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Ags, Horns haul in impressive talent

From the Associated Press
The University of Texas and Texas A&M held their own against outside raids of state schoolboy football talent on national signing day Wednesday, with Longhorn Head Coach David McWilliams gathering an excellent crop and Aggie Head Coach Jackie Sherrill proving he hasn't lost his touch as a master recruiter.

UCLA, LSU and Oklahoma stole away with some of the state's top blue chip recruits, leaving Southwest Conference schools other than A&M and UT scrambling for picked-over talent.

Kevin Williams of Spring High School, the top-rated running back in the nation, signed with UCLA, while LSU and Oklahoma each got three of the state's top 15 prospects.

LSU signed top blue chippers in linebacker Tyrone Malone of Fort Bend Willowridge and star running back-defensive back Wayne Williams of Brazoria, while Oklahoma got highly sought linebacker Joe Bowden of North Mesquite and running backs Ike Lewis of Wilmer-Hutchings and Reggie Finch of Irving MacArthur.

Texas landed a carload of beefy linemen, including blue chippers Turk McDonald of DeSoto, top-rated Tommy Jeter of Deer Park and Paul Moriarty of Conroe McCullough.

Talented Willie Mack Garza of Refugio, who will play defensive back and return punts, signed with the Longhorns, as did hard-throwing Sherman quarterback Jason Bureson.

"We felt we got a real solid group of players," McWilliams said. "We really needed some help in the lines of scrimmage and we felt we got it.

- TEXAS A&M SIGNEES**
Eric Moore, 6-1, 180, DB, Waco
Quintin Coryat, 6-2, 250, LB, Baytown Lee
Trey Logan, 6-0, 220, LB, Denton
John Cooper, 6-4, 200, DB, Tyler JC
Paul Johnson, 6-2, 200, QB, Cameron
Robert Wilson, 6-2, 225, RB, Houston Worthing
Eric Brown, 6-3, 195, WR, Boling
Pat Cunningham, 6-8, 290, DL, Sacramento (Calif.) JC
John Ellison, 6-4, 260, OL, Kingwood
Mike Jones, 6-4, 240, TE, Sacramento (Calif.) JC
Anthony Williams, 6-2, 235, LB, Waco
Emanuel Johnson, 6-5, 265, DL, Sacramento (Calif.) High School
William Butcher, 6-2, 303, OL, Brazoswood
Clarke Flowers, 6-5, 252, OL, Houston Lee

Overall, we're pleased with our team."

McWilliams said he felt Bureson would be the passer the 'Horns need.

"He can throw the ball and we believe he will be a good one," McWilliams said.

"Garza should be a great punt returner and we can spot him some at running back if need be."

Sherrill added to an already talent-deep A&M roster that has won three straight SWC titles and decimated Notre Dame 35-10 in the Cotton Bowl.

Blue chip running back Robert Wilson of Houston Worthing, the second best back in Texas, signed with the Aggies, who also got three of the best junior college players in the nation: tight end Mike Jones and defensive lineman Pat Cunningham of Sacramento Junior College, and John Cooper, a defensive back from Tyler JC.

"We got as much quality as we've had in any year since I've been here," Sherrill said. "We got quality in different positions this time. And

the Wilson kid is already a man. He's going to be something."

Sherrill called Jones and Cunningham great players who are potential first-stringers next season. He said Cooper "is a real plum." The Aggies outfought UCLA for Jones.

Probation-plagued Southern Methodist, meanwhile, began its new era under former NFL coach Forrest Gregg, who had 15 scholarships to give under the NCAA's ruling. SMU doesn't play football again until 1989.

"This is really a great day for us," Gregg said. "Having to do everything by telephone, I've felt like I was holding our staff hostage here."

We are pleased with the caliber of student-athletes that are joining our program. They're outstanding young men who definitely can compete in the Southwest Conference."

Tight end Drew Randall of Irving MacArthur and quarterbacks Mike Roma of San Antonio Roosevelt and Casey Clyde of Highland Park were three of the better players to join the Mustangs on scholarship.

Houston signed a blue chip by getting wide receiver Ronnie John-

son of La Marque, who was signed with Coach Jack Pardee's shoot offense.

Texas Tech's crop was led by James Walker of Waco, a senior who is the brother of former receiver Wayne Walker of the Raiders, and highly sought Steve Stewart of Lubbock. "We feel we have a solid line and linebacks, as really needed help," said Coach Spike Dykes.

Arkansas got a passing terback in Jimmy Williams, a zona Western Junior College transfer who passed for seven touchdowns in five games last year.

Williams chose Arkansas because he felt he had a chance to start next fall.

The Razorbacks didn't sign many high quality Texas players usual.

Baylor landed some solid recruits including Plano quarterback Needham, who led the state Class 5A state title last year. Mike McKenzie of San Antonio Holmes and linebacker Ronnie of Oakridge Conroe should be Bears right away.

Rice stocked up on big linemen, including 310-pound Baldwin of Houston Kaituma, 275-pounder Vincent Seigens of Baton Rouge.

Texas Christian Coach Wacker was pleased with the signing of Shawn Crow of Odessa, who rushed for 2,288 yards in 1987, defensive end Tommie Ann Arbor, Mich., and back Cedric Jackson of Tyler.

SMU signs 10 recruits to start new football era

DALLAS (AP)— Nearly a year after the NCAA slapped its harshest penalty in its history on Southern Methodist's football program, new head coach Forrest Gregg signed 10 high school seniors to scholarships Wednesday, the first in the new era of Mustang football.

Gregg personally greeted each new player and his family as they came to the SMU football office to sign letters of intent.

But signing day wasn't the media and alumni circus it has been in previous years.

"This is a great day for us," Gregg said. "We are very pleased with the caliber of student-athletes joining our program. They can compete in the tough league that the Southwest Conference is."

The NCAA handed SMU its so-called "death penalty" last Feb. 24, canceling the school's 1987 football season and restricting the number of scholarships for 1988 because of recruiting violations connected with a pay-for-play scandal.

"We were handcuffed to our chairs and our telephones," Gregg said of his staff's recruiting effort.

Despite the publicized scandal that reached all the way to the Texas governor's mansion, dozens of high school seniors from as far away as California and Colorado visited SMU on weekends and many sent videotapes of them during high school performances, he said.

Part of the reason is Gregg, a well-respected SMU alumni who quit the National Football League's Green Bay Packers head coaching job to come to Dallas.

Although SMU has decided not to field a team in 1988, Gregg said 15 new recruits and walk-ons will begin practice in August with 10 walk-ons and four scholarship players left from 1986.

"It's going to be a productive program," Gregg said.

"We don't want to neglect the development of these football players."

"We'll start out looking at films and then we will progress to the field and do a lot of individual technique, fundamental work."

"Next year we'll have 25 (scholarships) available. Then we can fill in

as far as we need. This year, our idea was just to take 15 kids we feel can play in the Southwest Conference."

Some of the players who signed letters of intent to play at SMU initiated the contact with Gregg.

New Mustang Kyle Carroll, a 6-4, 270-pound, offensive tackle from Big Spring, said he wrote a letter to SMU after Gregg arrived from Green Bay last month.

"I'd probably be at a Division II school or a junior college if it wasn't for this," Carroll said.

"I've always wanted to go to SMU. I remember watching them back when (Eric) Dickerson and Craig James were the Pony Express."

The first player to publicly declare his intent to attend SMU, Omar Thompson of Wichita Falls, said Gregg called him two weeks ago after seeing his performance on a videotape a high school teammate sent to SMU.

"Coach Gregg said it was like God brought us together," Thompson said.

"Last year when he coached for the Packers, he never planned to be coaching for college and I never planned to be attending SMU."

The Mustang's biggest recruit, Trey Cowan, a 6-7, 310-pound offensive tackle from Wichita Falls, said he doesn't think he would have been able to go to SMU if this were a normal year for the school.

"I'd be playing Southwest Conference ball, but I don't think it would have been here."

"This is as good as it gets," Cowan said, adding the school's academic opportunities were a big lure.

The Mustangs signed two prospective quarterbacks, Mike Romo of San Antonio Roosevelt and Casey Clyde of Highland Park.

Gregg described both as "passing quarterbacks."

"I don't care where you are, what league you're in, you have got to have two quarterbacks," Gregg said.

Also signed Wednesday were Andy Bergfeld, 6-3, 180, SE, Tyler Lee; Jason Helms 6-4, 225, TE, Austin Johnston; Uzo Okeke, 6-1, 218, DT, Garland; Drew Randall, 6-3, 230, TE, Irving MacArthur; and Kenny Rea, 6-2, 238, DE, Duncanville.

Hockey lover laments lack of Texas teams

**By Cray Pixley
Sports Writer**

Hockey and Texas are not two words that would be spoken in the same breath.

In fact, hockey and Texas have nothing in common and here lies the problem.

Hockey is traditionally thought of as a Canadian or North-eastern American sport that rarely oversteps the bounds of the Mason Dixon Line. For me and other Southern hockey fans this is a tragedy. There just isn't any live hockey action in Texas.

When I talk about hockey people look at me oddly. They look at me as if I'm a foreigner — or worse — a Yankee.

"Where are you from?" they ask. "Are you from the East?"

No, I'm not from the East. I was born and have spent half my life in Fort Worth but that doesn't mean I can't be an avid hockey fan.

There are, of course, a number of hockey fans on the A&M campus. We just tend to keep a low profile.

I saw a fellow fan today wearing a North Stars jersey and we briefly reminisced about Tuesday night's NHL All-Star game.

Back in the dark ages Texas did have hockey teams, but they fizzled out.

I used to be able to enjoy matches between the Fort Worth Texans, the Dallas Blackhawks and the Houston Aeros.

There was nothing like spending a weekend night at the hockey game. There were always the fights and the fast action.

I remember being very pressed when the Texas team shut down, leaving the state reft of live hockey.

However, an exhibition featuring Edmonton Oilers Wayne Gretzky drew record crowds in Texas last year.

People may have been disappointed with a renewed interest in hockey just showed up to see a sports celebrity.

The Texas teams just couldn't get the support they needed to keep afloat. Now me and other fans have to settle for television games of the northern and Canadian teams.

I don't know what I would do without ESPN. The network's wide range coverage of hockey and there is usually a game on every night. Thank you!

Just the other night, Mario Mioux of the Pittsburgh Penguins set an NHL All-Star record and garnered the MVP award.

Calgary and Edmonton let my attention with their smart play, while the Philadelphia Flyers' fighting tactics and goaltender Ron Hextall changed the pace.

The Winter Olympics briefly add even more hockey to the television schedule and far from being disappointed.

I sometimes daydream about A&M having a hockey team.

I know most people would think this is an irrational thought, but hockey is the ultimate sport next to football.

Football is fast moving, high scoring, but in the end, good conduct and sportsmanship fighting is strictly forbidden. Hockey without fighting is merely a group of guys taking a promenade around the arena.

Any way, it would be nice to have a team here at A&M.

Sports Illustrated keeps idea pinned in my mind with pictures on the University of Minnesota number one college team.

Since there would be no Texas college hockey team, road game in Maine would be quite a trip.



**Cray Pixley
Sports viewpoint**

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