

**ROBERT PALMER**

**TUESDAY OCTOBER 25, 1988**  
 G. Rollie White Coliseum  
 8:00 P.M.  
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## Chatter of Aggie fans was better than game

Fan enthusiasm is a wonderful thing at sporting events.

It picks up the players to hear the cheering masses and it also ups the tempo of the game for those in the stands. I mean, no one wants to go to a football game that is all quiet where the fans are too inhibited to scream approval or disapproval during pivotal plays.

I found out this past weekend at the A&M-Baylor game that it can be quite interesting to sit back and listen to the comments of fellow spectators. It is sometimes more fascinating than the game itself.

Oh, please don't think I was eavesdropping on private conversations. I was merely soaking up the environment around me.

These conversations that I was a party to were being shouted seemingly for the benefit of everyone at Kyle Field — not just for two or three people.

I couldn't help listening to the crowd's sporting shouts — my mind had begun to wander from the action on the field to the more attention-grabbing talk around me.

The comments ranged from the usual referee bashing to heated discussions about A&M's key players.

From what I could hear, section 237, rows 20 to 26 were ardent Darren Lewis fans. But this isn't too revealing since any Aggie fan should already hold the dynamo in the highest regard.

I heard everything from, "Lewis sure is short to be so awesome", to "no he isn't — he's a rushing machine where size doesn't matter". Everyone seemed to be an expert on Lewis and his abilities.

And the discussion moves on. Aggie fans seem relentless on Saturday afternoons in their ability to tear down or build up a player.

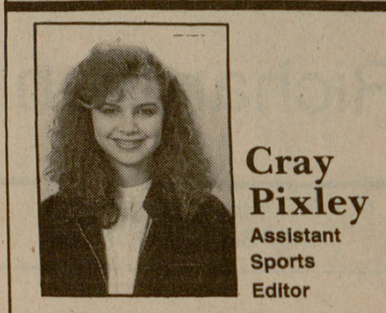
Everyone knows Scott Slater is having difficulty putting the ball between the uprights — right?

Well, I listened to a panel discussion about it from the neighboring rows. "It must be mental!", some people exclaimed.

"You know how kickers are always getting those mental blocks," Joe Ag said. "Once that happens, you never know if they will ever kick well again."

Thanks coach. Slater will be thrilled to hear that diagnosis.

But John Ag disagreed.



**Cray Pixley**  
 Assistant Sports Editor

"It's probably because he has a new holder this year — that's got to be the problem. Slater's always been great before."

Whoa, whoa there, that new holder happens to be Bucky Richardson.

And the Bucky Richardson fan club standing behind me vehemently disagreed with any criticism of their exalted player.

For the eight guys behind me, Richardson as quarterback, ball holder, punter, running back, any position can do no wrong.

Richardson seemed to be the sole reason for their presence at the ball game.

The fan club attributed the quarterback with almost heavenly qualities, and the guys were so involved with Richardson's moves that I feared for my safety every time number seven made a good showing.

Their man is a star and don't anyone forget it!

I'm sorry to say the fan club began to drown out my listening pleasure. I just couldn't hear anything but, "Bucky this, or Bucky that".

I would have liked to discover if anyone had jumped on the Chris Osgood or Robert Wilson bandwagons. Hey, how come no one ever yelled for Jerry Fontenot?

I was getting so wrapped up in what people were saying that I missed most of the game. I wanted to throw in a few opinions of my own but succeeded in just being an avid listener.

I think it was time well spent — the game didn't really rev up until the fourth quarter anyway.

## Thompson stands behind decisions

WASHINGTON (AP) — John Thompson said Monday that has been hurt by some of the criticism he has taken since his U.S. Olympic basketball team lost to Russia, but claimed he would not change a thing if he had to do it over again.

"The things that were done were things that we thought were in the best interest of what we were trying to accomplish," Thompson said. "I think if I had to do it over again, every player I selected I would select again, every staff member, everything that we decided to do. You make decisions, and then you have to go with those decisions."

"I would do everything the same way, absolutely."

After the United States was beaten 82-76 by the Soviet Union in the semifinal round, many columnists criticized Thompson's continuous substitutions, his play of making the squad similar to the scrappy, defensive-minded teams he fields at the University of Georgetown, and the fact that the club lacked enough adequate outside shooters.

Thompson said his critics have been outnumbered by well-wishers who appreciated his time-consuming effort.

"There have been things that have been said, very minimal, that have hurt me personally. But there have been far, far more things that have been said that have been extremely positive," Thompson said. "The kindness has been far, far more overwhelming than any criticism I have heard."

"Certainly, I would have liked to have beaten the Russians," he said. "But I feel the young people did what I asked them to as best they possibly could. There are a lot of factors. ... Maybe I'll talk about it one day."

Thompson, in his first press conference in the United States since the Olympics, said he formed the team to satisfy his own objectives and not of those around him.

"It all depends on who you seek approval from," he said. "I don't seek approval from many men."

Despite the loss and the criticism, Thompson said he is not embarrassed.

"This is what I do. It's not something that has scared me into a cave or made me feel ashamed," he said. "I could have taken the safe way out and declined to do it, but I took the challenge and now I'm dealing with it."

## UCLA hits No. 1, Notre Dame No. 2

Associated Press

The UCLA Bruins are the No. 1 team in college football for the first time in 21 years, followed by Notre Dame, Southern California and defending national champion Miami.

Notre Dame's 31-30 victory over Miami knocked the Hurricanes from the top spot after a six-week stay. The Fighting Irish, meanwhile, moved up from fourth place last week to their highest ranking since they were No. 1 on Sept. 14, 1981.

UCLA, 6-0 after a 38-21 victory over California, received 33 of 60 first-place votes and 1,169 of a possible 1,200 points from a nationwide panel of sports writers and sportscasters. The Bruins had been ranked No. 2 for five weeks.

The last time UCLA was No. 1 was on Nov. 13, 1967, when the Bruins had a 7-0-1 record. But UCLA lost its next two games and finished 7-2-1.

"I actually feel it's too early to determine who the best team in the country is," UCLA coach Terry Donahue said Monday. "We're just over 50 percent done with our schedule, and how do you judge anything on 50 percent?"

"It just doesn't make sense, but it'll all come out in the end. It's not time for Christmas yet."

Notre Dame, also 6-0, received 22 first-place votes and 1,142 points. The remaining five first-place ballots went to Southern Cal, 6-0, which defeated Washington 28-27 and received 1,091 points in holding onto third place.

The rankings are bound to change later

in the season, since UCLA meets Southern Cal on Nov. 19 and USC plays Notre Dame the following week.

Miami, 4-1, received 1,001 points in dropping from first to fourth.

Nebraska jumped from seventh to fifth with 879 points following a 63-42 triumph over 10th-ranked Oklahoma State. West Virginia remained sixth with 974 points after an open date and Florida State slipped from fifth to seventh with 872 points despite a 45-21 victory over East Carolina.

Oklahoma's 70-24 rout of Kansas State pushed the Sooners from ninth to eighth with 777 points while South Carolina fell from eighth to 18th by losing to Georgia Tech 34-0.

Clemson, No. 11 a week ago, moved up to ninth with 700 points by defeating previously unbeaten Duke 49-17. Auburn rounded out the Top Ten, climbing from 12th to 10th with 656 points after a 42-0 trouncing of Akron.

The Second Ten consists of Georgia, Wyoming, Arkansas, Indiana, Oklahoma State, LSU, Washington, South Carolina, Syracuse and Michigan.

Last week, it was Clemson, Auburn, Georgia, Wyoming, Michigan, Washington, Arkansas, Indiana, LSU and Florida.

Florida dropped out by losing its second straight game, 24-9 to Vanderbilt. Syracuse, which finished No. 4 last year, moved into the rankings for the first time this season. The Orangemen are 5-1 after defeating Penn State 24-10.

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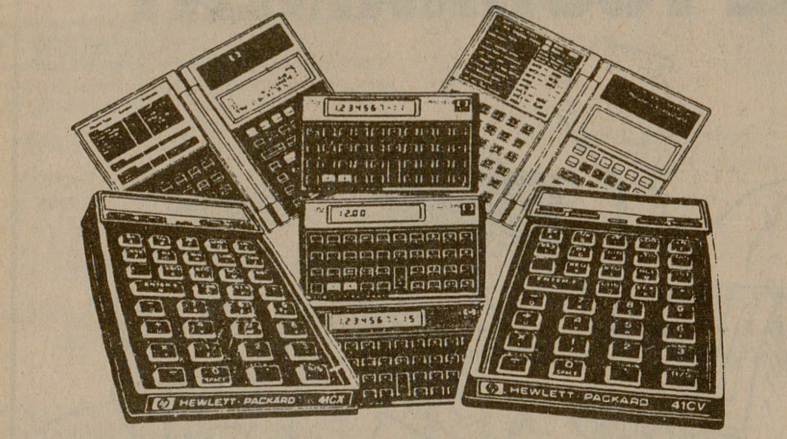
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