

# Sports

## Ags cooking Cajun Baton Rouge Connection hits LSU

By Dianne Normand  
Reporter

Four years ago, a sophomore quarterback for the Broadmoor High School Buccaneers of Baton Rouge, La., came off the bench to play in his first high school football game.

He dropped back, faked to the running back, then rolled out and connected with the all-state senior tight end for a 35-yard touchdown. The sophomore's first.

The quarterback was Bucky Richardson; the tight end was Wally Hartley.

Since then, both have been imported from Broadmoor High to Aggie land via the Texas A&M football team.

Now dubbed "The Baton Rouge Connection" and wearing A&M jerseys, both players will try to live up to their title in Saturday's game against Louisiana State in front of a hometown crowd.

Richardson, the Aggie quarterback and offensive Most Valuable Player of the 1988 Cotton Bowl, will view the LSU game from a much different perspective than he did the last time the Aggies traveled to LSU two years ago.

"I was a senior in high school watching the game from the stands," said Richardson, who played as a true freshman last fall.

Hartley, however, was on the field for the Aggies that game.

"The '86 LSU game was the first college game I played in," said the 6-

### A&M vs. LSU

- When: Saturday night, kickoff at 7 p.m.
- Where: Tiger Stadium, Baton Rouge, La.
- Rankings: A&M is ranked No. 11 by the Associated Press. LSU is No. 17.
- Television: on pay-per-view basis at Rudder Auditorium. Satellite feed provided by Home Sports Entertainment.
- Radio: KTAM 1240 AM, with Dave South on play-by-play and Jay Howard on commentary.

5, 240-pound junior tight end. "I was fired up playing in Tiger Stadium. I grew up watching football there.

"The LSU game is like the other students' Texas game for the Louisiana players."

Both players were recruited by both schools, Richardson said.

"I don't think I would have come to Texas without knowing anybody," he said. "Wally being here made the decision much easier for me.

"I knew there was an opportunity for me playing here since Kevin Murray was going professional. LSU had (Tom) Hodson for quarterback, and I knew no one would beat him out of that position."

The duo's parents support the Baton Rouge natives' decision to play

for A&M. But they're not the only ones to make the six-hour drive to College Station to see the "Baton Rouge Connection" in action.

Rusty Price, the Broadmoor High School head football coach, also makes the trip to see his former players perform.

"Both were leaders on the field, especially Bucky because he played quarterback," Price said in a telephone interview last semester. "They definitely stood out — Wally has a gift in catching the ball."

The players showed this finesse last week against Nebraska when a Richardson-Hartley pass sparked the Aggies' first successful touchdown drive of the season.

"One of the best things about them," Price said, "is that success hasn't gone to their heads. They come back on breaks and really enjoy talking to the high school players.

"Last spring break Bucky was throwing passes to Wally on Broadmoor's practice field; he also threw to some of the players."

Throwing and catching wasn't the only thing "The Connection" did over spring break, Richardson said.

They both watched LSU's Purple and Gold game. It was the Tiger's final spring training scrimmage.

"It pumped me up and we got a good look at the Tigers," Richardson said. "Heck yeah, we're going to beat 'em."

To that, Hartley gave his standard phrase of approval: "Gig 'em!"

## Simmons now has a chance to be proven worth the hype

As a high school senior, I had the privilege of watching Aggie fullback Randy Simmons in the last football game of his high school career.

It was the 1986 AAAA Texas state championship featuring Simmons' McKinney High School and my alma mater, West Orange-Stark.

I knew he was good from all the hype surrounding the game, but after seeing him carry the ball the first eight plays of the game, I was convinced.

Simmons was one of the country's most highly recruited players in 1987. He was named to the Parade All-America team as a senior and was rated the No. 1 prep fullback in the country according to recruiting expert Max Emfinger.

So when I read that both he and Darren Lewis were coming to A&M, I figured they would both make an immediate impact in the Aggies' continuing quest for the Cotton Bowl.

I was half right. Playing in the shadow of now-Green Bay Packer Keith Woodside, Darren Lewis still managed to ramble for 668 yards and a 5.3 yards per carry

average as a freshman.

But Simmons played only against Southern Mississippi and was redshirted after receiving a hardship because of knee surgery. Disappointingly, he was left with only five carries for 12 yards and a 2.4 yard average gain.

This season, Simmons will get his chance, right? Wrong.

Senior Matt Gurley retained his starting job after 388 yards and five touchdowns in 1987.

The 6-2, 220-pound redshirt freshman Simmons scored his first collegiate touchdown and played much of the second half in the Aggies' 23-14 loss to Nebraska. He got the chance after Gurley went out with a knee injury.

Now, he finally gets his opportunity to showcase his blue-chip talent in a starting role against Louisiana State this weekend.

With Gurley out for this week's contest, Simmons was thrown into his first start for Texas A&M in perhaps the toughest place to play in college football — Tiger Stadium (a.k.a. "Death Valley").

He must come through with the big plays up the middle, as the Aggies converted only 18 percent on third-down situations.

More importantly, to Simmons anyway, is the question of whether or not he can "live up" to the high expectations of Aggie coaches and fans alike after being such a highly sought player.

Alongside Simmons will be Larry Horton, who

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Jeff Miller  
Sports viewpoint

## Ten Napel dominated LSU

By Tim Stanfield  
Reporter

Fourteen years ago LSU Tiger QBs also had to be aware of an outstanding pair of A&M LBs in Garth Ten Napel and Ed Simonini.

### Flashback

Even that didn't help, as Ten Napel so ransacked the Tigers in 1974 that he was named the AP's National Defensive Player of the Week, as A&M defeated LSU 21-14.

"From a football standpoint Garth was always a totally aggressive player," former A&M Head Coach Emory Bellard said Thursday. "He was alert, committed to excellence and just an outstanding player and person."

Ten Napel had started all 11 games in 1973 at weak linebacker and helped the Aggie defense become the first of four consecutive A&M defenses to top the SWC in fewest yards allowed.

A&M crushed Clemson 24-0 in the 1974 opener at Kyle Field, then headed to "Death Valley," better known as Tiger Stadium in Baton Rouge, La., where they had last won in 1957.

"I told the squad the night before the game that at some time every football team had to be a good team in order to better its own program," Bellard said. "And I knew that LSU had that kind of team."

Robertson's fiery defenders stuffed the Tiger offense while the Aggies' Wishbone ground out an

amazing 290 yards rushing in the first half.

Skip Walker scored on a 10-yard run late in the opening quarter and Bubba Bean's 50-yard scamper in the second quarter put the Aggs' up 14-7 at halftime.

But the Tigers stayed tough, tying the game late in the third period.

At this point Ten Napel and friends took control of the game. LSU fumbled midway in the final period, Ten Napel recovering the ball at the Tiger 37.

Bucky Sams powered into the end zone a few plays later, giving the Aggies a 21-14 lead, but the Tigers weren't dead yet.

They moved deep inside A&M territory as time ticked away. On

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## Lady Ags sweep Lamar in season opener

By Doug Walker  
Assistant Sports Editor

The Lady Aggie volleyball team opened the 1988 season by sweeping three games from Lamar Thursday night in Beaumont.

Senior outside attacker Cheri Steensma led the Lady Aggies with 13 kills as A&M took the three games of the match 15-6, 15-7 and 19-17.

A&M hit .412 as a team with 47 kills and 12 errors in 85 attempts.

"The first two games tonight we did exactly what we wanted to do," Givens said. "In the third we let down and relaxed a little bit and allowed Lamar to get back in it."

Steensma hit .417 with only three errors in 24 attempts. Senior middle blocker Vivian Viera led the team in hitting percentage by hitting .500 in 20 attempts. Sophomore outside attacker Amy Cumings led the Lady Aggies in attacks with a .727 percentage.

Givens was pleased to be able to use some of his younger players as 10 of the 12 team members saw action.

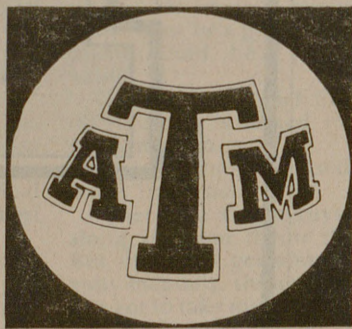
"I definitely think we've got a lot of weapons. We're going to be a really good team, and we'll continue to get better with each outing," Givens said.

Tonight the Lady Aggies meet Louisiana State at 7:30 in the Pete Maravich Assembly Center on the LSU campus in Baton Rouge.

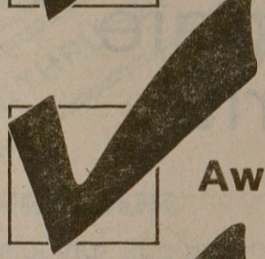
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