

Monday, September 18, 1989

# Aggies romp past turnover-happy Horned Frogs 44-7

By Richard Tijerina  
Of The Battalion Staff

FORT WORTH — In its season opener against Missouri, Texas Christian moved the ball at will but couldn't find the endzone. On Saturday night against Texas A&M, TCU had trouble just holding onto the ball — period.

TCU committed nine turnovers that the Aggies converted into 31 points, as No. 22 A&M romped to a 44-7 win in front of a crowd of 42,960 at Amon G. Carter Stadium.

It was the worst home opening loss in TCU's history, and the nine turnovers were the most during Coach Jim Wacker's six-year tenure at the school. A&M has now defeated the Horned Frogs 17 years in a row.

"This is the worst disaster I can ever remember," Wacker said. "We had no execution at all on offense. Fumbled snaps. Fumbled handoffs, interceptions. . . you name it. Who knows what happened between last week and now?"

"Last week" was TCU's impressive offensive showing in a 14-10 loss against Missouri. TCU unveiled its new "Triple Shoot" offense and piled up almost 500 yards.

No one can tell Wacker exactly "what happened" Saturday night, but most likely, it was a case of TCU meeting the Aggies at the wrong time.

A&M came off a disappointing 19-6 loss to Washington the week before. The Aggies shined in their season opener against LSU, but in Seattle the Aggies looked bad offensively and defensively. Against TCU, they just looked mad.

"We kind of embarrassed ourselves last week and we had to prove a point," linebacker Aaron Wallace said. "We're still a very good football team and last week we just had a bad day."

"We wanted to prove the LSU game wasn't a fluke."

They didn't have much of a problem doing that. TCU didn't score until midway through the fourth quarter, and even that took some luck. The Horned Frogs blocked a Kevin Ellis punt and took the ball over at the A&M two-yard line. Quarterback Ron Jiles scored on the next play.

That two-yard touchdown was

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TCU Head Coach

one of the more impressive plays TCU could muster all night.

The Aggie defense kept TCU's Triple Shoot on safety lock most of the night. The Horned Frogs had only 191 offensive yards, and whenever they did gain anything, Aggie defenders hit them hard and often.

"Our plan going into the game was accept those short passes, but try to punish those receivers and try to cause some turnovers," A&M Coach R.C. Slocum said.

The Aggies were successful causing TCU turnovers nine times, including five interceptions and four fumbles. TCU made matters worse because they turned the ball over several times in their own territory.

Jiles saw the TCU miscues as the key to the game.

"Thank God we've got nine more weeks," Jiles said. "We've just got to get better at what we're doing. We can't have that many turnovers and win. We turned the ball over and they capitalized on our mistakes."

TCU's nine turnovers made up for yet another weak rushing performance from A&M. Running back Darren Lewis again was held to a lackluster performance. He rushed

for just 45 yards on 16 carries — his season low.

However, seven of those 45 yards made up for his performance. Lewis scored three touchdowns — his career high for one game — on rushes of one-, two- and four-yard rushes.

"I felt like I had a pretty good night," Lewis said. "I didn't have much yardage, but three TD's. . . you can't ask for more than that."

Still, Lewis' third consecutive poor rushing game had to worry Slocum, who hinted that the offense is still not near where he'd like it to be.

"We're still not making the yards we'd like to make, and we're not making them consistently anywhere near I'd like to make," Slocum said. "I'm disappointed in our inability to maintain the football."

A&M put the game out of reach in the third quarter. Wacker replaced Jiles with redshirt freshman Leon Clay. He fumbled on his first play.

The Aggies took over at the TCU 9-yard line, and Lewis' second touchdown of the night and Layne Talbot's extra point made it 24-0.

A&M didn't have to wait long to get the ball back. On TCU's first play of their next possession, running back Curtis Modkins fumbled the handoff from Clay, and linebacker William Thomas fell on it at the TCU 41.

Aggie quarterback Lance Pavlas then connected with tight end Mike Jones for a 26-yard pass down the middle that set up Talbot's 33-yard field goal.

Pavlas, who was 12 of 19 passing for 193 yards, threw his first touchdown in two years in the first quarter. Pavlas' last throwing touchdown came in 1987 against Southern Mississippi.

"The receivers made some great catches — that's all there was to it," Pavlas said. "It's a great lift for us to have a score like that. Our receivers have been working hard, and they've shown it this year catching the ball."

It was just a great performance for the team."

Jiles then came back in the game for Clay, but the senior picked up right where the freshman left off. He fumbled a snap and Wallace recovered on the A&M 46-yard line to set up the Aggies' next score.

Chris Osgood replaced Pavlas and promptly threw a 32-yard bomb to Percy Waddle. A&M scored four plays later on Lewis' third touchdown of the night. That made it 37-0 in the fourth quarter.

TCU, which hadn't scored against A&M in seven quarters going back to last year's 18-0 shutout in College Station, finally scored with 5:40 left in the game to make it 37-7. But that didn't mean the Aggies were finished.

Slocum inserted third-string quarterback Kent Petty, who drove A&M 67 yards for its final touchdown, a one-yard score by running back Keith McAfee.

"I think you're always surprised when you get that kind of score," Slocum said. "I had no idea it would be like that, and it wouldn't have been if it hadn't been for the turnovers."

"We got all the breaks in the game"

In 1987, the Aggies humiliated the Horned Frogs 74-10 in Fort Worth. With less than two minutes in the game, Coach Jackie Sherrill called for an onside kick. A&M recovered and it left Wacker angry, accusing Sherrill of running up the score.

Slocum was quick to play down any talk of running up the score Saturday night.

"I felt bad that the score turned out like it did," he said. "I played three quarterbacks and a bunch of young players, but we were just getting some breaks out there which you have no control over. It's hard to tell kids not to try to score."

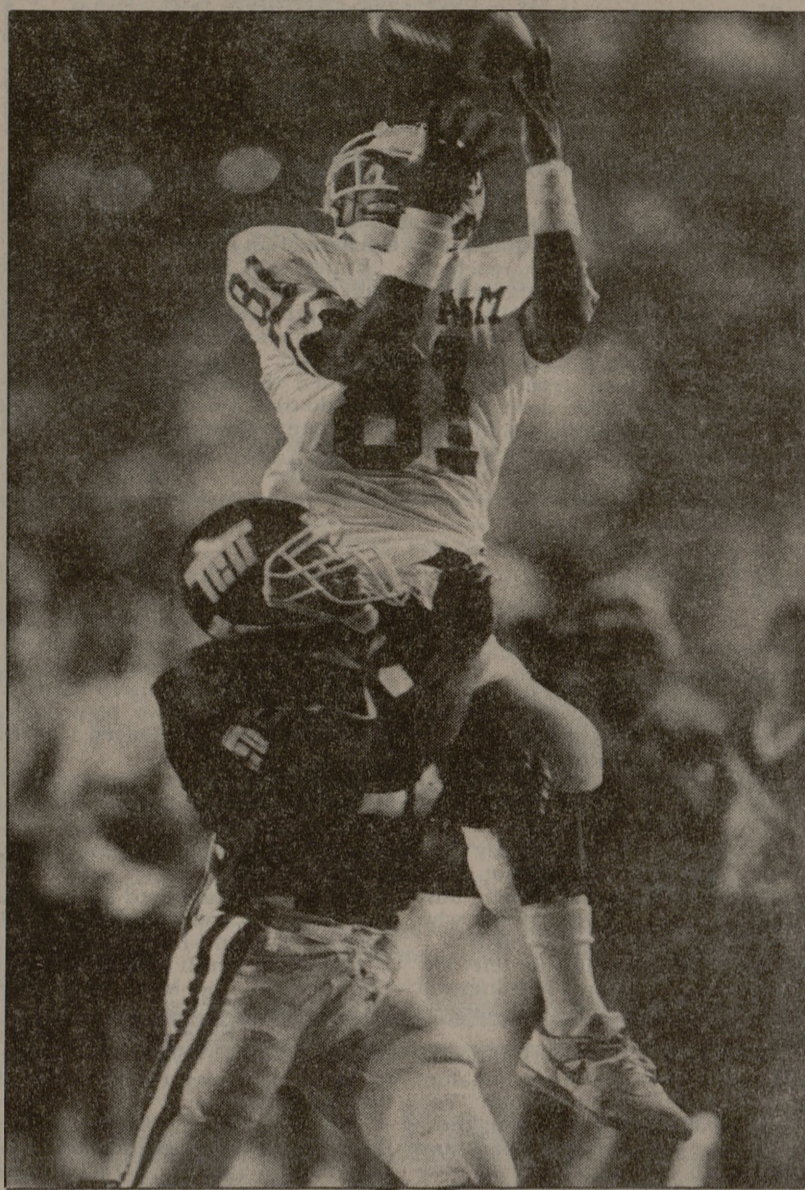


Photo by Phelan M. Ebenhack

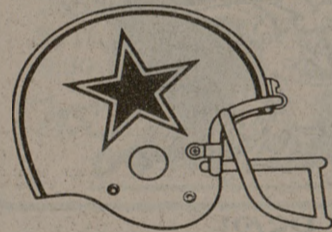
Wide receiver Percy Waddle hauls in a 32-yard Chris Osgood pass in the third quarter of A&M's 44-7 win over TCU.

## Cowboys blow lead, lose to Falcons 27-21

ATLANTA (AP) — Chris Miller says success comes down to one simple thing — confidence.

"If I'm confident, they can see it in my eyes," Miller said of his Atlanta teammates Sunday after leading the Falcons to a 27-21 comeback victory over the Dallas Cowboys.

"When they see that confidence in me, they have no doubt that I can do it," Miller said.



Miller, who completed 21 of 29 passes for 255 yards, engineered scoring drives on Atlanta's first three possessions of the second half as the Falcons (1-1) overcame a 21-10 halftime deficit and spoiled Herschel Walker's first professional appearance in his home state.

Walker, a three-time All-Ameri-

can at the University of Georgia, hammered out 85 yards on 23 carries and scored on runs of 4 and 20 yards to help the Cowboys build their early lead.

But Miller's second-half passing left Dallas with an 0-2 start for only the third time in franchise history — its first season in 1960 and again in 1963.

"It was exciting seeing all the red and white colors," Walker said, colors shared by the Falcons and the Georgia Bulldogs.

"It brought back memories of Georgia, but when you lose a ball game, it takes away from all that," Walker said. "Very disappointing."

The Falcons scored the go-ahead touchdown with 7:28 remaining on a 4-yard run by John Settle.

It capped an 11-play, 79-yard drive on which Miller was 5 of 7 for 59 yards.

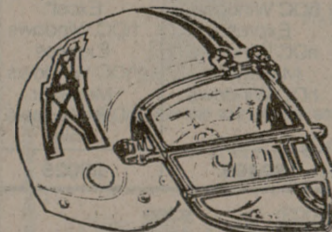
Miller hit his only five attempts for 61 yards in a 75-yard third-quarter drive that trimmed the Dallas lead to 21-20 when Kenny Flowers scored on a 1-yard run, the first touchdown of his career.

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## Moon, Oilers outplay Chargers in 34-27 win

SAN DIEGO (AP) — San Diego is still not a friendly place for the Houston Oilers, even when they get a little help from their hosts.

"We made too much of a game of it," said Houston quarterback Warren Moon, who threw for two touchdowns and ran for another in the Oilers' 34-27 win over the Chargers on Sunday, their first regular-season victory in San Diego in 27 years.



"I don't think we're playing at the top of our game yet. We just should have run away and hid," Moon said.

The Chargers committed five turnovers, leading to 24 of Houston's points as the Oilers snapped a 10-game regular-season losing streak in San Diego. Their last win was a 42-17 victory in 1962, when the two teams were among the powerhouses of the early AFL.

Chargers quarterback Jim McMa-

lion suffered three interceptions but nonetheless put together the best passing day of his eight-year career. McMahon, obtained from Chicago last month, was 27-for-45 for 389 yards.

He had touchdown passes of 63 and 10 yards to Anthony Miller. The 10-yarder came with 55 seconds remaining and brought San Diego within seven points.

The Chargers then tried an onside kick. Field officials initially indicated San Diego's Lester Lyles had recovered.

But referee Howard Roe reversed the decision, saying it was determined that the kick failed to travel the required 10 yards before it was touched. An instant replay official twice reviewed the play, but did not intervene, citing inconclusive evidence.

The confusing sequence left San Diego kicker Chris Bahr mystified.

"Here we have a critical play, and I can't imagine that it was obvious (to reverse the initial ruling)," he said. "They gave us the ball at 10 1/2 yards. That was where they spotted it. Then after four or five minutes, the official on the field said, 'after further review . . . the ball

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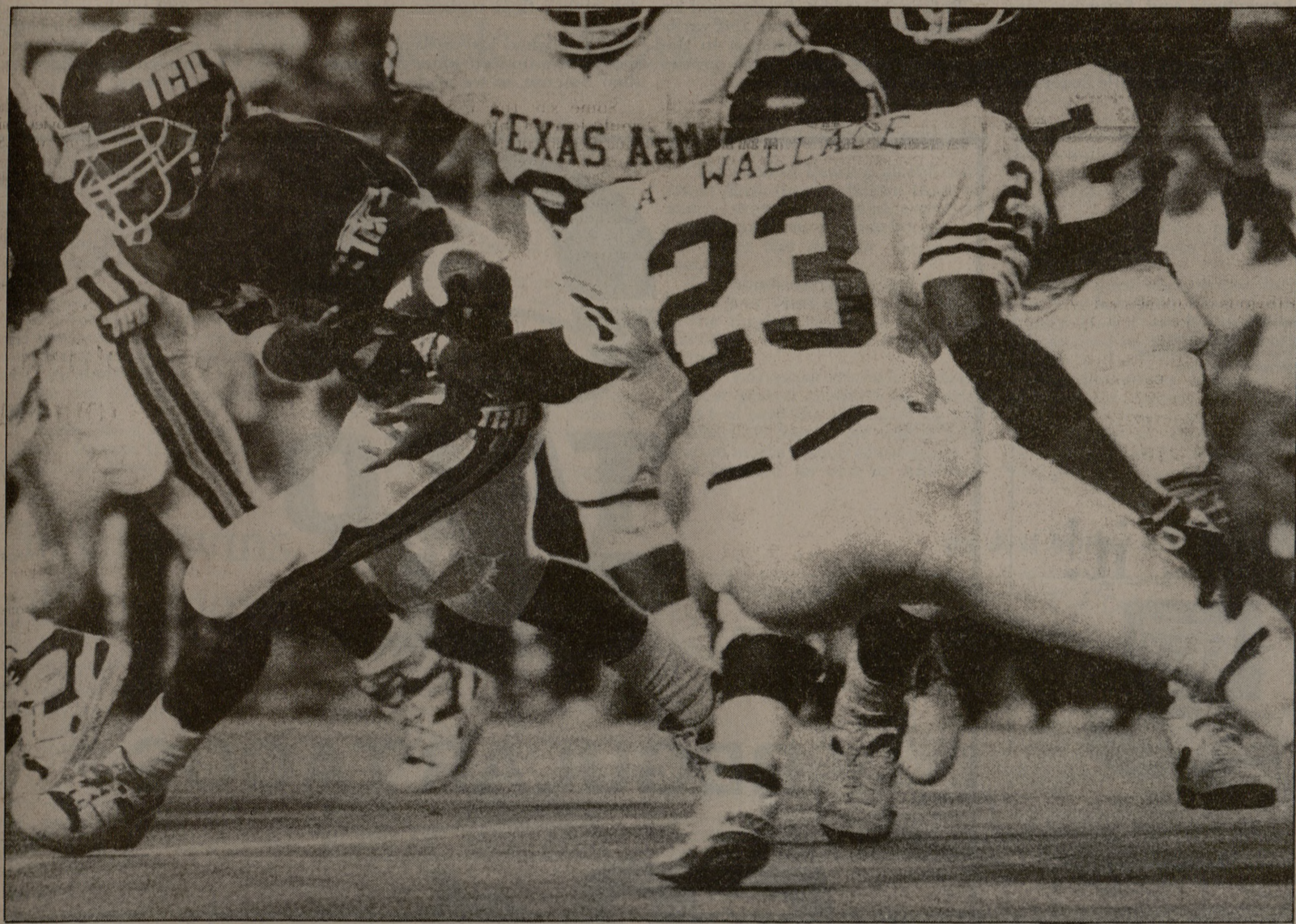


Photo by Frederick D. Joe

Aaron Wallace forces a third-quarter fumble on running back Curtis Modkins.

## Wallace overcomes illness to lead defense

By Richard Tijerina  
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If senior linebacker Aaron Wallace was still suffering from strep throat on Saturday night, don't ask Texas Christian. He was his same old, dominating, sacking self.

Early last week, Wallace came down with strep throat and was checked into the A.P. Beutel Health Center. He stayed there for two days, and his status for Saturday night's game was listed as day-to-day.

On Friday, trainer Karl Kapchinski said Wallace was released from the student infirmary Thursday, would suit up for the game and see how he felt.

Evidently, Wallace felt good enough to play, if not completely well.

"I wasn't very healthy," Wallace said after A&M's 44-7 win. "I wasn't at full speed — probably only about 70 percent. I was sluggish at the start."

It looked like a 70-percent Wallace was as good as a 100-percent Wallace to disrupt the Horned Frogs' new "Triple Shoot" offense.

Wallace led the Aggie defense with six tackles, one fumble recovery and one quarterback sack. Not bad for a man who didn't practice all week and whose main diet for the previous two days before the game was "lots of jello and soup."

"I lost a lot of weight and felt a little dehydrated, but I felt like I was ready to play," Wallace said. "I started feeling better on Friday. I just had a slight temperature."

"We got the fever down today and I was ready to play."

With his first-quarter sack, Wallace needs only two more to break Jacob Green's career school record. That could come at home on Sept. 30 when A&M hosts Southern Mississippi.

The Aggie defense dominated TCU's potent Triple Shoot. TCU gained only 191 yards on the day and converted only four-of-12 third-down conversions. Wallace said it was a redemption of sorts from the previous week's debacle in Seattle, where A&M was outplayed by Washington 19-6.

"Everything we did just kind of worked out," Wallace said. "We felt like we kind of embarrassed ourselves last week and we had

something to prove, and that's what we came out to do tonight."

A&M forced nine TCU turnovers which resulted in 31 points.

The Horned Frogs were hurt by the loss of their leading rusher, senior Tony Darthard, but Wallace said the Aggies were just too dominating to let anybody rush effectively against them.

"I think we would've shut down anybody they would've had tonight," he said. "They have good backs, but what we were doing shut them down. I don't think the personnel would've mattered."

The Aggies constantly pressured senior quarterback Ron Jiles. He was sacked four times for a total of 31 yards in losses. The A&M defensive line spent almost as much time behind the line of scrimmage as they did in front of it.

"Jiles played a good game, but they just couldn't do anything," Wallace said. "He was under pressure a lot, but he handled it well. Some people would have just taken off and gotten the sack, but he stayed in the pocket and took some licks after he threw the ball."