

Friday, April 7, 1989

Ag baseball squad looks to Rice series

FROM STAFF & WIRE REPORTS

Riding a nine-game winning streak and still the top-ranked team in the nation for the sixth straight week, according to ESPN-Collegiate Baseball, the Texas A&M baseball team travels to Rice for a three game series this weekend.

SWC Baseball Standings

Team	SWC Record	Pct.
Texas A&M (35-1)	6	1.000
Arkansas (28-4)	6	1.000
Texas (35-10)	4	.957
Houston (33-6)	3	.500
Baylor (25-9)	4	.444
TDU (22-12)	2	.333
Rice (22-19)	2	.222
Texas Tech (21-14)	0	.000

The Aggies are coming off of a two-game sweep of Sam Houston State earlier in the week. A&M won a 9-3 contest at Olsen Field on Tuesday and traveled to Huntsville on Wednesday to take a 9-6 win from the Bearcats. The A&M season record now stands at 35-1, 6-0 in SWC action.

Rice (22-19, 2-7 SWC) took one of three from Texas last weekend and split a pair of games with Stephen F. Austin on Tuesday.

A&M centerfielder Kirk Thompson has been red-hot thus far in 1989, as the Houston native has set an A&M school record by hitting safely in 25 straight games. Thompson's achievement breaks the old record of 22 held by former Aggie third baseman Scott Livingstone.

Shortstop Chuck Knoblauch still remains the picture of consistency for the third straight season, as the All-America candidate leads the team with 28 stolen bases on the season and holds the A&M record in career stolen bases with 75.

Knoblauch is hitting .397 with five homers and 40 RBI and is third behind John Byington's whopping .450 and Andy Duke's .422 in the individual batting average standings.

Probable pitching starters for the 7 p.m. Friday opener include A&M lefthander Pat Sweet (6-1) facing Rice righthander Mike Cooper (3-4).

Freshman Ronnie Allen (6-0) is scheduled to face Rice's Rob Howard (6-2) in the first game of Saturday's doubleheader, while righthander Keith Langston (6-0) will face Rice's John Polasek (4-5) in the nightcap.

Toledo teaching multiple attack

New offensive coordinator looking to jazz up Aggie offense

By Stan Golaboff

SPORTS WRITER

Bucky Richardson left, Bucky right, Bucky up the middle.

That is usually what the A&M football team did last year whenever Darren Lewis wasn't running the ball.

If Head Coach R.C. Slocum and new Offensive Coordinator Bob Toledo have their way, the Aggies will this year have an air attack to complement Lewis's running.

Last year A&M fans cringed whenever the Aggies faced a third-and-long situation.

The Aggies finished next to last in passing in the Southwest Conference, as none of their three quarterbacks completed 50 percent of their passes.

"While it's true that Chris (Osgood), Lance (Pavlas), and Bucky didn't complete a lot of passes, with the new offense we should see a marked improvement in our passing game," Toledo said.

One might wonder why Toledo, who coached quarterbacks like Chris Miller during his tenure at the University of Oregon, would want to

come to a team and a conference dominated by running.

"A lot of it had to do with R.C.," Toledo said. "I have known him for several years and I think he is going to build a very good program here."

"Also, it was time for a change. I've spent most of my life on the West coast and this was the right job at the right time for me."

Toledo was the offensive coordinator at Oregon for the last five years.

Toledo said the new offense will feature more higher-percentage passes to more than just the wide receivers.

"We aren't going to be throwing the bomb on every down," Toledo said. "We are going to throw more in the flats and have a control-type passing game."

"We are going to spread the ball around to different people and the tight end and running backs will be used more."

Last year only senior Rod Harris averaged more than two catches a game. While Harris was an outstanding receiver during his stay at A&M, Toledo says he thinks there should be no problem in finding a replacement for Harris.

"All the receivers are having a good spring and I look for Percy Waddle and Gary Oliver to have good seasons," Toledo said.

However, a receiver cannot catch a ball until after it has been thrown.

"Darren (Lewis) might not get as many carries as last year, but I think his yards per carry will increase. I would like to see him catch the ball in the flats. In the open field he could be deadly."

— Bob Toledo, A&M offensive coordinator

A&M hasn't had a quarterback who has shown he can throw successfully since Kevin Murray.

"We are trying to create an atmosphere that makes it easier for the quarterbacks to throw more effectively," Toledo said.

With two weeks left in spring practice, Toledo says it is hard to say who will quarterback the Aggies in the fall. Pavlas is listed first on the depth chart.

Pavlas came to A&M from Tom Ball and was said to be a can't miss college prospect.

Since arriving, Pavlas has seen more bench time than playing time and hasn't been effective when playing.

"Lance has been throwing extremely well in practice and last week he was 11 of 13," Toledo said. "If we can create a positive atmosphere in our passing, Lance should do well in the fall."

Osgood is second on the depth chart and Kent Petty is third. Richardson is not listed since he is still recovering from knee surgery.

"Bucky should be ready by the fall, but if he is not we might redshirt him," Toledo said. "It is hard to tell what the fall will bring, but having the option to redshirt helps."

Despite the new offense and the emphasis on passing, Toledo said A&M will not forget about Lewis.

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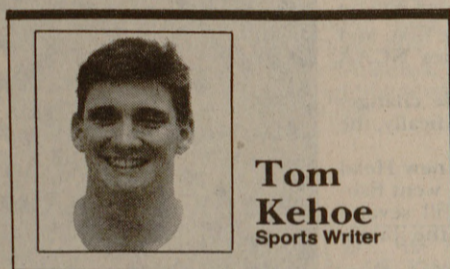
Sanders decision could lead to the spoiling of college football

So, Barry Sanders is bound for the NFL. Big deal.

It's not as though he hasn't been playing pro football for three years anyway.

One of the major reasons he wanted to enter this year's draft was because the Oklahoma State Cowboys were put on multi-years probation for a payroll that approximated the NFL's Cowboys. It's such a shame. They fielded a better team than Dallas for less money.

But that's old news. Everyone already knows that Hart Lee Dykes was making as much for catching footballs in 1988 as he will in 1989. But what most people aren't realizing is that the latest Heisman Trophy winner, allegedly Mr. Squeaky Clean, is jumping ship for purely avaricious reasons. But I guess that's why he played football



Tom Kehoe Sports Writer

at OSU anyway.

It comes down to more than just the money, though. Guys have come out early before to make their fortunes. Ohio State receiver Cris Carter was allowed to enter the draft early because it was discovered he

was taking money from an agent. Then he was drafted by the Philadelphia Eagles and signed with a bonus. Double score.

I mean what's to encourage a player to not take money from an agent when the only penalty he'll have to pay is playing in the NFL early and quadrupling his yearly income?

As you know, the NFL has no policy allowing underclassmen to play in the league before the freshman class they entered with has graduated. Plainly stated, you have to pretend to stay in school for four years.

See Barry go to the library. See Barry study. See Barry pass up the post-game party to study.

Now see Barry jump ship, hose his teammates and get his butt kicked in Green

Bay because the line couldn't block a defensive line consisting of Rex Reed, Truman Capote and Harvey Firestein.

But, see Barry threaten the NFL with a lawsuit. See the NFL chicken out. See Pete Rozelle jump ship and hose college football. See Barry bring the NFL to its knees.

And the big issue here is not whether Sanders is getting away with something. It's what is now going to happen to college football.

Since its inception, the NFL has been the beneficiary of a top-notch, free farm system. Now it could be poisoning the well.

College coaches won't be so open and cordial when talent scouts from the Bears, Seahawks and Dolphins call. They won't be too keen when the same scouts want to come time the boys in the 40.

But worse than being unwelcome, is the level of talent that could flee to the NFL once their heads get big enough. Many players at skill positions will take the road the "hardship" cases in basketball do. And many will meet the same results.

Carl Wright of SMU and Rob Williams of UH felt it would be appropriate to quit wasting their considerable talent in the college ranks and move up to a real challenge in the pros. What if sophomore and junior football players suffer similar cases of self-importance?

Now you may be saying "Why should I care? If he wants to go for the big time let him."

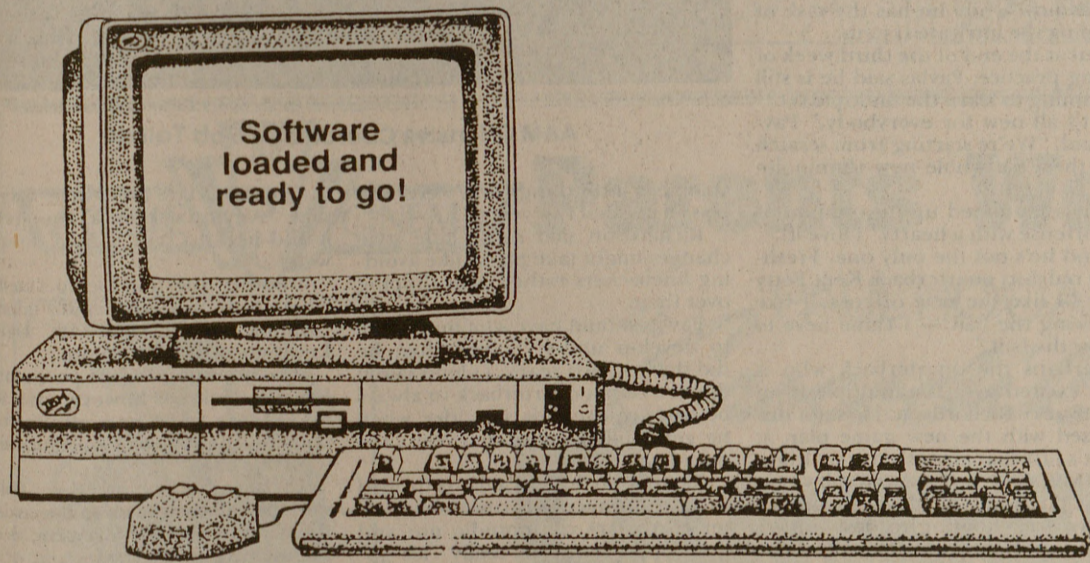
Well that's reasonable enough. But remember it affects all of college football. Ever hear of a guy named Darren Lewis?

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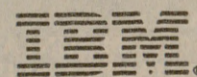
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