



We're having a ball . . .

Texas A&M's Donald Thompson (30) and Houston Baptist University's George Christopher battle for the ball following a rebound early in the first

quarter in Wednesday night's game at G. Rollie White Coliseum. A&M won the game 79-67. See story on page 10.

Photo by Dean Saito

## Smith's ex-employer offers clues in inquiry, A&M plans interviews

From Staff and Wire Reports

A newspaper story contained no new information about George Smith's allegations that he was paid "hush" money, Texas A&M officials said Wednesday, adding that the University already had scheduled an investigative team to go to Georgia for interviews.

A former employer of Smith was quoted in Wednesday's copyright story in the *Dallas Morning News* as saying the former A&M running back threatened to expose violations of National Collegiate Athletic Association rules if the athletic department did not send him money.

Larry Wilson, who coached Smith in high school, contradicts Smith's latest statements, in which he contended he only got friendly loans from A&M head coach and athletic director Jackie Sherrill.

Wilson told the newspaper he allowed Smith to make collect calls to A&M athletic offices and overheard Smith talking to Sherrill and assistant coach George Pugh.

"Contrary to some media reports, we are progressing expeditiously and diligently in a thorough investi-

gation to determine the facts surrounding all facets of this matter," A&M President William H. Mobley said in a prepared statement Wednesday. He said NCAA officials had previously been informed that investigators retained by the University would be interviewing "a number of people" in Georgia.

Wilson said he had not been contacted by the NCAA or by A&M officials last month.

"In short, we are on top of this matter and progressing in an orderly manner," Mobley said. "No one is more interested in coming to a quick resolution than we are, but we will not act in haste at the risk of being incomplete or unfair. As I have said before, due process is paramount."

Wilson's comments corroborate Smith's previous story, published by the *Dallas newspaper* Nov. 18, that \$4,400 in cash and money orders were actually sent in return for Smith's silence as an NCAA investigation of the A&M football program concluded in September.

Smith received one \$500 payment in an express mail package four days

after A&M received its penalties stemming from an NCAA investigation.

At a Nov. 19 news conference, Smith said the payments were not "hush money," but a loan from Sherrill. Smith said he lied to *Morning News* reporter Doug Bedell to help sell a proposed book.

Wilson, director of city parks in Douglasville, Ga., said he hired Smith in June and July as a part-time worker.

"He (Smith) was always telling me about money," Wilson said. "He said, 'I'm going to tell on them (A&M) if they don't come through with money.'"

Wilson said he talked numerous times with Smith about the demands he was making on Sherrill and Pugh. "Now he turns around and says he made everything up," Wilson said. "Like I told somebody today, if this happens to come back, I ain't going to lie for anybody. He made several of those calls here."

David Berst, NCAA assistant executive director for enforcement, said he did not know if A&M officials planned to interview Wilson.

## Service helps stress victims deal with final examinations

By Andrea L. Warrenburg  
Reporter

Students encounter stress at the end of each semester with the arrival of final exams. This stress, like finals, must be dealt with. If not, it can lead to depression, and in extreme cases, suicide.

"The number of attempted suicides goes up every year at this time," says Nicholas Dobrovolsky, counseling psychologist at the Texas A&M Student Counseling Service. "In fact, we had some attempted suicides last week."

Dobrovolsky cited two reasons why the suicide rates increase as the fall semester is concluding: the holidays, and pressure to make good grades.

"The holiday season is a time

when many people get depressed," he said. "And second, the reality hits people that they're not going to make their grades."

"Students try to fulfill aspirations to graduate and expectations from parents and other significant people. They find their goals, which may be unattainable, cannot be fulfilled and so they see themselves as a failure. They feel they are letting down everyone. So, they begin to see suicide as an option to escape the pain and pressure."

Dobrovolsky sees suicide, in some cases, as a cry for help.

"People sometimes attempt suicide with the hopes of being rescued," he said. "It's a way of saying 'I'm in pain and I need help.'"

If someone is depressed, tells you he's going to kill himself, purchases

a weapon, or has a drastic change in behavior, he should get help immediately.

"Seek some sort of intervention, whether it be a psychologist, a counselor or a minister," Dobrovolsky said.

In the meantime, Dobrovolsky gives some tips to help deal with the stress of finals:

- Eat nutritiously.
- Get adequate sleep.
- Communicate with others to relieve the "tunnel-vision" effect that studying causes.
- Exercise.
- Take time out to relax and concentrate on something positive, whether it be in the form of Yoga, progressive muscle relaxation or prayer.

Dobrovolsky came to A&M in 1974 for his doctorate study and has been working at the Student Counseling Service for 11 years.

The Counseling Service has been working from a waiting list since the second week of the semester, but one of the 14 counselors is on emergency call every day. At night, they can be reached through the A.P. Beutel Health Center at 845-1511.

The Counseling Service is located on the third floor of the YMCA Building and can be reached at 845-4427.

## Thousands die as quake rocks Soviet Union

MOSCOW (AP) — The strongest earthquake to hit the Soviet Caucasus region in 80 years flattened buildings Wednesday, and Foreign Minister Eduard A. Shevardnadze said thousands of people were killed.

Soviet President Mikhail S. Gorbachev cut short his summit trip to New York and planned to return to Moscow on Thursday because of the earthquake, Shevardnadze said at a news conference in New York.

Gorbachev had been scheduled to travel to Cuba on Friday and to London Monday before returning to Moscow.

Earlier, Gorbachev called the earthquake "a grave tragedy." Official Soviet news media did not give any casualty figures. Armenia was the hardest-hit area in the Caucasus.

"Preliminary data indicate that in the Armenian republic, thousands of people have died, and of course I cannot give you a more accurate figure for obvious reasons, there being also a lot of disruption," Shevardnadze said.

"It's a most grave misfortune, it's a terrible tragedy not only for the Armenian people, but for all the peoples of the Soviet Union," he added.

## FAA fines airlines for security violations

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Federal Aviation Administration fined 29 airlines more than \$1.6 million Wednesday for security lapses at passenger checkpoints, although officials said the violations have declined significantly in the past year.

The civil penalties ranged from \$1,000 against a handful of commuter carriers — the minimum for a single violation — to more than \$200,000 apiece against American Airlines, Northwest Airlines and United Airlines for each having more than two dozen violations.

The penalties stemmed from failures by security guards at airport

checkpoints to detect 236 mock weapons carried or hidden in carry-on baggage by undercover FAA officials. Most of the violations occurred between April and September of this year.

The agency collected more than \$1 million in fines earlier this year as a result of violations that occurred in late 1987 and early 1988 as part of a stepped up effort by the government to improve checkpoint security at major airports.

Despite the latest civil penalties, Transportation Department officials said the airlines, which are responsible for passenger screening at air-

ports, have significantly improved their detection of weapons at screening points since the matter became a focus of concern in late 1987.

According to FAA figures, the airlines in 1987 detected 78.9 percent of the mock weapons being passed through checkpoints by FAA undercover agents.

During the first six months of this year the success rate increased to 85.6 percent and during the July-September period it improved to 88.9 percent.

But Transportation Secretary Jim Burnley told reporters while announcing the latest figures that he is

not satisfied with a failure rate in excess of 11 percent.

The FAA said that the \$1.66 million in fines against the airlines reflected 236 cases in which mock weapons were undetected at airport checkpoints, where X-ray screening devices, metal detectors and visual checks are used to prevent the smuggling of weapons aboard aircraft.

In some cases a single violation resulted in several airlines being fined because a number of air carriers shared responsibility for a checkpoint.

Fines were either \$1,000 or

\$10,000 per violation for each air carrier involved, according to a DOT spokesman.

DOT spokesman Ed O'Hara said that airlines were fined \$1,000 for each violation that occurred at a checkpoint where the overall detection rate was 95 percent or better and \$10,000 at a checkpoint where the overall rate was less than 95 percent.

The FAA declined to provide a breakdown of the detection rates at various airports, how many airports were checked or which were checked.

## Gorbachev plans removal of troops, conventional weapons from Europe

NEW YORK (AP) — Mikhail S. Gorbachev, urging a "period of peace" during an American visit suddenly cut short, announced a cutback of 500,000 Red Army troops on Wednesday and called on the United States and its allies to "take certain steps" in reply.

President Reagan and President-elect George Bush embraced the troop reduction gesture after a cordial luncheon summit with the Soviet leader.

Just before midnight, Soviet officials said Gorbachev was returning to his homeland because of a severe earthquake that took thousands of lives in the Soviet Caucasus region. Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze said Gorbachev would return to the Soviet Union today.

Gorbachev had intended to spend today sightseeing New York before traveling to Cuba for the weekend and then stopping in London on his way back to Moscow. The White House said the Soviets had told President Reagan of Gorbachev's plan change at about 11:30 p.m. EST.

In his U.N. speech, Gorbachev billed the cutback in troops, artillery,

planes and tanks as "unilateral" — part of a reduced reliance on military might. He later said "Nyet, nyet, nyet," when asked if there was resistance at home to the move, but there was evidence to the contrary.

Reagan said in a speech in Washington a few hours later that if the Soviet reduction is carried out speedily and in full, "history will regard it as important — significant."

On a day that blended superpower substance and symbolism, the Soviet president bade farewell to Reagan and answered Bush's welcoming handshake with a vigorous two-handed embrace. He declared that the president-elect would find the Soviets ready "without long pauses or backtracking" to continue work toward a new arms control treaty as well as on other issues.

Bush, who played a low-key role throughout the day, said he had told Gorbachev he "needed some time" to settle in as president after his inauguration next month. He hailed the troop reduction announcement, even while saying it was not enough for balance of forces in Europe.

U.S. analysts have been predicting

such a move for months, believing it could further boost Gorbachev's popularity in the West and allow him to divert needed funds from the military to the domestic sector.

Gorbachev praised U.S. willingness to discuss arms reductions and said the Soviet leadership has decided to demonstrate once again its readiness to reinforce this process not only in words but in deeds.

"Within the next two years, their (the Soviet Army's) numerical strength will be reduced by 500,000 men," Gorbachev said near the end of a lengthy address to the U.N. General Assembly. The Soviet Armed Forces total about 5.6 million men and women.

"The numbers of conventional armaments will also be substantially reduced," he said. "This will be done unilaterally."

Gorbachev said the Soviets would pull 50,000 troops out of East Germany, Czechoslovakia and Hungary, reducing by about 10 percent the number of forward-deployed Red Army forces arrayed against the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

## Gorbachev's tour surprises unsuspecting New Yorkers

NEW YORK (AP) — His summit completed, Mikhail S. Gorbachev took a 75-minute motorcade tour of Manhattan on Wednesday from the canyons of Wall Street to garish Times Square, twice jumping out of his limousine to greet astonished and delighted crowds.

Though traffic was light most of the day, the dreaded "Gorbylock" arrived late in the afternoon once the 45-car motorcade began snaking through the city.

Traffic was locked up in lower Manhattan for about an hour after the Soviet leader left the World Trade Center, where he and his wife, Raisa, admired the view from the top of the 110-story twin towers.

At 50th Street and Broadway, just outside the Winter Garden Theater, Gorbachev stopped his motorcade and jumped out to greet people on the street.

"I was right there, and I yelled in Russian, 'How are you,'" Geranno Valentine said. "He said, 'Thank you, fine.'"

"The crowd was just going hysterical," said Joe Crawford, a 17-year-old high school student from Connecticut who had seen a matinee of "Starlight Express" at a nearby theater. "It was fantastic, truly something fantastic to see someone like that up close."

Gorbachev also briefly stepped out of his limousine at Bloomingdale's, Lexington Avenue and 59th Street while his wife remained in the car.

"We're very pleased by the fact that thousands of New Yorkers have come out to see us," he said. "We saw their faces, we saw their eyes, their friendliness . . . We are grateful for this warm hospitality."