

Tuesday, February 14, 1989

Slocum hires pair to complete staff

FROM STAFF & WIRE REPORTS

Texas A&M Head Football Coach R.C. Slocum on Monday hired two coaches with strong reputations as recruiters to complete his staff in time to prepare for spring workouts which begin March 20.

Offensive Line Coach Mike Sherman and Receivers Coach Robert Ford replace former A&M assistants Joe Avezzano and George Pugh.

Pugh and Avezzano were fired in December for their involvement in the George Smith scandal which led to the resignation of former Head Coach Jackie Sherrill.

Both coaches have been top recruiters in previous jobs.

Sherman comes to A&M from Holy Cross where he served as offensive coordinator for the 1988 season in addition to his duties as offensive line coach. During his four years at Holy Cross, the Crusaders went 30-3 in the past three seasons.

He also coached the offensive line at the University of Pittsburgh and Tulane. Sherman has a reputation as

an excellent recruiter and tactician and has coached several linemen who went on to professional football careers.

Ford is the former receivers coach at Tech where he coached one of the nation's top units last season during his one-year stint in Lubbock.

Ford played college football at the University of Houston and caught a pair of 99-yard touchdown passes during his college career. He is the only player in NCAA history to accomplish that feat.

Ford coached receivers at New Mexico while also serving as recruiting coordinator for the Lobos during a three-year stay there. He subsequently coached at Oregon State, Mississippi State, Houston of the United States Football League and the University of Kansas.

Slocum said Monday he was pleased to complete his staff and praised the men for their coaching ability and experience.

"Both of them possess the outstanding qualities that I was looking for to fill these two important positions," Slocum said.

Landry shakes up coaching staff

Cowboy coach replaces Hackett, Stautner with new coaches

IRVING (AP) — Dallas Coach Tom Landry, stung by a 3-13 season and a last-place finish in the NFL, replaced defensive coordinator Ernie Stautner and pass coordinator Paul Hackett on Monday, then hinted he might be with the Cowboys into the 1990s.

Landry hired George Hill as defensive coordinator and Jerry Rhome as quarterbacks coach.

Stautner, the Cowboys' defensive coordinator for 20 years, was reassigned to work on special projects and will retire after the 1989 season, Landry said.

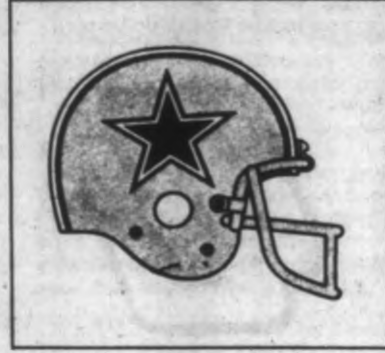
Rhyme, who was offensive coordinator for San Diego last season, replaces Paul Hackett, who has been reassigned to work on special projects for the club.

"I'll try to find Paul a job with another club with what he does best, coordinating an offense," Landry said.

Hackett, who joined Dallas in 1986 from San Francisco, is currently working on special projects.

Hill, who was fired after the 1988 season with the Indianapolis Colts, was defensive coordinator under

Coach Ron Meyer for four seasons. Stautner joined the Cowboys in 1966 as defensive line coach following two years as a player-coach.



"I can't say too much for the contribution that Ernie made with the Cowboys," Landry said. "We had some great seasons and some great Super Bowls. He called every defensive play. Sometime you have to make changes."

Stautner took the change well. "I can understand that Tom had

to change up the defense," Stautner said. "I'm looking forward to helping out in any way I can."

Landry admitted he had philosophical differences with Hackett. "I think we're still friends," Landry said.

Landry said with the coaching changes he might stay on past next year.

"I never said I wouldn't be around after next season," Landry said. "If I can find somebody (an owner) who wants me, then I might be available. I told my new coaches this."

"I have no intention of retiring unless it is forced upon me. I feel good. I survived the onslaught of last season."

Landry said he is trying to build the Cowboys back into the power they were in the 1970s.

"My objective is to go out with the Cowboys headed into the right direction," Landry said. "I want to see us turn it around this next year. I'm on the bottom and I want to go up."

Landry said he will pay more attention to the offense next year and let Hill work a 3-4 defense into the Cowboys' scheme.

Dallas was 26th in the NFL last season in points allowed.

Asked if his famed four-man line "flex" defense was dead, Landry said, "You might say it's nicked up some. I don't see the 'flex' as the main part of our defense next year."

Landry likes Hill because his defenses bend but don't break.

His 1987 Indianapolis team allowed only a league-low 238 points.

"His defenses don't give up the big play and that's what has been killing us," Landry said. "He plays a lot of zone."

Landry also announced he will go to UCLA soon to see quarterback Troy Aikman and decide if he is the Cowboys' No. 1 pick.

"I'll go to UCLA to look at him personally," Landry said. "If we do decide to take him we'd like to get him in Dallas by April. But it would be a miracle if we signed him early."

Landry also has to hire a running backs coach after Al Lavan accepted a similar position with San Francisco on Friday.

Billie Matthews, who lost his job with the Kansas City Chiefs, is expected to be hired to replace Lavan.

Sooners, Longhorns demean themselves by being braggarts

The University of Oklahoma isn't necessarily popular in this part of Texas. But take a three-hour drive north, or beyond, and Boomer Sooners get as thick as Longhorn lovers are just west of here.

When you get up in those parts, you find there's a kind of a pride that goes along with being an Okie — especially those that have been forced to cross the border into Texas.

Ask almost anyone in the Texas Panhandle (including those in Panhandle, Texas) and the natives will claim that Oklahoma is not part of the United States — but a separate entity altogether. Not surprisingly, Okies stranded in Texas will say the same about their present state.

When it gets down to it, the main cause of all these rivalries is not which state has the most beautiful highway scenery or the best fishing holes. And they could both care less who has the largest state product or which one entered the union first. All nonsense.

The real rivalry has been established where pride makes some of its biggest and ugliest faces — on the playing field.



Jerry Bolz
Assistant Sports Editor

Not just any field, though. There is only one rivalry that stirs up the states enough to be newsworthy — the University of Texas versus the University of Oklahoma.

Let me be clear. Most everyone else in these states, whether they are related to the schools or not, can be caused to have the hair on their neck raised with just the mention of one of these schools antics. But Texas and OU are the ones responsible for all the hair-raising.

What I mean by antics is something a

Texas or OU representative says or does that they see as normal but at least mildly disturbs everyone else. For example, Brian Bosworth's haircut.

It's hard to point a finger at either school for starting the raucous. Who knows when it kicked up. But neither school is gaining respect from the other or the rest of us bystanders.

One thing that gets people so irate is the boastful pride associated with Texas and OU. Their attitudes show signs of contempt for "lessers" all around the states and even the rest of the country.

Take OU basketball coach Billy Tubbs' comment after beating No. 1-ranked Arizona in a basketball game Sunday. When asked if his team was the best in the country, he said, "When you really got down to it, and I had to be fair, I'd probably put us in there."

I don't knock Tubbs. He's just a coach there that has fallen into the overall attitude problem at OU. Again, who knows who started it.

The same thing goes on at Texas. With the start of baseball season, the Longhorns have in their midst the source of one of their greatest boasts. Their baseball team has been racking up wins for years.

They play with a lot of confidence (known as cockiness to others), and there fans ascribe the greatness of the ball team to themselves when shouting out insults to teams less blessed in the win column. What's the point to all of this pride? There is no point.

In fact, Oklahoma used to get along just fine without it. I've heard stories of the seniors on the OU football team unloading a freshman quarterback's car for him when he first arrived at the school in the late 1950's. Then they took him out to eat.

Can you imagine Brian Bosworth or Jamelle Holieway carrying anyone's bags up dormitory stairs? I can — in an environment other than Norman, Oklahoma.

I don't believe guys like Bosworth are bad apples. I just think they get caught up in trying to prove they are somebody bigger than they really are.

Sorry old peer pressure.

Texas and OU have such a reputation to keep up that the entire communities of the universities — athletes, coaches, fans, faculty, supporters, you name it — have to continually boast to make sure they still look good to everyone else.

It's sickening. But there's not a lot that can be done about it, especially by a lone Aggie columnist.

All I have to offer is to ask A&M not to let it spread.

Simply, realize that your athletes are only people and your school only an institution. We're here, we picked A&M. Why care if our image is better than anyone else's, including Texas and OU?

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