

There are none so blind as those who will not see

The utter irony of the situation is simply astounding.

Just yesterday morning I was in Jackie Sherrill's office working on a profile of the man, a story that wound up making the celebrated head football coach and athletic director pretty good.

Too bad it's never going to run.

I was trying to get him to talk to me about why he came to Texas A&M, why he's such a supporter of the school, and if he ever plans on leaving for the ranks of professional football — or anywhere else, for that matter.

And I was about to ask him why he has such a difficult time dealing with the media — you know, with the old NCAA scandal — when he had to leave for some staff meetings.

He'd said he'd give me 10 minutes. I wound up with 40.

He shook my hand twice. He passed on excellent opportunities to put me off. He even encouraged me to come and finish up the interview that afternoon.

My opinion of the man quite likely was at an all-time high. At least since the NCAA allegations came out.

And then . . . this.

It's over, isn't it? The Golden Era, the Age of Sherrill, . . .

All over. . . .

Personally I'm convinced Sherrill didn't know about the storm on the horizon. At least, not that morning.

After all, he takes practically every opportunity to avoid talking to the media. It doesn't seem very likely that he would choose the occasion of what may be his dismissal as athletic director to try to become friendly.

Now it looks like Sherrill and A&M football might not have very much to be friendly about. Not for a long, long time.

I said at the time the first bomb the NCAA dropped that I was hardly a charter member of the Jackie Sherrill fan club. And I did vote as a member of *The Battalion* Editorial Board in favor of asking the University to look into the possibility of firing him.

But on the other hand, I wasn't quite sure then a dismissal was in order.

Then.

University President William Mobley had expressed his full confidence in Sherrill as part of the solution to the problem, and Sherrill himself had pointed out that many of the allegations were somewhat picky.

And as all my friends will attest, it's not difficult to get me to believe someone.

But even Mr. Naive has come around now.

It's time Sherrill supporters and Aggie fans came around to the increasingly obvious facts of the situation.



Hal L. Hammons
Sports Editor

We've been had, folks.

Jackie Sherrill's stay at Texas A&M, once you boil it down, has been nothing but one deception after another.

He told us we could have a winning program in three years and go to the Cotton Bowl in four — without cheating. He told us we could beat Texas four years in a row — without cheating. He told us we could be national-championship contenders — without cheating.

Apparently we couldn't.

And then he told us we had caught all our slip-ups. We were on the way to a clean program. We were committed to compliance with NCAA rules and regulations.

Apparently we weren't.

And we ate the whole thing up, didn't we? Swallowed it hook, line and sinker. It was too good to be true. It was big bucks, no whammies.

How could we have missed it? How could we have been so blind?

Because it felt good to think we could have it all. Because we wanted to believe.

After all, we in America — and especially in Texas — have been brought up to love winners and hate losers. And we in Aggieland were tired of being on the down side. We were ready to win for a change.

And Texas A&M capitalized on it. Told us in dollars and cents what was most important to this University. Told us a football coach was worth all that money they were paying him if he could bring home the Southwest Conference crown.

Was it?

Is years of disgrace in the eyes of millions of Americans worth a few Saturday afternoons of glory? Is a yearly New Year's trip to Dallas worth its weight in shame and stigma?

All questions we were told we would never have to answer. Because we were doing it the hard way — earning it.

It would be funny if it weren't so pathetic.

We were sitting ducks. Patsies at the shell game. Completely, blissfully unaware of what was going on under our very noses.

Jackie Sherrill conned us. He conned us all. And a scary number of people out there bought the entire act.

Wacker's staying TCU coach denies buyout rumors

FORT WORTH (AP) — Jim Wacker wants to board up the rumor mill. No, he isn't quitting as the Texas Christian head football coach. Period. No ifs, ands, or maybes.

There has been tailgate party talk at Amon Carter Stadium that Wacker would take a half payout on the rest of his contract, which lasts until 1991, and return to Southwest Texas State University, where he won two NCAA Division II national championships.

The rumor mill ground out the tortilla that Wacker would replace retiring athletic director Bill Miller and football coach John O'Hara. It would cost somebody, either SWTSU or dissident TCU alumni, an estimated \$200,000 to swing the deal.

Once done, the TCU revolutionaries would summon Curly Halman from Southern Mississippi to take control of the Horned Frogs' sagging football fortunes.

Wacker quickly scotches this gossipy scenario.

You ask Wacker how he is doing and he quips "I bet you are doing a lot better than I am the last two weeks."

The Frogs have lost heartbreakers to Texas Tech and Texas as their season unraveled. It's a season in which TCU is expected to do big things with 32 seniors.

The Frogs will have a losing season no matter what happens against Texas A&M on Saturday.

Wacker deals head-on with the rumors.

"There ain't no way I'd go back to Southwest Texas," Wacker said. "I hope I got three more years to go here. I hope to be here a long, long time."

"I didn't even know Bill Miller was retiring, and the last thing I need is to be athletic director. I'm into coaching stuff, and I sure want to put that rumor to rest."

Wacker's critics charge he hasn't been much of a coach since he took TCU to the Bluebonnet Bowl in 1984.

They claim his small college coaching techniques don't carry over to major college football. They give him an "A" for recruiting and a "D-

Texas A&M vs. Texas Christian

- **When:** Saturday at noon.
- **Where:** Kyle Field.
- **Weather:** Partly cloudy with a slight chance of rain. Temperature at kickoff expected to be in the mid-80s.
- **Aggies:** Last week A&M lost to Arkansas 25-20 in Fayetteville.
- **Frogs:** TCU lost to Texas 30-21 last week in Fort Worth.
- **Records:** A&M is 5-4 (4-1 in SWC). TCU is 4-6 (2-4).
- **Television:** Raycom-TV is televising the game regionally with Phil Stone on play-by-play and Dave Rowe on commentary.
- **Radio:** The game can be heard locally on WTAW-AM and around the state on the 80-station Aggie Radio Network with Dave South on play-by-play and Jay Howard handling the commentary.
- **Transportation:** The A&M Shuttle bus system will be operating on a trial basis to transport off-campus students to and from the game.
- **Buses will be running from 10 a.m. until one hour after the game is over.**

took it and it still may be.

"We had to kick off the top seven players on the team and the NCAA took away 30 scholarships. Everything that could go wrong does go wrong here."

He says everyone has "just got to keep believing we'll turn it around. We're still excited. We've got a big response from our recruits this year. Not a lot of people in the league are knocking 'em dead right now."

Then Wacker says, "It will still be special when it (TCU getting to the Cotton Bowl) happens. I'll guarantee you nobody will be able say it was easy."

Wacker loses two senior quarterbacks and is looking for a strong-armed passer on his recruiting rounds.

"Finding a quarterback is critical," Wacker says. "We need to find one who can throw as well as run. We need to do better job in the passing game."

Wacker says he doesn't listen for ticking packages when he opens the mail.

"I have a lot more favorable mail," he says. "You can count the number of negative responses on less than one hand. Our fans are the greatest in the whole world. They aren't spoiled."

Wacker says he can understand the alumni being somewhat disgruntled. Wacker's teams in five years are 2-15 in November.

"I'd be upset if they were not not disappointed," Wacker says. "I think they understand some of the difficulties we've been through."

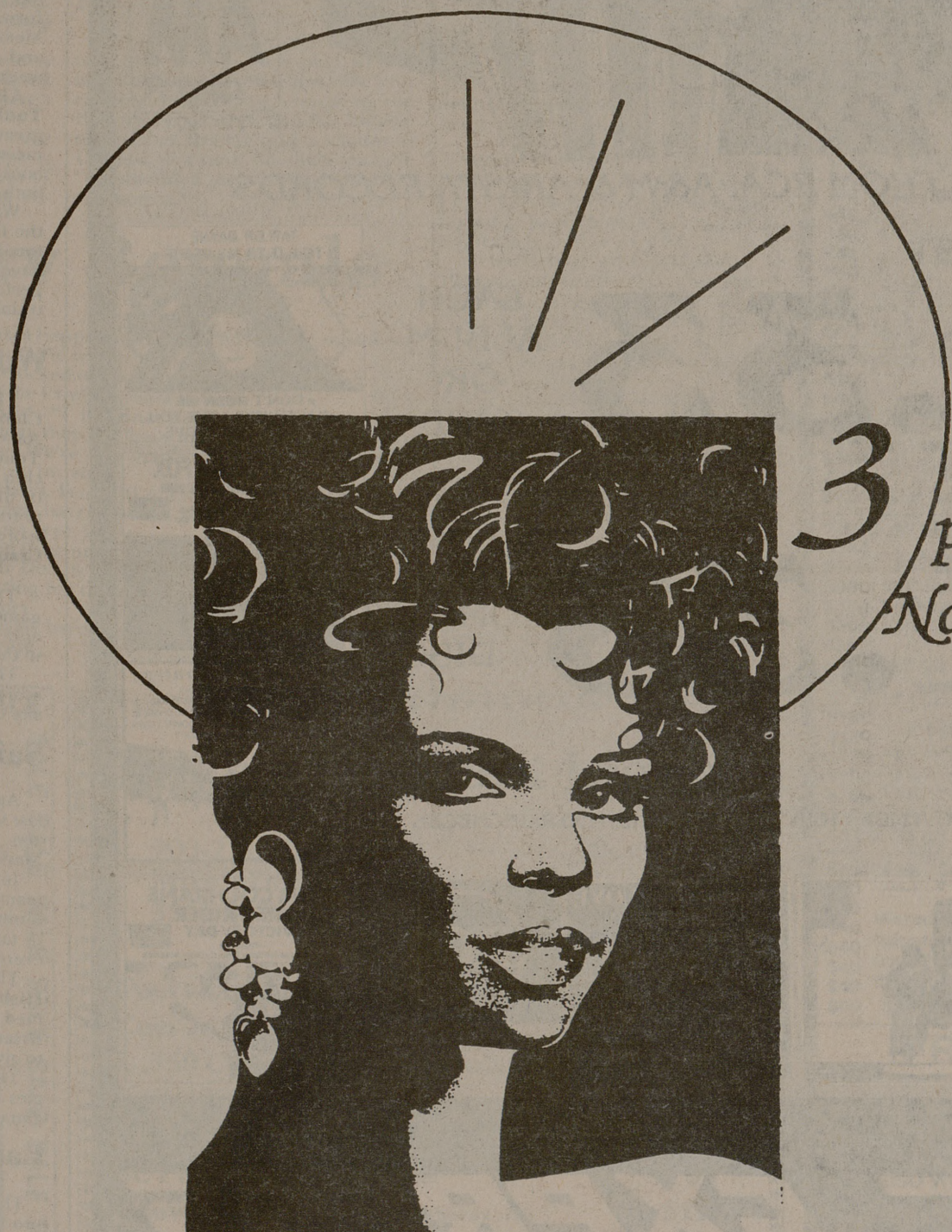
"We're making progress and we will do it right. Our kids are going to class and will get their degrees. I'm dang proud."

Then there's the rumor that a strong Wacker-backer has left \$25 million in her will for TCU if they leave Wacker alone through 1991. . . .

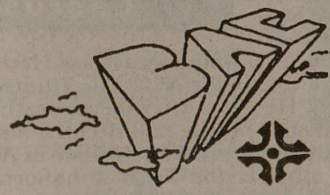
Enough. Wacker has shut down the rumor mill.

AS THE CLOCK CHIMES:

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 Members: \$3
 Non-Members: \$4
 General: \$5



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