

## Baseball's NL behind times without DH



**Alan Lehmann**  
Sports Writer

Believe it or not, something nice came from the tragedy in San Francisco. Since game three of baseball's World Series will be postponed until Tuesday, Giants fans get an extra week to prepare for the pain of losing to the Oakland A's. Not that the average San Franciscan will be too broke up about losing to a team from just across the bay. As wishy-washy as most Californians are, they'll probably just claim to be Oakland fans anyway.

The sad reality for National League fans is that the American League is dominant and will be for years to come.

Oakland was the best team in baseball last year, despite slumping and dropping the Series to the Los Angeles Dodgers. The AL has won the last two All-Star games.

As I said two weeks ago, Oakland will win this year's Series — not that it took a genius to figure that out. But, since the A's whipped the Giants in the two pre-quake games, they are only two games from a sweep of the best-of-seven affair.

Why will Oakland win the Series? Because they come from the better league. When you come from a tough neighborhood, you either grow up or give up. The A's have grown up in the toughest neighborhood in baseball, and are now the bullies of the block.

The AL West was the only division in the major leagues to boast four teams with winning records. Kansas City and California

See Lehmann/Page 10

## Thomas evokes 'Johnny Rock' memories

By Richard Tijerina  
Of The Battalion Staff

It's the return of "Johnny Rock." William Thomas isn't the first Texas A&M football player to star at linebacker while wearing No. 11 on his jersey.

Former All-American Johnny Holland, the Green Bay Packers' first-round draft choice in 1987, wore the same number for the Aggies.

The similarities don't stop there. Holland was All-Everything for the Aggies. As a senior, he was their leader on defense — leading the club in tackles and sacks.

No. 11 is back again in 1989, wreaking havoc on opposing backfields and quietly leading the team in tackles (58) and sharing the team lead in sacks (5.5).

But there's a new name on the jersey now, and Thomas, a junior from Amarillo Palo Duro, said this season's defense is starting to look pretty familiar to A&M fans.

"We're getting to be the same defense that A&M's known in the past," Thomas said. "We're coming up and hitting pretty hard and making the big plays when it's time. We're being the same old A&M defense."

That same old defense is because of some great talent A&M's had at the linebacker position in the 1980s — Holland, Larry Kelm, John Roper, Dana Batiste and Aaron See Thomas/Page 10



1989's No. 11: William Thomas closes in on a Southern Mississippi runner in A&M's 31-14 win at Kyle Field.



1986's No. 11: Johnny Holland moves in for a tackle in a 28-12 loss to Ohio State in the 1987 Cotton Bowl.

photos by Jay Janner

## Slocum: Showdown with Baylor crucial to conference race

By Clay Rasmussen  
Of The Battalion Staff

More than just bragging rights to the Brazos River are at stake when Texas A&M visits Baylor this Saturday in Waco.

The loser of the game might find themselves at home on New Year's Day, instead of in Dallas at the Cotton Bowl Classic.

Momentum heading into the second half of the season and the possibility of elimination from the conference race are up for grabs to both the Aggies and the Bears.

Baylor Coach Grant Teaff said this weekend's game probably will eliminate either Baylor or Texas A&M.

"There are four eligible teams for the

Cotton Bowl with one or no losses," Teaff said. "One of us will probably be eliminated after the Baylor-A&M game."

Texas A&M Coach R.C. Slocum sees it pretty much the same way.

"When you get to this point in the season, you walk out on the field and say 'This is it. One of us has got to go and the other one gets to stay,'" Slocum said. "Whoever wants to stay the most, will."

If the Aggies are to be the ones to stay in the race, they must do the same things they've talked about all year.

"We need to eliminate the long plays and turnovers," Slocum said. "If we don't give up the big plays or turn the ball over to Baylor, we'll have a chance to hang in there with them."

Other than eliminating the big plays and turnovers, Slocum must be wary of overconfidence.

Coming off big wins against Louisiana State and Texas Christian, the Aggies played flat in Washington and struggled with Texas Tech. They lost both games. Texas A&M was ranked in the Associated Press' Top 20 before each game, and was knocked out of the polls after the losses.

This week, A&M is coming off a 17-13 upset over the previously eighth-ranked Houston Cougars. A&M's defense dominated the Cougars and effectively shut down quarterback Andre Ware and the Run-and-Shoot offense.

"There's something that's really frightening about doing that (getting overconfident

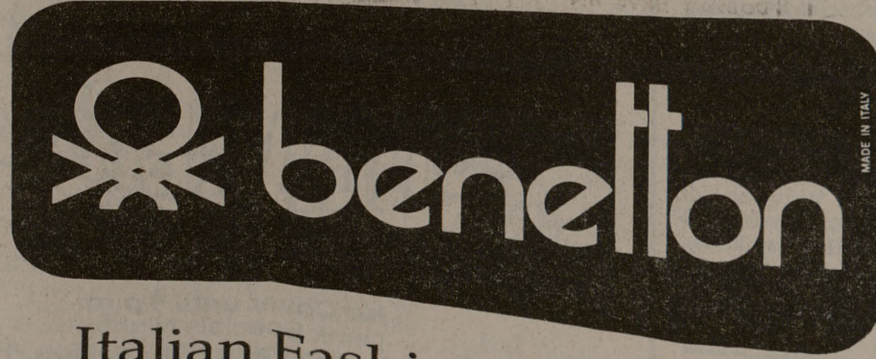
of Houston win)," Slocum said. "If you're in the sales business and all you talk about is the great sales you made last week, there's not much chance of you making any sales this week."

"You've got to stay hungry. You can't dwell on success very long."

The Aggies (ranked 23rd in AP's Top 25) can't afford to take the Bears or quarterback Brad Goebel lightly just because of Baylor's 66-10 loss to Houston three weeks ago.

Goebel is creeping up on former Baylor quarterback Cody Carlson's career passing records and is second on career pass com-

See Showdown/Page 10



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