

Jolt, No-Doz, SWC action and a whole lot more



Alan Lehmann
Sports Writer

Grab the No-Doz and a six-pack of Jolt, football fans, because it's gonna be a boring weekend in the Southwest Conference. However, barring divine intervention, the Aggies only can improve their Cotton Bowl chances.

Baylor has the weekend off, so the other eight SWC teams will play in four games Saturday. Arkansas travels to Rice, Texas Christian hosts Houston, Texas Tech visits Texas and Texas A&M gets Southern Methodist on Kyle Field.

Three blowouts, and one unlikely barnburner. I can't believe Raycom, who has the SWC regional television coverage contract, chose to air the Arkansas-Rice game. Even A&M fans should be more interested in the outcome of the Texas-Texas Tech clash, hoping the Raiders can knock off the Horns.

Granted, Raycom scheduled its coverage before the season started, long before the Longhorns upset the Razorbacks to take over the SWC front-runner role. Also, Raycom has a moral — if not contractual — responsibility to televise games of all SWC teams, not just the best matchups.

The Hogs-Owls matchup provided an opportunity to knock out its obligation to Rice, and to show the Arkansas powerhouse in action. That was probably the plan, anyway.

Oh well, no use crying over wasted coverage.

The fact is that the Texas-Tech game will be the only game of importance on the SWC schedule.

Only three weeks ago, the Horns seemed on their way to another losing season, having lost two of their first three games, and scoring a late touchdown to beat Rice. However, in that near-upset, the Horns found the ingredient that they've been missing for over a decade: a quarterback who knows how to win.

Redshirt freshman Peter Gardere scored the Owl-killing touchdown, and then showed a blend of poise and luck in leading the upstart Horns to upsets of Oklahoma and Arkansas.

Aggie fans were delighted to see the Red Raiders upset the Horns, who are undefeated in SWC play. If Tech passes the ball with any success, Aggies should be happy because the Texas secondary couldn't cover a receiver with a blanket.

However, fans who don't have tickets to the sold-out game in Austin will have to listen to it on radio because it won't be on TV.

The Razorbacks will be, and

See Lehmann/Page 8

SMU's Gregg: Ags 'an awesome task'

Aggies not taking Mustangs lightly

By Clay Rasmussen

Of The Battalion Staff

The question in Saturday's Texas A&M-Southern Methodist game may not be whether the Aggies can beat the Mustangs, but rather, can A&M cover the oddsmaker's 45-point spread?

SMU is in the midst of a rebuilding year. After receiving the NCAA's death penalty in 1987, the Mustangs football program was put on hold for two years.

Now, SMU is striving to achieve the success it enjoyed in 1984.

Former Coach Bobby Collins and his Mustangs went 9-2 in 1984 and finished eighth in the Associated Press' Top Ten Poll.

What a difference four years can make. In 1989, SMU is 2-5, beating only Connecticut and the University of North Texas. Its losses have been lopsided, especially within the Southwest Conference. The Mustangs have posted big losses to Rice (35-6), Texas (45-13), Baylor (49-3) and, most notably, Houston (95-21).

The SWC has not been kind to SMU.

Still, you won't find A&M Coach R.C. Slocum letting up in their preparation for the Mustangs.

"We can't practice or play according to whatever level SMU is at," Slocum said. "We're going to go out there and play as good as we can play."

The players are just as focused on SMU as the coaching staff. A&M linebacker James Webb, who Slocum said probably would start for an injured Aaron Wallace, refused to discriminate because of a team's

See Game/Page 8

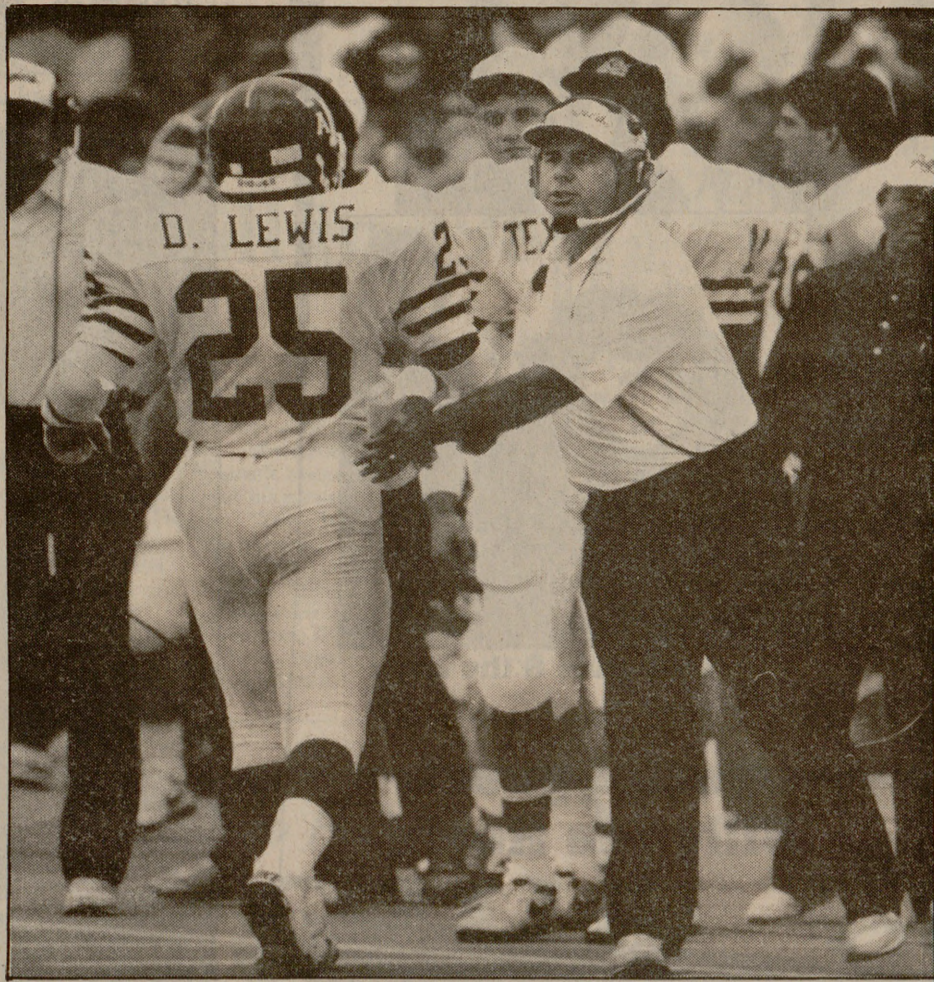


Photo by Mike C. Mulvey

Texas A&M junior running back Darren Lewis is congratulated by Offensive Coordinator Bob Toledo after coming out in the third quarter of last week's 45-7 victory over Rice. Lewis, who rushed for 201 yards in the game, leads A&M against Southern Methodist on Saturday.

SMU finds it hard having to rebuild

By Clay Rasmussen

Of The Battalion Staff

Rebuilding a football program that's been dead for two years has to be tough. Just ask Southern Methodist Coach Forrest Gregg.

Gregg, after spending 11 seasons as head coach in the National Football League, now finds himself in a difficult situation. He must try to revive a SMU football team that hasn't played in two years. Gregg's Mustangs mostly field a bunch of freshman in 1989, and have struggled to a 2-5 record.

SMU at Texas A&M

- Site: Kyle Field (72,387 cap.)
- Kickoff: 2 p.m.
- Ranking: A&M (20th), SMU (—)
- Records: A&M (6-2), SMU (2-5)
- TV/Radio: The game will not be televised; KTAM (AM 1240)

Gregg and the Mustangs have been fortunate. They attracted talented freshmen who are interested in contributing to the rebirth of the Mustang football tradition.

"Some kids might stay away because our program is young, but I think in some ways, people coming out of high school see a chance to play with SMU as an opportunity to play right away," Gregg said.

"We give them a chance to be a part of the rebirth of football at SMU, and that's appealing to a lot of kids."

Still, recruiting and fielding a team of freshmen has presented enormous problems for Gregg.

SMU is surrounded by teams that are larger and more experienced.

"We're undersized compared to the teams we've played against," Gregg said. "We can match up fairly close in terms of speed, but the greatest disadvantage we face is a lack of size, strength and experience."

"We just go up against people that totally outman us. It really hurts us."

As for recruiting, Gregg said this year SMU expects to have problems signing blue-chip recruits.

The Mustangs have come further than a lot of people would have thought possible. Preseason predictions had SMU going 0-11 this season.

"The wins certainly help us from an attitude and confidence standpoint," Gregg said. "Our football team played consistent throughout the entire North Texas game. That showed me that we have made a lot of progress, but I still know there's a long way to go yet."

And how long is a long way?

If this year's freshmen develop as Gregg believes they can, SMU hopes to be competitive within three years.

"It's going to take plenty of time to rebuild," Gregg said. "You have to realize that while our talent and experience level will go up next year, it still will be far behind the levels at other SWC schools."

Romo ready to help Mustangs rise

By Alan Lehmann

Of The Battalion Staff

If Southern Methodist quarterback Mike Romo sounds relaxed, there's a reason.

The redshirt freshman from San Antonio Roosevelt already has led his born-again football team to twice as many wins as even the most optimistic SMU fans had hoped for.

Romo passed for a school-record 450 yards last week in a 35-9 upset victory over North Texas. The victory was the Mustangs' second of the season, and the Eagles were the top-rated NCAA-Division II team as recently as five weeks ago.

Before the season, hardly anyone expected the Mustangs to win one game, much less two.

Romo attributes some of his team's success to the relaxed atmosphere that surrounds the squad.

"We're not playing with much pressure this year," Romo says. "We're going out with a pretty loose attitude, and trying not to make the mistakes that pressure causes."

Romo's numbers have reflected his attitude this year. He's already thrown for almost 1,900 yards, and has completed 56 percent of his passes for nine touchdowns and 12 interceptions.

Although he's only played in seven games, he's already ninth on SMU's career passing list.

Romo says he's pleased with his performance, but credits his teammates for his success.

"I've been pretty happy, there have been good points and bad points," Romo says. "As a whole, our offense has done a lot better than most people anticipated we would do."

"That's a credit to the line and the receivers. They make my job easier, because I'm only as good as they are."

Romo says that he didn't choose SMU solely for football, but rebuilding the program appealed to him.

"I wanted to help rebuild the football program," Romo says. "I was hurt my senior year, so coming here gave me a chance to redshirt last season and rehabilitate while I learned the offense for a year."

"I knew I could come in and compete for the starting job. I knew that with the Run-and-Shoot offense, I'd get a chance to throw the ball a lot."

Now that he's had some experience with it, Romo says he likes the Run-and-Shoot offense that the Mustangs use.

"It's a complicated offense, but there's never a dull moment," he says. "There are so many different things that you can do with it. I like the challenge of it."

After seeing the nation's best Run-and-

See Romo/Page 8



Environmental Symposia

November 7, 1989

Day Topics:

Rudder Room 601

- 9:00-10:00 a.m. Environmental Economics: Finding a Balance
- 10:30-11:30 a.m. The Greenhouse Effect
- 12:00-1:00 p.m. Waste Disposal: Where Do We Go From Here?
- 1:30-2:30 p.m. Water Quality: Evaluation and Control
- 3:00-4:00 p.m. Uses and Abuses of Our National Forests

Evening Topic:

7:00 p.m.

Rudder Theatre

The World Environment

with Peter Burtchell of The Cousteau Society

Reception following

Admission to all programs is free

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