

Sports

Amedee alters offense to changing conditions

By Hal L. Hammons
Assistant Sports Editor

Editors note: In the first part of a two-part interview with Texas A&M Offensive Coordinator Lynn Amedee, the coach describes the Aggie offensive scheme, his philosophy of coaching and the shortcomings of the A&M attack.

Q: What part do you like most about your job?

A: Oh, I think coaching kids. I think you get involved in coaching and coaching is teaching. And when you start teaching somebody and all of a sudden you see they get better, you win and you get better, and it gets easier. Being involved in football is something that... If you've ever been in wars it's very similar. So I think the involvement of teaching a young guy to get better and see him progress is the biggest thing there is in football.

Then you see them go on and be someone else. I (have) 16 or 17 kids playing in the pros. And you watch these guys play on Sundays, and you know they're making millions, and you're still making a dollar and a quarter! (laughs) But that's the fun about it!

So it is, it's a lot of fun. You see those things happen, and that's what makes coaching what it is. I mean, it's a fun job. It's something that you

enjoy doing. There's no point where you hate to get up in the morning and you say, "I've got to go to work." Because it's really a fun type of thing. There's something always different going on. And that's the big thing. There's never the same day — it's something different every day. And that's what makes it fun.

Q: Are you the one who designed the offense they're running right now?

A: Well, I think I've had a part of it, yes. I think what we're doing and what we've done since I've been here has been in my background for the last eight-ten years. And we've had to make some adjustments, some bad and big adjustments this year compared to what we were two years ago and last year. But (our staff) could see that we needed to make adjustments. We weren't going to be the wide-open team that we have been, and we've had to make some adjustments.

Q: What kind of adjustments?

A: Well, we've had to take away from the spread offense and (throwing the ball) 40-50 times a ballgame, to the "I" formation and running the ball more. Be able to execute offensively and take the heat off our quarterbacks a little bit more.

Our quarterback ran the show here for two years, until this year,

because he was such a great player. He was a dominant player. He was going to make it happen. Here now our youth has caught up with us at quarterback... We adjusted and made those adjustments. And it's helped us. We wouldn't be in the hunt today if we wouldn't have made those adjustments. If we'd said we were going to stay wide open and try to throw the ball 40 times, I don't think we would've won six games. It's just that simple.

Q: Are you staying basically with the same offensive scheme?

A: Well, yeah, our scheme's the same. Our adjustments are different. We would in the past throw first, run second. Now it's the opposite: we run first, throw second. And until our quarterbacks learn and get better, we're going to have to continue with that pace...

Q: Last year's offense was described as a "run-'n-shoot" offense. Would you classify this offense as a "run-'n-shoot"?

A: No. I would classify this more as an I-formation football team, based on the fact that we've got two great tailbacks in Keith Woodside and Darren Lewis. We try to get them the ball as much as we can. We're more of a power football team than we were. We're more play-action pass than we were. It's a com-

pletely different football team. And that's what I'm saying — we made those adjustments. Philosophy — we still want to throw the football. But we can't. We've not progressed to the point where we can put all the heat on the quarterback and say "you go out and execute." They're not quite ready yet, and that's what's hurting us right now.

Q: It's easy to look at the running backs that you have and wonder, since you have such a run-oriented offense, "Why don't you go to, say, a wishbone offense where you can get all the running backs in there and perhaps run a little more efficiently?"

A: Well, I think it's because, simply, two reasons: one, I don't want to do it. I don't like the wishbone. Two, I don't think we have enough linemen to run the wishbone. I think the wishbone is a power football team where you gotta have big linemen. You gotta have tremendous speed — we've got adequate speed. And you gotta have a like for the wishbone... It's a three-yards-and-a-cloud-of-dust football game. I'm not that kind of guy...

Q: You don't like the slow pace of it?

A: I don't like the pace of the wishbone... Your personality has got to dictate, and my personality

will not dictate to the wishbone. I just don't like it.

Q: Do you get frustrated not being able to throw the football?

A: (quickly) Yes I do. Very much so. I think that it has been hard on us. It's been hard on me, it's been hard on my quarterbacks, because I want to see them come faster. I want to see them be able to progress to the point where if the defense gives us something, we ought to be (able) to take advantage of it. We haven't done that...

It kind of frustrates me because it's so easy, it looks so easy. But yet, when you put yourself in the shoes of a 17- or 18-year-old like Bucky (Richardson) and (Lance) Pavlas, it's not that easy. And they're having growing pains, too, and we've got to grow with them and be patient. And sometimes we're not patient, and sometimes our alumni are not patient, and sometimes the press is not patient, but we've got to be patient with the young guys, because they've got to be our future. And they're going to get better.

But time is going to tell. Not today — time is going to tell. And we hope it's today, but it's not going to be that way. And so we've got to try to relieve that pressure off of them, and become a better team some other way. And that's with the running

game a little bit, and a little bit of passing, those kind of things.

But yes, it does frustrate me because I think the throwing game is the easiest way to score, it's the easiest way to open up defense so that you can move the ball more adequately and more strong.

Q: So you're saying it's easier to set up the run with the pass than other way around.

A: I always thought so. I thought it was easier to set up run with the pass. Because once you start throwing the ball, and you're throwing the ball effectively, linebackers have the tendency to start dropping back, defensive men have the tendency to drop back, and you got a chance to knock off the ball a little easier. A lot of people don't agree with that, but always felt it was easier to set up that way.

And it has proven over the couple of years for us, because had the No. 1 rusher last year in Southwest Conference with Rick Vick. And we ran the ball two years ago and last year at a 200-yard clip and threw the ball at a 200-yard game clip. So that's what you're

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Bedrosian wins NL Cy Young race

NEW YORK (AP) — Philadelphia reliever Steve Bedrosian, who led the major leagues with 40 saves, won the National League Cy Young Award Tuesday by the slimmest margin in the award's history.

Bedrosian, who set a major-league record with saves in 13 consecutive appearances, edged Rick Sutcliffe of Chicago 57-55 in voting by the Baseball Writers Association of America. Rick Reuschel, who played for Pittsburgh and San Francisco, finished one point behind Sutcliffe in third place.

The closest election prior to this year was in 1981, when Fernando Valenzuela of Los Angeles beat Tom

Seaver of Cincinnati by three points.

Bedrosian is the third reliever to win the NL Cy Young Award since the leagues started giving out separate honors in 1967. Bruce Sutter of Chicago won in 1979, while Mike Marshall of Los Angeles was honored in 1974.

It is the fourth time this decade that a Philadelphia pitcher has won the NL Cy Young Award. Steve Carlton won in 1980 and 1982, and John Denny won in 1983.

Bedrosian had a 5-3 record and earned run average of 2.83 in 1987. He struck out 74 and walked 1 in 89 innings. Despite his outstanding season, the Phillies finished tied for

fourth in the National League East with an 80-82 record.

After setting a club record with his 30th save, Bedrosian downplayed the feat.

"You can't think about records when you're out there," he said. "It's just my job to finish it up."

Orel Hershiser of Los Angeles finished fourth in the voting with 14 points. Dwight Gooden of New York and Nolan Ryan of Houston tied for fifth with 12 points. They were followed in the voting by Mike Scott of Houston with nine points and Bob Welch of Los Angeles with three points.

Tech's Tolliver earns Player of Week honors

From the Associated Press

There's something about the Texas Christian Horned Frogs that brings the very best out in Billy Joe Tolliver.

Texas Tech's Tolliver killed TCU for the third consecutive year Saturday with a late touchdown pass in a wild 36-35 victory over the Horned Frogs. That performance earned him The Associated Press Offensive Player of the Week award.

The AP's SWC Defensive Player of the Week came as no surprise. It was Houston defensive back Johnny Johnson, who returned three Texas passes for touchdowns in the Cougars'

60-40 victory over the Longhorns Saturday.

In 1985, Tolliver set an SWC record for passing yards in a game with 422 against TCU in a 63-7 victory. In 1986, Tolliver threw two touchdown passes against the Frogs in a 36-14 victory.

Then came Saturday's magic against the Frogs by the junior quarterback. And yes, TCU — he has one more year of eligibility.

Working from the Tech 40, Tolliver completed four of five passes for 59 yards of the touchdown drive. He completed a 24-yard pass and hit Eddy Anderson

with a 10-yard strike to the 11.

Tolliver then found a wide open Wayne Walker for the winning pass with 54 seconds left.

"Billy Joe showed a lot of poise in the last 2½ minutes," said Tech Coach Spike Dykes. "He did a great job in reading TCU's defense. They were mixing blitzes and Billy Joe did a good job of picking them all up. He had to audible several times and even used hand signals."

"He has really come on to be the kind of year we thought he could," Dykes added.

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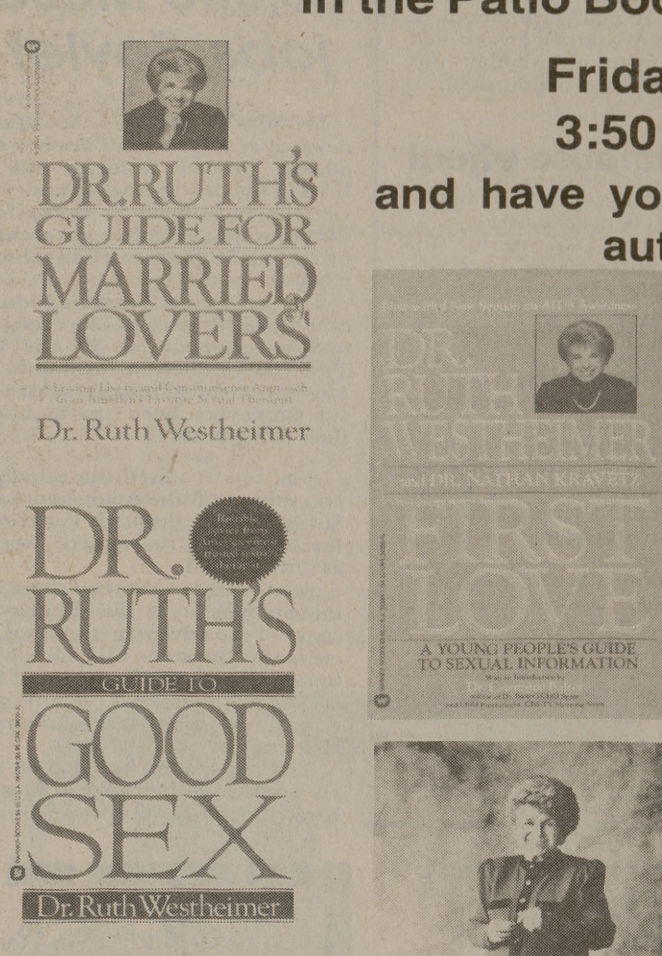
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Dr. Ruth K. Westheimer
with Ben Yagoda

Photo by Ken Nahoun

ABOUT THE AUTHOR
Dr. Westheimer earned her doctorate in the Interdisciplinary Study of the Family from Columbia University and is an Adjunct Professor at New York University. Dr. Westheimer also gives lectures at colleges and university across the country and has a private practice in New York City. She is married and the proud mother of two grown children.

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