

The argument is settled: Arkansas 25, A&M 20 Mistakes, turnovers fatal to Aggies in big game

By Hal L. Hammons
Sports Editor

Fayetteville, Ark. — Darren Lewis stood in the Arkansas visitor's locker room, probably still unsure of what had happened to the Aggies in the past three hours.

"It hurts to be a loser," he said.

And that's what it boils down to. Texas A&M was beaten by the Arkansas Razorbacks.

You can blame it on the bad luck that plagued the Aggies all day. You can blame it on the wind that worked against A&M all the first half, giving the Razorbacks a big edge in field position. You can blame it on the spectres that seem to haunt the Aggies in the state of Arkansas.

But, in the end, none of that matters.

As A&M Head Coach Jackie Sherrill put it, "It doesn't matter what happens the first sixty minutes, it's what's on the scoreboard at the end."

The scoreboard read, "Arkansas 25, Texas A&M 20."

The really frustrating thing about the game, especially for the Aggies, was that in a game with so much to be proven on both sides of the ball, all of the big questions remained unanswered.

Arkansas didn't prove it could play strong football against a quality opponent. The Razorbacks didn't score on the Aggie defense all day.

A&M didn't prove they had improved enough during its five-game winning streak to beat a Top 20 team like the ones that beat the Aggies in the first three games of the season. The Aggies committed four turnovers, which led to 11 Arkansas points.

Personal achievements were somewhat different.

Lewis proved he could run on the top ranked defense in the country, racking up 192 yards on 34 carries, including 92 in the first quarter.

John Bland proved Arkansas' offense doesn't live and die with Quinn Grovey. After Grovey went out in the second quarter with a concussion and shoulder sprain, Bland came on to complete four of eight passes for 88 yards. He also rushed for 60 yards, many of which came in critical situations.

Kendall Trainor proved he is the best kicker in the conference. His five field goals on the day gave him 23, breaking the Southwest Conference record set by A&M's Scott Slater in 1986. It also extended his streak of successful field goals to 22.

But the biggest question was still debated: Which of the two teams is the best in the SWC?

Bucky Richardson said he still thought the Aggies were the better team.

"They didn't stop our offense for four quarters," he said. "Our defense played

great, just like they have all year. They gave up some big plays, but you're going to have big plays in a big ball game.

"I can assure you they're not a top 10 team. We've played three top 10 teams this year, and I can assure you Arkansas couldn't stay on the field with them."

The Arkansas players, on the other hand, said they felt they had proven the Aggies couldn't back up all their talk about sending the second-best team in the conference to the Cotton Bowl.

"The second-best team is staying home," Trainor said. "Hopefully people will take note of what is going on. The Hogs are for real."

Bland said, "I'm not sure we would have played as great a game if they had not done so much talking. We might not have been as fired up."

"We wanted to prove we are the best team in the conference, probation or not."

Arkansas did get some help early on in the game—from the weather and from the Aggies themselves.

Lewis fumbled the ball over to the Hogs on the A&M 47 on the fourth play of the game. Grovey led Arkansas to a field goal seven plays later.

A 15-yard punt by Sean Wilson into a stiff wind gave the Hogs the ball at the A&M 37, and Trainor added another field goal five plays later.

On the next drive Richardson threw

his first pass of the day two feet over Gary Oliver's hands right to Arkansas' Patrick Williams. Williams returned it 47 yards for a touchdown.

A two-point conversion run by Joe Johnson gave Arkansas a 14-0 lead with less than six minutes to go in the first quarter. The ball had not been on the Arkansas side of the field.

The Aggie offense hit full stride at the end of the first quarter. Four carries by Lewis brought A&M to the Arkansas 22. But Robert Wilson fumbled the ball away after a seven-yard gain.

But Richardson took the Aggies 99 yards for a touchdown on the next drive. He completed all three of his passes for 43 yards and finally ran the ball in himself from four yards out.

But A&M was unable to execute its two-minute offense after stopping the next Arkansas drive.

Instead it was Arkansas that added a late score, driving with the wind that had now switched directions.

Bland's eight-yard run on fourth-and-six extended the drive, and his eight-yard run at the end of the drive took the ball to the A&M 25.



Photo by Mike C. Mal...

A&M running back Darren Lewis is tackled by Arkansas linebacker Kerry Owens in the first quarter of A&M's 25-20 loss to the 11th-ranked Razorbacks Saturday. Lewis gained 192 yards on the day.

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Radio wave football game proves frustrating for Aggie fan

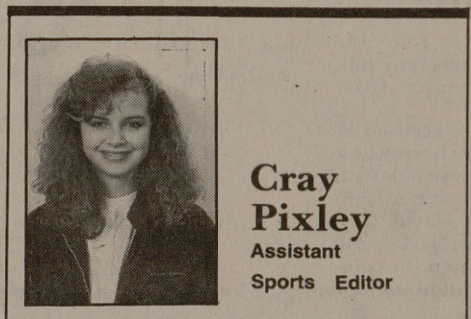
The Texas A&M-Arkansas football game competed with my INXS cassette tape this weekend. But that goes with the territory when listening to the Ags through the wonders of radio.

It was the third Aggie game I have listened to instead of watching, and I've decided that radio is a big disadvantage for someone raised in the television age.

Granted, radio reception beats not receiving any coverage of the game, but radio is just not up to par with my expectations. I've discovered that visualizing the plays is a very difficult task. I blame television for my untrained ear, which is unable to pick up all the details of the game.

Radio just doesn't have vivid visual elements that a television broadcast possesses.

There isn't any slow-motion shots or instant replays. Kyle Field doesn't have this



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either but at least we have the chance to see where the Aggies are going. Darren Lewis' brilliant runs are far more appealing when one can see all his quick tiny steps and speed as he breaks for the endzone.

'Lewis is at the Aggie 30-yard line, to the 40, the 50...' shouted by frenzied

commentators just doesn't have the impact of visual action.

Oh, you might say I could have paid to view the game at a local establishment, but I was headed out of town with only the car stereo as a link to the Aggies and Hogs.

That's where the trouble started.

There is nothing worse than listening to your football team play a losing game to an upstart team on the radio while driving a car.

Every time the Aggies fumbled or threw an interception my foot slammed onto the gas pedal, and I closed my eyes in agony.

This is not a good way to drive a car — unless you're the Road Warrior. Fortunately, I had a passenger who wasn't quite so caught up in the game who frequently had to jolt me out of my stupor. Not to mention

that I was very pleased that no highway patrolmen saw my Mad Max impersonation.

When the Aggies are losing, the play-by-play commentary becomes excruciating. It was significantly more so this Saturday because the Aggies had so many miscues that they essentially gave the Cotton Bowl-bound Hogs an easy victory.

Listening to a football game on the radio is like being held captive.

A&M's Bucky Richardson may have dropped back for a pass but it was maddening trying to imagine where that pass would end up. Would it be in the hands of an A&M athlete or in a crowd of six Razorbacks all over the back of an Ag receiver?

My mind whirled with the possibilities.

Every time the Aggies started a decent drive some monumental mistake would happen. After every miscue, in would go the cassette tape.

I needed a musical break from the football trauma before ejecting the tape, listen to what corner the Ags had got themselves into next. My tape player had workout.

I suppose the real clincher of the game was the way in which Arkansas raked up most of their points: the field goal.


Field goal attempts are especially unnerving on the radio.

The radio announcers try to set up the situation in a visually stimulating fashion but it tends to fall flat.

This happens because there are those four or so seconds when no one, not even the people watching the game, know if it

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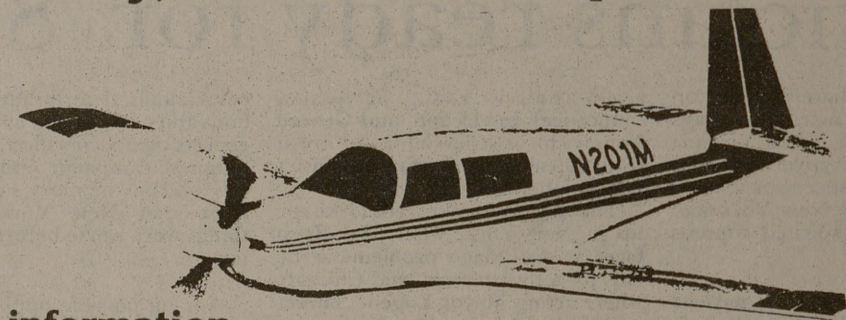
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WE WON THE SECOND HA...

Lad after...

By Je... Sports

Texas A&M's ball team upset Tigers Friday 3-0 to move them out of the NCAA bid to the NCAA.

After getting perfect LSU performance of LSU performance of the game, the Aggie Coach Al Given performance of the game.

Coming into the game, the Aggie Coach Al Given performance of the game.

Aggies were ranked 11th in the NCAA South Region. Aggies were ranked 11th in the NCAA South Region.

"The win put us in a good position," Given said. "We were beaten Houston. We would be sweeter if we had won."

Given said that the teams of the region would be competing for the tournament.

New not s...

Take your be... gland's Doug Flutie does.

Shrimp. Short putian?

"America's M... mate Jim McMahon. But when I through with the he had throw passes in a 30-7 Mahon injured Mike Ditka two mild heart attack Some midget.

Flutie is flourish... cord for the Pat Tom Ramsey wh... cut. He's been N... terback ever since.

He has comple... last three game have been for 'T... scouts who once... are starting to... Certainly Patriot... Berry does.

"His ability to... quickness are e... he said. "He giv... sion which is sp... ability to move an... Don't for a... think that Flutie... choice. But To... Steve Grogan is... hurt, and Rams... swer. Enter the l... "I can under... reservations." B... big or tall like n... was curious about... affect him. But... cerned about it a... That may be g... bers the Pats' gar... The Bills arr... Bruce Smith and... a combined 520... fensive bulk. T... quarterback and... tered as they arr...

Hogs (Continued from... Trainor connect... Razorbacks a 17-7... In the third... stopped a long A... ng Bland for a... A&M 8.

The snap on the... bobbled and Bland... to William Thoma... But a personal... Price after the play... to their own 2, at... by Kerry Owens fo... After the Hogs... in for another fi...