

# Criticism goes with territory for sports writers and editors

By Hal L. Hammons  
Assistant Sports Editor

So, it took a rookie to get some mail generated for the sports department at *The Battalion*. What a shame. I was hoping it would be me. But the kind of letters we have received about Anthony Wilson's column of Oct. 13 ("Stats don't match 12th Man chatter") have been rather disturbing and indicative of a lack of understanding of the newspaper business. Hopefully I can fix either of both of these.

### Viewpoint

First off, for Liz Wenzel: If one article was enough to make you tired of hearing an opinion, I hope you haven't been reading, for instance, the *Houston Post*, which has run columns on the National Football League strike, the Oilers' recently nixed move to Jacksonville, Fla. and/or the general idiocy of General Manager Ladd Herzog and owner Bud Adams practically every day for the last two months.

Personally, my favorite articles in my two or three daily newspapers are the columns on the sports page. I already know what I think about things; I like hearing other people's thoughts to see if I am in harmony, or even (perish the thought) in disagreement, with the people who get paid to write about it.

And columns, of course, will con-

tain criticism on occasion. Sports writers, and indeed, sports fans, make a regular habit of criticizing athletes of collegiate and professional stature. Criticism is an American institution and an American right.

You see, Liz, this is America. You know, the country spelled U-S-A, not U-S-S-R. And one of the very cornerstones of our political structure is freedom of expression. It keeps the public informed and the system clean. It's in the Constitution — you can look it up.

And to Blaise Walker: the true meaning of the 12th Man on the field is to reflect the spirit of the 12th Man in the stands. The spirit of the second, more important, group will flourish with or without the first.

I as part of the 12th Man will continue to support the team "through good and bad" as Walker said. But that doesn't necessarily mean I support keeping my fellow non-scholarship students on the field if and when they start costing the team ball games.

I love Texas A&M as much as Liz Wenzel, Blaise Walker or anybody else on this campus or this planet. But that does not mean I can't conscientiously criticize things pertaining to A&M.

For the record, I hope they keep the 12th Man Kickoff Team, and Anthony Wilson didn't write anything that indicated he thought

otherwise. But if we did, we would have the right to present it in *The Battalion*, a forum of public expression. And A&M traditions and pride would continue without the fans' representatives on the field.

Remember — the 12th man was a tradition long before Jackie Sherrill put them on the field. Pride in and support for the team burned as brightly as bonfire then, and it does now. No difference.

And personally, I think if Sherrill thought any part of the football team, including the non-scholarship players, would cost A&M a single victory, he'd scrap the system. And he'd be completely justified.

The students here seem to be under the same misconception that plagues the Athletic Department and the Sports Information Department from time to time: We are *The Battalion*, a student newspaper, not Texas A&M's personal, free-of-charge public relations department.

If we on the sports desk see a negative aspect about the Athletic Department, be it the 12th Man Kickoff Team or the Board of Regents' choice of head coaches, we will write about it if we can. We'll write what it takes to make *The Battalion* and *The Battalion* sports section the best they can be.

And that includes things that some people in our readership don't like or agree with. That's the price you pay for having an independent press on campus.

# Dickerson big factor in Rams' loss

CLEVELAND (AP) — Neither coach wanted to talk much about Eric Dickerson, probably because both realized he could have made a difference.

Dickerson, bothered by a sore thigh and dissatisfied with his \$680,000 salary, was on the sidelines for most of the Los Angeles Rams' 30-17 loss to the Cleveland Browns on Monday night.

"I don't even know how much he played, frankly," said Browns Coach Marty Schottenheimer. "I didn't pay any attention to him."

That alone should have told Schottenheimer that Dickerson did not play much. For when Dickerson was in the game in the second quarter, he got everyone's attention, sprinting 27 yards for the 1-5 Rams' only first-half touchdown.

Dickerson finished with seven carries for 38 yards but did not play at all in the second half.

"He's done everything we've asked of him," said Rams Coach John Robinson. "I thought he played very hard when he was in there. One of the problems we're having is hourly reports and hourly questions."

Robinson made no reference to Dickerson's salary dispute when explaining why Charles White got the bulk of the playing time at halfback.

"Eric had a charley horse in his thigh," Robinson said. "At half-time, our doctors looked at it and really felt like he shouldn't play. It's the kind of injury we felt would be progressive if he continued to play."

Dickerson agreed that the leg was bothering him, but he also said afterward that he still wanted to be traded.

"I don't think I'm appreciated with the Rams, and I think I could go somewhere else where my skills would be appreciated," he said. "There's no doubt I can play. They can write bad articles about me, about me being greedy, whatever. But they can't ever say that I can't play the game of football."

The Browns' defense was glad to have Dickerson on the sidelines.

"Any time the best back in the NFL doesn't play a tremendous amount, it's always very gratifying for the team he's playing against," said linebacker Eddie Johnson. "Even when Eric was in, he wasn't that much of a factor except for the touchdown run. But I maintain that Eric Dickerson is the best running back in football, and I'm aware that Walter Payton is in the league."

With Dickerson's playing time limited, the 4-2 Browns were able to focus more carefully on Rams quarterback Jim Everett, who threw three interceptions and might have thrown a couple more if cornerback Hanford Dixon had been able to hold onto them.

# Fans give Twins victory parade

ST. PAUL, Minn. (AP) — Hundreds of thousands of deliriously happy Minnesota Twins showered their heroes with millions of dollars in shredded money and waved the ever-present Homer Hankies in a World Series victory celebration Tuesday.

"It's been building up since we won our division," said left fielder and leadoff man Dan Gladden, whose grand slam homer got the Twins off to a winning start in the first game.

"It's been parlayed and carried over since then. I guess this is the grand finale right here. These have got to be the best fans," Gladden said.

Police estimated that more than 200,000 fans turned out for the start of the parade in Minneapolis, and another 200,000 or more were in St. Paul to watch the parade and a rally on the steps of the Capitol.

"I could cry. That is so nice I could cry," said team owner Carl Pohlad as he rode at the head of the parade.

A young woman rushed his car, planted a kiss on his cheek, then apologized to Pohlad's wife, Eloise, who rode beside him.

Steven Schussler, a Minneapolis nightclub owner, said he distributed some 17,000 pounds of confetti for

the celebration. He said that included 2,000 pounds of out-of-circulation, shredded money from the Federal Reserve Bank in Minneapolis.

Federal Reserve Bank officials estimated their contribution amounted to millions of dollars in old bills which had been taken out of circulation, Schussler said.

Gov. Rudy Perpich gave most state employees the afternoon off, and many Twin Cities schools followed suit. Perpich proclaimed the rest of 1987 "Twins' Year," and promised individual days in honor of each player and members of the team management.

"It's a sign of this state being together, one family," Pohlad said when asked about the holiday. "I think that's what's great about this state."

Pitcher Bert Blyleven slapped high-fives with fans and waved a placard saying "Twins Number One."

With temperatures in the mid-40s, a brisk wind held the thousands of pounds of confetti in the air. People were hanging from windows, children climbed traffic lights, and construction workers 60 stories above the street waved their hands and placards.

The parade nearly came to a halt

within minutes of its start in Minneapolis as thousands of fans flooded the parade route, blocking traffic.

Some 40 to 50 Hennepin County sheriff's deputies were dispatched to clear a path, but the procession moved at a crawl through both downtown areas.

Twins officials and players, many of them wearing heavy fur coats and gloves to ward off the fall chill, were introduced individually to the crowd at the rally.

"This is surely the best thing that's ever happened to the Twin Cities," said Minneapolis Mayor Don Fraser, speaking from a podium atop the red-, white- and blue-decked steps of the Capitol.

Added Twins Manager Tom Kelly: "We're enjoying the heck out of it. It's been fun, and we appreciate the help you've given us all year."

The Twins defeated the St. Louis Cardinals Monday night 4-2 to clinch their first-ever World Series Championship. It was also the first time a team won the best of seven series by winning all four games at home.

Many of the fans along the parade route were the same fans who made playing in the Minneapolis Metrodome a terror for opposing teams.

# High school star no longer getting rich off touchdowns

HOUSTON (AP) — When he was in the ninth grade, Torrin Polk's father offered him \$10 for every touchdown the running back scored.

Polk promptly went out and rambled for 19 scores on the freshman team of the Houston Lamar Redskins.

It was the last time his dad offered him money for athletic success.

"When I'd go up to my dad to remind him of the money, he'd get that puppy-dog look on his face. He didn't think I could do it," Polk said. "I didn't want to hassle him about \$190, so we settled for a new pair of boots. I guess my father didn't expect me to do as well as I did."

Polk, 5-foot-11, 185 pounds, has surprised area football coaches as well. At just over the midpoint of the 1987 regular season, he already had passed the 1,000-yard mark and was the state's leading rusher in Class 5A. He also was averaging two touchdowns a game.

Last year, Polk led the Houston

Independent School District with 1,244 yards, beating Houston Kashmere's Rodney Hampton by 18 yards. Hampton is now a freshman at the University of Georgia.

His sophomore year, Polk rushed for 540 yards while missing four games with a hip pointer.

"He finds an opening real well," said Lamar Coach Tom Nolen. "He's tough, and he's elusive. He's hard to knock off of his feet."

Polk's longest run is an 85-yarder for a touchdown against Reagan this year. But Nolen said he best remembers the athletic moves Polk displayed on a 38-yard jaunt against Houston Worthing in the sixth game of the season.

"He went into the hole and was stopped," Nolen said. "He then cut back behind the line and went around everybody for a touchdown. It looked great."

"The highlight of the season was beating Worthing (35-15)," Polk said. But even more special would be

a district championship, he added.

One of the highlights of the high school season in Houston should be the Nov. 5 clash that will showcase Polk, the area's top runner, against Houston Lee and the Generals' quarterback, Peter Gardere, one of Texas' best passers.

Nolen said he believes Polk is pushed by his lack of exposure in the media. He has not appeared much in print despite his back-to-back 1,000-yard seasons.

"I don't go out and play for the publicity, but for the team," Polk said. "I've always felt that if you do something good, people will know about it. A lot of people go gunning for you when you're in the paper."

A lot of recruiters have been gunning for Polk.


He has been contacted by UCLA, Louisiana State, Nebraska, Baylor, Texas Christian and Texas, among others. He has in mind going out of state to play college football.

"I'm leaning hardest to UCLA

# AGGIELAND YEARBOOKS ARE NOW HERE!

To Pick Yours up Bring Your I.D. to the English Annex, 8:30 a.m. till 4:30 p.m. Monday thru Friday.

Plastic Covers are also Available for 50¢ each.



# Marines

We're looking for a few good men.

Captain R. Mahany 846-9036/8891

## IMPORTED BEER SPECIAL

Wednesday 7-closing

# YESTERDAYS

18 Imported Beers on Special

## Happy 19th Birthday

# Karen Smith

Love, Jeff

## Snow Ski Club meeting

### October 26, 1987

- Ski exercises by Aerofit (wear loose clothing)
- "Steep and Deep" Warren Miller's latest ski film
- Mount Aggie T-Shirts
- Trip sign-up
- UNBELIEVABLE door prizes

Rudder 701 7 p.m.

## Men & Ladies ATM Watches

Our Price **\$29<sup>95</sup>**

Sold for \$35 & \$40 elsewhere

Other Southwest Conferences Available

## TEXAS COIN EXCHANGE

404 University • Behind Shellenbergers • 846-8905

## WORDSTAR FOR THE BEGINNER

# BYTE BACK!

One - week classes for those who want to learn this popular word processing program

Nov. 2-6	5-7 p.m.
Nov. 16-20	4-6 p.m.
Dec. 7-11	5-7 p.m.

**COST: \$35.00**  
Evans Library

LEARNING RESOURCES DEPARTMENT

For more information and registration forms, go to LRD, Room 604 or contact Mel Dodd at 845-2316

## INTERNATIONAL HOUSE OF PANCAKES RESTAURANT

# \$2.99

Mon:	Burgers & French Fries
Tues:	Buttermilk Pancakes
Wed:	Burger & French Fries
Thur:	Hot Dogs & French Fries
Fri:	Beer Battered Fish
Sat:	French Toast
Sun:	Spaghetti & Meat Sauce

## All You Can Eat \$2<sup>99</sup>

6 p.m.-6 a.m.  
no take outs must present this  
Exp. 11/1/87

## International House of Pancakes Restaurant

103 S. College Skaggs Center