And now a little bedtime story about days of Texas' old glory

Well the end has finally come. I suppose it's appropriate that my last column as sports editor should run the last day of my tenure - and the day after the Aggie football season finally wound

Choosing a final column topic was difficult. There's so much that hasn't been said.

I haven't explained why I think Shelby Metcalf should be replaced as Texas A&M's head basketball coach. I haven't said how much I've regretted not getting to cover women's basketball or volleyball in my tour of duty at The Battalion. I never blasted Mike Tyson, Brian Bosworth or

But a choice must be made. And considering how so many Battalion readers think we printed a bunch of lies concerning a certain head football coach and athletic director, I suppose it's appropriate, just for once, to indulge in the

It's getting late, too. The paper isn't going to be ready to go to press until about 1 or 2 in the morning, (That's went to press for you readers, I suppose.) And I'm sure you're just as sleepy as I

So gather 'round, children, as the sun sets upon this once-glorious state, and I'll tell you a bedtime story.

Once upon a time there was a greeeaaat big place called Texas, and it was just chock-full of neat stuff. The people were friendly, the weather was moderate, and folks just kinda lived their own little lives without botherin' other people a whole lot — 'cept for a little braggin' now and

But one thing set this place apart from all

other places.
You see, the inhabitants of this little paradise were, well, not quite right in the head all 12 months of the year. And as September grew near and the leaves began to turn, the natives started

to get restless.
And when they got restless; they started

The local farmers got into the action some,



Hal Hammons **Sports Editor**

and when they did they were baaaaad news. Even worse news for anybody who wanted to run over them. You never would a thought agricultural or mechanical types could be so vicious.

And they were not the only ones, by any stretch. There were rampaging herds of wild horses that centered up north near the panhandle. Some rangy mountain lions from down on the coast were usually tough to cage and pretty much impossible to tame. And there was a clan of bears just to the west of here that, when it wasn't time to hibernate, could cause a mess of trouble.

And if you went back far enough you'd find a time when even coastal night fowl and northern amphibians were a force with which to be

reckoned. Strange, I know, but true nonetheless. But the main death-and-destruction types were from a little town to the south and west. You never would've thought cattle could cause

such a ruckus. You see them grazing in a pasture or something and you think, "Low brain-wattage types here." But it seems that certain pastures

Because when they'd stampede into Dallas, Fort Worth, Houston, Waco, Lubbock, or even here in College Station, they were usually unstoppable.

And when they were in their home territory shoot, seems like not even an Indiana Irishman

But then things started to change. And not for

Course, the birds and toads were the first to kick off. No one was too surprised at that - they just couldn't evolve at the same pace as the others. The toads keep showing signs of significance, but it always seems to amount to

The big turnaround happened one year when a blight from Kansas came down and wiped out the herd of horses. They'd proven succeptible to it, and in fact they were still reeling from the last battle they'd had with it. The second shot put 'em away. Nobody's seen so much as a single pony

The bears, apparently, have just stayed asleep for the last couple of years. At least, that's what I'm told. They certainly haven't caused any

trouble lately.
"Actually it's been the farmers who've been pushing people around lately. After a few years of mediocre, yields, they've been reaping some hefty cotton harvests recently

But unfortunately, they got hit by the blight too. That and some angry hogs wiped this year's crop out, and it looks like the pickings will be slim for some time.

The gulf-coast cats looked like they might be able to reek enough havoc to make up the difference, but it looks like the plague is spreading east

West, too. The cattle are looking purty sickly already, and just not from the blight. It don't look too promising for the future. Someone's gonna have to breed a new strain —

one that's resistant to this kind of disease. Trouble is, no one seems too concerned with the problem — they're just trying to water down the results. Trying to keep the dying horses out in the field long enough for one more harvest.

But don't cry. You're forgetting, it's just a story. Now, if this were real, well it'd be purty depressing. 'Nuff to make you want to watch basketball or something.

But anyway, I hope you liked it, 'cause it's time for bed. And that's the last page of the story.

Man Scoreboard 12th

Aggie fencers gig opponents in qualifie

The Texas A&M Fencing Club produced qualifiers for the Junior Olympics after a successful competition in Port Aransas last weekend.

Greg Dillworth and Kevin Hawkins both took first place titles, while Leslie Brown placed third in the women's division. The students will compete in the National Junior Olympics in Colorado Springs, Colorado, in

Fencing A&M hosts the NCAA fen tournament in January. The gies currently hold second pl LOS ANGE

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among Texas schools and hopen capture the first place title from the University of Texas. Rice, Tu lane, Southwest Texas State, an the University of North Texasa among the schools invited to the tournament.

Judo team closes fall season in Dallas

Texas A&M's Judo Club traveled north last weekend to compete in the Dallas Champion-

Teams from the University of Texas and Arkansas as well as clubs from Florida, Colorado, Louisiana and others around Texas competed. The Aggies had an off-week, finishing near the bottom of the 20-25 team field.

John Hughes took third in the

Judo

nen's novice 215-pou neavyweight divisions. Schmidt also came in third in th

novice 185-pound division. Another notable perform was Bob Perez's fourth place the 132-pound class.

The tournament marked last for the Judo Club this fal

Coming Attractions

A&M swim team travels to Tuscaloosa

The Texas A&M swimming team splits up squads this week-end to compete in two tourna-

After a two-week layoff, part of the team will travel to Tuscaloosa, Ala., to swim against teams from Iowa, Arizona, Clemson, Florida, Southern Illinois, Indiana and Alabama, the host team.

The rest of the team goes to Fort Wort for the Texas Christian Invitational to face teams from Texas, Rice, Oral Roberts, Drury

Swimmers in Alabama get un derway today at 11 a.m. and continue through Sunday while thos in Fort Worth compete only Friday and Saturday.

Aggie coaches are hoping for some of their swimmers in A bama to meet NCAA qualifyi standards. Swimmers consider favorites to do so are Mike V rozza and Ernie Vela for the m and Susan Habermas, La Grimes, Joan Wojtowicz and Jernifer Newcomb on the women

Aggie hoopsters battle Lamar tonight

The A&M men's basketball team hosts the Lamar Cardinals in a 7:30 match tonight at G. Rollie White Coliseum.

The Aggies have posted a 3-1 mark so far this season while the Cardinals stand at 1-1

A&M defeated Stephen F. Austin 117-88 earlier this week in

the Dial Classic. A&M takes Kansas State at 6 p.m tonigi Coach Lynn Hickey coached the Lady Wildcats before coming

Minnesota plays Radford in the other first round game and the finals and consolation game The Lady Aggie hoopsters, will be Saturday

If Sherrill's leaving, get an outside man

Jackie Sherrill hasn't even left Texas A&M yet — despite what you might have heard from news reportslately. But already rumors are starting to fly about his successor — or successors.

Most of the speculation seems to be centering around the headcoaching aspect of Sherrill's job. ing would imply his guilt again. Either people are assuming the jobs will stay under one man or, separate from the coach and therefore uninteresting. I am of the second persuasion.

Most of the rumors seem to be centered around University of Houston Head Coach Jack Par-dee. He's certainly got the cre-dentials: NFL and USFL experience, college experience, proven winner, proven program-builder.

And most importantly, rumor has it, still fiercely loyal to Texas A&M. After all, it's not easy to dissociate yourself completely from the school where you were an All-American

Whoever isn't on the Pardee bandwagon seems to be supporting Defensive Coordinator R.C. Slocum for the job. And again, that would make sense.

Slocum interacts well with the media, can obviously coach with counting on being on any kind of the best of them, and would make the transition from coach to coach as easy as could be expected. Not to mention the fact that Sherrill placed enough faith in Slocum to appoint him as his replacement against TCU

But paradoxically, the very reasons that make the two men so qualified for the job make them lutely the worst for it.

If Sherrill quits or is fired after the recent turmoil, it will leave an

Hal L. Hammons

Analysis

impression in the minds of people across the country that's even worse than the one they have now. Proven guilty once, his leav-

And hiring someone else to come in and fix the situation will

cum's coaching ability, and I imagine he will make a fine head coach one day. But if he stays at A&M, there will always be people wondering if he was part of the wrongdoing of Sherrill's adminis-

Pardee is doing a fine job at Houston, and I'm happy for him. But he's a "good ol' boy." And Texas A&M doesn't need a head coach that's chummy with the big

It needs a coach that will never be accused of being a "yes-man" to men who have stood behind Sherrill staunchly throughout all the controversy of the last few

Who then? Well, I'm not consultation committee when and if Sherrill vacates his jobs, but I think the obvious man for the job is Earl Bruce, the man whose Ohio State Buckeyes beat the Aggies two years ago in the Cotton

Bruce is a proven winner, there are no questions about his integrity, and there's little doubt could be hired away from Northern Iowa, where he is now. And best of all, he has no con-

nections with Texas A&M.

Curry's job safe at Bama until '92

From Staff and Wire Reports Head Coach Bill Curry is safe at Alabama until at least 1992.

He got a concrete vote of confidence for the remaining three years of his contract before Thursday night's regular season college foot-ball finale against Texas A&M Uni-

Alabama officials were so con-cerned with rumors about Curry's job, they called a press condeal with them nine hours before

After the Crimson Tide's 30-10 victory in Thursday night's "Hurricane Bowl" Curry has a 15-8 record in two years at Alabama and this year's team is 8-3 but some Crimson Tide alumni haven't been satisfied. His contract is not for sale," said

Dr. Roger Sayers, Alabama's interim There were rumors that Curry would be fired after Alabama's Sun want in charge of our program."

Bowl game Dec. 24 against Army. "Bill Curry will be our football

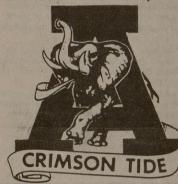
coach tomorrow, next week, next to reinforce what Dr. Sayers said month, next year and at least the about our football program. next three years," Sayers said. Sayers said ESPN's report last

week that an influential group of alumni had banded together to buy out Curry's contract was incorrect. 'That is absurd," Sayers said. "I hope that any alumni group with \$2 million to spend on Alabama will contact me at their earliest convenience because I have in mind several outstanding academic pro-

Sayers said Curry's ethical behavior was a "first priority" of the administration and he said the school

also is "pleased with his leadership." He said Alabama's definition of football success was a winning program and one in which it lenged for conference and national

honors and does so with integrity. Sayers praised Curry for this sea-



son, saying he lost two great players to injury yet kept the team compet-

"When a group of players can advance this far during adverse circumstances someone is molding real leadership and character," Sayers

That is the kind of person we Red Blount, president pro-tem of the board of trustees, said, "I'm here

"Let me repeat Billy Curry is our football coach and he will be our football coach for at least three years and I hope longer. His contract is not for sale. In the words of a recent candidate for president: Read my

Blount said, "One of our trustees has been rumored to be a part of buying out coach Curry's contract. This rumor like all the others is completely without foundation.

One of those rumors had Texas A&M coach Jackie Sherrill reseigning after Thursday night's game and assuming the head coaching position at Alabama, his alma mater. Curry, a Georgia Tech graduate,

has an overall coaching record of 46-51-4. He was head coach at Georgia Tech from 1980-1986 and recorded

Rangers make bid for fireballer Ryan

HOUSTON (AP) — The Texas Rangers have offered free agent pitcher Nolan Ryan a one-year contract for more than \$1 million, Rangers General Manager Tom Grieve said Thursday.

Ryan became a free agent at the end of the 1988 season with the Houston Astros and has been offered a 1-year pact by both Houston and the California Ange

We think he would go hand in hand with our other veteran pitcher, Charlie Hough," Grieve said. "They would provide strong leadership for our young, developing pitching staff."

Grieve said he made the offer Tuesday night to Dick Moss, Ryan's agent, after the Rangers lost out in the bidding for pitcher Mike Moore, who signed a multi-year contract with the Oakland Athletics.

So Grieve turned his attention to Ryan, another \$1 million pitcher. "We didn't feel we could negotiate

with more than one million dollar pitcher because what would happen if both said yes?" Grieve said.

Grieve says the Rangers' initial of-fer to Ryan isn't the best one Ryan has received, but the Rangers are willing to negotiate.

"I just want to express by the fer that we are serious," 6

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Ryan earned \$1 million in the year of his contract with the A after leading the league in s

Houston originally offered \$800,000 plus incentives to play season for the Astros.

The Astros have increased offer to \$1.15 million, the He Post reported Thursday, buti below the reported \$1.5 million fered by the Angels.

The Post said Ryan rejecte

offers by the Angels and Astron now is looking to the Rangers. Ryan led the National Le with 228 strikeouts last sea

the ninth time he has been league strikeout leader. Ryan could be a benefit to y Texas pitchers Bobby Witt, Jeff sell and Jose Guzman, Grieves

"Our younger pitchers ma to see what conditioning and miniation and drive and cou

do," Grieve said. "Here's a guy who has thro miles per hour for 22 years. doesn't happen by accident.

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