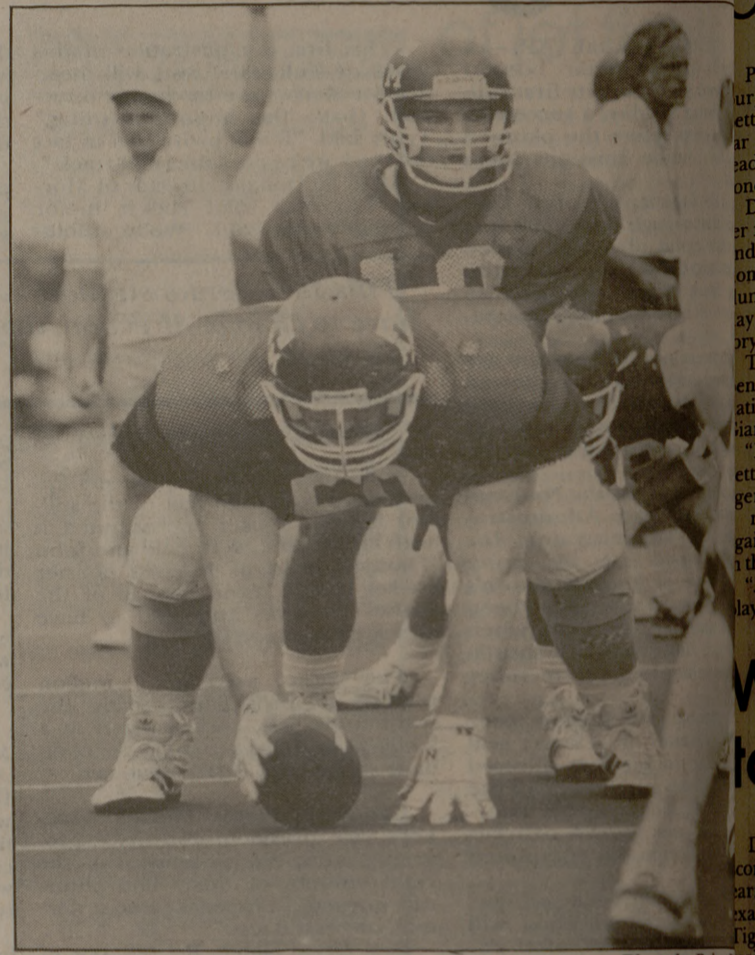


Photo by Robert...

## Taking Snaps

Texas A&M freshman quarterback Lance Pavlas take snaps from center Matt Wilson during practice. The Aggies play Louisiana State University Saturday at Kyle Field.

## Jacoby adjusting to SWC mayhem

DALLAS (AP) — Fred Jacoby didn't know what he was getting into when he left the peaceful Mid-American Conference to become commissioner of the frenetic Southwest Conference on Nov. 1, 1982.

This is what the SWC's current "yellow sheet" looks like:

Houston — Under preliminary NCAA inquiry.

Southern Methodist — In the jailhouse without a football program for two years, the first school ever to get hit with the NCAA's "death penalty" for major football violations.

Texas — A two-year probation without sanctions, although scholarships have been cut from 25 to 20 next year. The probation can be reduced to one year if the university follows steps outlined by the president to prevent a recurrence.

Texas A&M — Results of an internal investigation have been turned over to the NCAA.

Texas Christian — A three-year probation through May 1989. Bowl

and TV sanctions have expired, although TCU was permitted to give only 10 football scholarships this year and 15 in 1988.

Texas Tech — A one-year probation through February 1988, with a loss of three scholarships next year.

SMU's probation was a record seventh against the Dallas school by the NCAA.

It was never like this for Jacoby in the Mid-American Conference.

"I was 1,200 miles away," he says of the SWC. "Being a former assistant coach at Wisconsin, I knew that obviously the recruiting was intense. I was equating in my mind that it would be somewhat like the Big Ten. I was mistaken.

"Where I made my error was that the intensity of recruiting here is higher. Eight of the nine conference members are in Texas (87 percent of the players are from in-state). There

are more than 1,100 high schools in Texas and there's a wealth of talent."

At the NCAA convention in January 1986, the SWC proposed a ban on recruiting by boosters. It never got to the voting stage.

"We saw it was going to be defeated, so we tabled it and came back with it at the 1987 convention," Jacoby said. "No one spoke against it and it passed by a show of hands without dissent."

The new rule prohibits boosters — alumni or otherwise — from doing any recruiting.

"I look at it as a triangle," Jacoby says. "At the top of the triangle is the coach. On one side, the coach is recruiting the prospect; on the other side, he's recruiting a booster to help recruit the prospect. At the bottom, the booster is recruiting the prospect."

"You have five, six, seven conference schools, plus the Oklahomas,

Iowas, UCLAs, BYUs, LSUs, Georgias recruiting the same prospect. You have booster recruiting against booster. I'd like to see it as a straight line from the coach to the prospect. That way, you can pinpoint the responsibility.

"There's no quick fix. We have to correct what we have and see that we don't have any violations. That's the best thing of all. We won't know the results for a few years, but I'm optimistic it can be done. I really don't know why an adult wants to chase an 18-year-old."

"Years ago, the private schools were doing very, very well, especially Rice and SMU. Some boosters are old enough to remember the good old days, and they're frustrated and they want to compete again. Really, what it is is misguided loyalty."

You can tell somebody what he can or can't do until you're blue in the face, but that won't necessarily stop him from breaking a rule, he says.

## Noonan inks contract to end long holdout

IRVING (AP) — Danny Noonan, the longest rookie holdout in the Dallas Cowboys' 27-year history, signed a four-year contract with the team Sunday worth an estimated \$1.6 million.

Noonan, an All-America defensive tackle from Nebraska, flew back to Lincoln Sunday afternoon and will return to the Cowboys' Valley Ranch headquarters on Monday for a physical.

He will report to Coach Tom Landry on Tuesday, and the Cowboys say they hope the 6-foot-4, 282-pounder can at least see limited duty on Saturday night against the Houston Oilers.

Noonan missed all of the Cowboys' training camp in Thousand Oaks, Calif.

"He's way behind, but we will be able to use him in pass-rush situations early in the season until

he learns our defense," Landry said. "We're glad to finally get him on the team."

Noonan, who can bench-press 500 pounds, was the Cowboys' first-round draft pick, and Brandt, the club's personnel director, compared his work load to those of defensive tackle Randy White.

"He reminds you a lot of White," Brandt said.

"He's got size, speed and quickness you look for in a defensive lineman," Landry said. "I think he's very versatile."

One of the hangups in the contract negotiations was what Noonan would be paid if he were injured during his fourth year. Dallas Vice President Joe Barrington handled the sometime sticky negotiations with agent Tom McDon.

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