

Sports

Stopping Hodson key to LSU game

By Hal L. Hammons
Sports Editor

Texas A&M Head Coach Jackie Sherrill said Tuesday that stopping Louisiana State quarterback Tom Hodson was a priority for Saturday's game against the Tigers.

"There's a lot of talk about Heisman Trophy players," Sherrill said at Cain Hall in his weekly press conference. "Hodson's probably the best in the country."

"If you look at the number of games he has played, the competition he has played against, and what he has done with the football, he has really outperformed all the others hands down."

He compared Hodson favorably with Miami Dolphin quarterback Dan Marino, whom Sherrill coached at the University of Pittsburgh.

"He's as good as Danny at this stage," he said. "You can talk about Troy Aikman (the Heisman-candidate quarterback at UCLA), but Hodson's in a class of his own at this stage."

He said a big key will be how well the Aggie defense will be able to put pressure on Hodson in the pocket.

"We've gotten to Hodson," he said. "He remembers us from last year."

The play most memorable was undoubtedly John Roper's hit on Hodson which crushed Roper's face mask and left Hodson shaken up on the ground temporarily.

Sherrill said the offense will have to improve over last week's game, but he again emphasized that the blame for the ineffective offense should not all be placed on quarterback Bucky Richardson.

"There's a lot of talk about Bucky not playing well," he said. "He threw the ball well early, and then the receivers were not in the right places in the second half. The quarterback gets the blame for that."

He said the biggest problem to fix is A&M's inability to convert on third down situations.

He said, "We should convert on third downs 42 percent of the time. If we do that, we're going to win."

By contrast, he said the biggest factor in Nebraska's win was their ability to come up with big plays on third down.

The injury status remains the same. Defensive end Leon Cole (bruised foot), linebackers Dana Bantiste and Basil Jackson (bruised shoulders) and cornerback Steve Lofton (hyperextended knee) are questionable.

Split end Rod Harris (dislocated shoulder), fullback Matt Gurley (sprained knee) and strong safety Gary Jones (fractured hand) are out.

Running back Darren Lewis could be forced into action with his sprained toe but will probably miss the game.

All are expected to play Sept. 17 against Alabama.

Linebacker defies stereotypes Jackson mixes school, sports with A+ results

By Hal L. Hammons
Sports Editor

Profile of the Week:
Basil Jackson

Editor's note: "Profile of the Week" is a weekly feature in The Battalion highlighting a local sports personality. It will run on Wednesdays.

Idealism is nice, but let's face it — stereotypes exist.

And when the average person thinks of what an electrical engineering major with a 3.1 GPR would look like, the picture gets filled out pretty quickly.

Male, certainly. About 5-9, 135 pounds. Introvert. Horn-rimmed glasses. Greasy hair. High-waters. Calculator on the belt. Pocket protector.

Well, Basil Jackson is male, but that's about as far as the similarity goes.

Basil is friendly and easy to talk to, for starters. He's also 6-1, 219 pounds.

"I can't say for sure," he said. "I'm just doing what I need to do to be where I want to be — being both athletically and academically sound."

His GPR backs up the fact that he's doing a

good job on the scholastic front. And his statistics give the impression that he's well on his way in his athletic goal as well.

He had 46 tackles last year in a largely backup role. In last year's LSU game alone he had 13.

Unfortunately for Jackson, he plays linebacker for Texas A&M — perhaps the team with the strongest starting four linebackers in the NCAA.

His big day in the sun was a single play, and if fans can think of Jackson in no other set of circumstances that is it.

The Cotton Bowl against Auburn Jan. 1, 1986. On fourth and goal on the two yard line it was Basil Jackson who stopped Heisman Trophy winner Bo Jackson.

It turned the game around, and A&M rallied for a 36-16 win in the Aggies' first Cotton Bowl in 19 years.

And the glory didn't end there. He was a starting inside linebacker the beginning of last year, but a knee injury lessened his playing time. In the meantime Adam Bob caught on fire, and Jackson never broke back in.

He still gets plenty of playing time, and in the 1988 A&M media guide he is pictured on the inside back cover with the starters. Obviously the coaches consider him on a par with the others.

But he doesn't start. So he remains "the other one."

But that doesn't matter that much, Jackson said.

"That happens," he said. "I don't compare myself to those guys. I figure on them being in the starting lineup as of now. They should get the publicity. I can't say anything bad against those players."

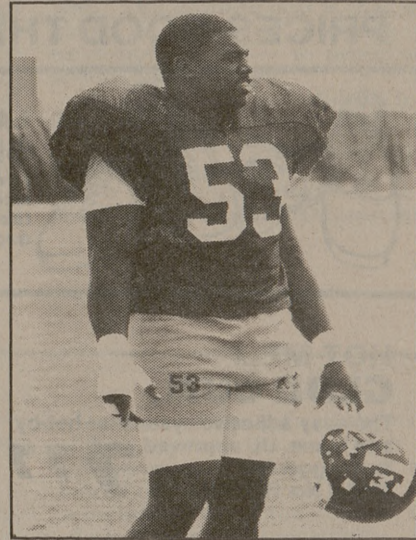


Photo by Kathy Haveman

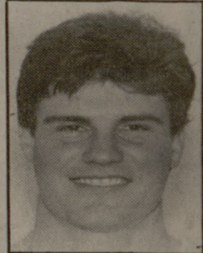
Basil Jackson, pictured here at Tuesday practice, hopes to recover from a shoulder injury in time to face LSU Saturday in Baton Rouge.

"This team is built on a certain performance level, and if those players play at a certain level I see no reason to change who's in the starting lineup."

He said that just because he doesn't start See Jackson, page 19

Rational people become lunatics over football

What is it about football that makes people not act like people? Why do normally non-reactive people suddenly shun all integrity and give over to the spirit of a football game?



Jerry Bolz

I have a few ideas on this, being a long-time sufferer of what I will call a condition. First of all, there are the athletes.

Right in the thick of things, it may be less obvious to them that they are suffering

from this condition. All they have to do, however, is to watch a post-game film, and they find themselves murmuring, "That was me?" or, "Did I really do that?"

Take, for instance, former Aggie defensive back Chet Brooks.

During a game, Chet was obviously showing the other team that there was a lot more to consider than his 5-11, 190 pound frame. He continually taunted the opponents' offense with his own play-by-play, on-the-field commentary. He often tried to drive it home with a post-whistle shove, blow to the helmet or other broadcasting device.

Now, in the classroom, Chet might as well have gone by his real name, Terrance. In the one class I had with Chet he only opened his mouth when the prof wanted to

talk football. And even then, any verbage had to be coaxed out.

And did he ever have a smile. Chet couldn't make a mean face walking across campus if he had too. But I venture to say that there wasn't a whole lot of pearly white flashing through his face mask out on Kyle Field.

A popular theory by those who think there is no such condition is that being aggressive is just part of the game. If this is the case, then why do fans suffer the same way as the players. In fact, many fans have more severe cases than the average player. Another "for instance" or two.

I remember in the late 1970's when the Cowboys lost to the Rams in the playoffs. I had just about had enough of their playoff antics so I picked up my freshly emptied

Cowboy milkshake mug and hurled it as hard as an eighth-grader can hurl. The pieces hit the carpet like a Texas Stadium fumble and immediately I knew something was wrong.

Though I certainly didn't know Chet in 1979, I was suffering from the same condition that he was. The tricky thing about this condition is that it isn't always violent.

Football started out as a game. People started out having fun playing and watching others play. But somehow it has developed into more of a disease, like whooping cough or something. But there is also a less obvious side to the condition.

Just a few weeks ago, my Dad and I were enjoying the Steelers-Eagles preseason game. The next thing I know, the Steelers

score on a long pass. And my almost always rational, calm, 47-year old Dad flies off the love seat and does a standing triple-jump in the den.

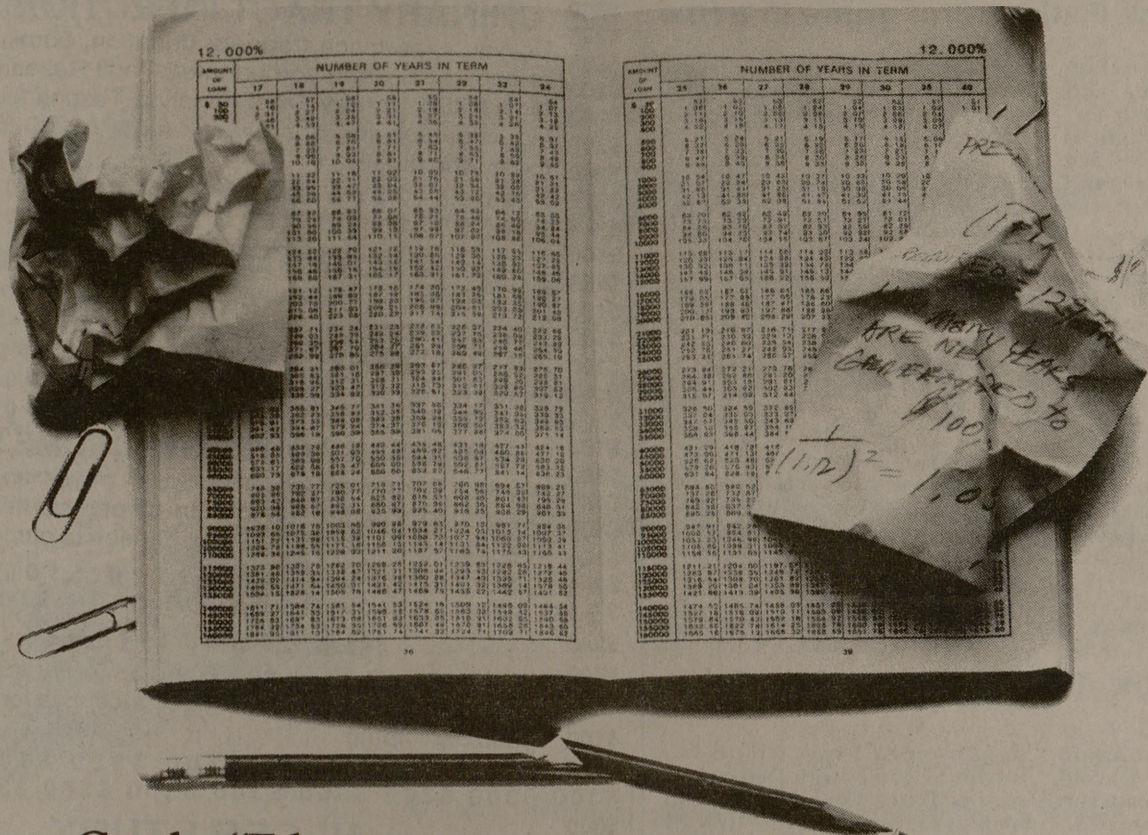
Now I know that Dad will be happier when I graduate in May than he was when the Steelers scored, but there is a good chance that there won't be any attempt to break his triple-jump record in the bleachers of Jolly Rollie.

This sort of thing doesn't just happen in the privacy of a home, either. The majority of the students on this campus remember last year's A&M-LSU game.

After their victory, a number of Tiger fans, who are well-known sufferers of both

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Old Business. New Business.



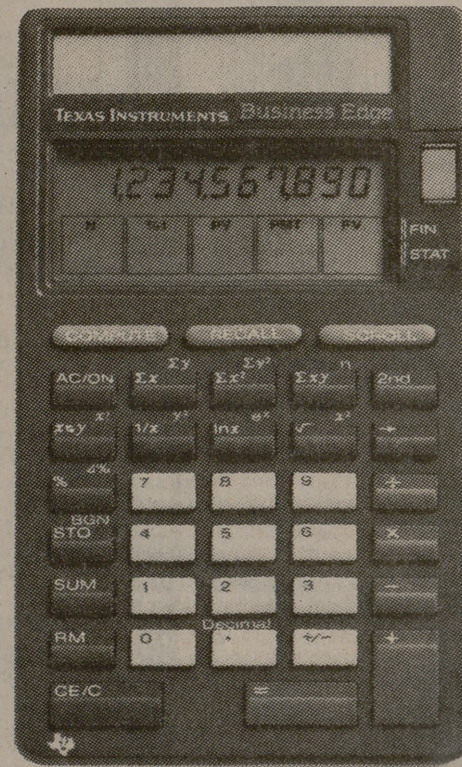
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