

Rumors ...
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Scott Wudel

A little message to clear the air from Texas A&M head football coach R.C. Slocum:
 "We're going to keep the 12th Man team!"

How easy it is for loyal Aggie fans to succumb to rumors and speculation and jump to conclusions.

Why are the Aggie faithful blowing smoke this week?

The 68,593 standing fans were startled last Saturday. They had just watched running back Darren Lewis catch a wide-open touchdown pass to give the Aggies the momentum over Texas Tech heading into the locker rooms at intermission.

But the marching bands would have to wait just a little bit longer to take center stage at Kyle Field.

In 11 seconds, Red Raider speedster Rodney Blackshear would make history. He took a short kickoff at his own eight-yard line and dashed right through a hole in the fired-up 12th Man defensive coverage. He raced down the sideline almost untouched as the last seconds of the first half ticked off the clock.

A&M fans were left stunned. It is safe to say there could have been, at best, only a handful of Aggies at the game who could remember the last time the opposition ended up in the end zone following an A&M kickoff.

Trivia buffs will be happy to know former Southern Methodist University great Kyle Rote ran back the last touchdown against the Aggies at Kyle Field in 1949.

Jackie's concept

In 1982, when Jackie Sherrill conceived the idea of having non-scholarship athletes take the field on kickoffs, he probably never thought of its historical consequences.

Having non-recruited students actually take the field and uphold the mold of the E. King Gill statue was a very popular idea.

But since then, no one had given much thought to the kickoff team odds of their upwardly-motivating, towel-waving dance while running onto the field. And the team lived up to a mold of consistency, never allowing the opposition to make it all the way down the field. That is until last Saturday.

Sure, there is a first time for everything, and as humans we are allowed to make mistakes.

But Saturday's incident at Kyle Field was adding a little bit of fuel to an already smoldering fire.

Smoky day

Last week a Houston sportswriter got a notion that Slocum wasn't happy with the performance of the 12th Man Kickoff Team, and that he was considering dropping the whole concept. How prophetic his words almost were as the crowd watched Blackshear celebrate his touchdown run last Saturday.

Then, in the second half, the 12th Man was replaced by the scholarship kickoff squad to ensure such an event would not happen again in a contest that was turning out to be anybody's game.

But Slocum isn't one to put up a smoke screen. He says the elimination of the tradition could be nothing farther from the truth.

Slocum emphatically explained that the situation with the 12th Man was never discussed among the coaching staff.

The coach jokingly remarked that ever since the day the article that started the heated rumor was published, he's fielded hundreds of phone calls from as far away as the Pentagon, wanting to know the

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Razorbacks prime for basketball season

FAYETTEVILLE, Ark. (AP) — One thing for sure, says coach Nolan Richardson, the University of Arkansas will be a better rebounding team this year.

"We've got some beef now," he said. "That was one of our weaknesses."

The Razorbacks, who reached the NCAA Final Four last spring, open practice at 12:01 a.m. Monday, the earliest allowed by the NCAA.

With Todd Day, Lee Mayberry, Oliver Miller, Ron Huery, Arlyn Bowers, Darrell Hawkins and Ernie Murry among the returnees, the Razorbacks are certain to be favored to repeat in the Southwest Conference.

"We're not going to surprise anyone," he said. "We're ranked high in some polls already. The nucleus of this team is juniors."



The juniors include Day, Mayberry and Miller — all starters for the team that won the SWC and the Midwest Regional. Day

and Mayberry played for the United States in the Goodwill Games and the World Games. Miller also competed internationally.

"It was definitely a short summer for Lee and Todd," Richardson said. "We've let those guys relax a little more. They don't have any mandatory things to do."

"Last year, our team was basically a group of over achievers," he said. "When we (the coaches) came into this job we thought this year we would be working on a Final Four appearance. The expectations are high on this team from the coach, players and the community. The only pitfalls to this team are injuries and grade problems."

"We will be able to compete on a national level. My goal when I came here was to have a top 10 program. It is starting to unfold."

The beef Richardson referred to is mostly in the person of Roosevelt Wallace, a 6-foot-7, 255-pound junior who was redshirted last year. Isaiah Morris, a 6-foot-8, 224-pound junior transfer, also is expected to help with the rebounding.

"Last year we did other things to make up for our lack of rebounding," Richardson said. "I hope we don't change anything. We should have some competitive workouts."

The incoming freshmen include Elmer Martin, Davor Rimac, Ray Biggers and Ken Biley.

Ags hope to disarm UH sixth straight time

By DOUGLAS PILS
 Of The Battalion Staff

It's time once again for Texas A&M to face the feared and dreaded Run-and-Shoot of the Houston Cougars.

It'll be No. 12 Houston (4-0, 3-0 in the Southwest Conference) and their No. 1 conference offense against the No. 20 Aggies (4-1, 1-0) and their No. 1 SWC defense in the Houston Astrodome tomorrow at 4 p.m.

Heisman Trophy winner Andre Ware is gone and sitting on the Detroit Lions' bench, but his former UH teammates are up to their same old tricks.

David Klingler, who played almost half of last year mopping up after games were out of hand, has stepped into Ware's shoes — and they seem to fit quite nicely.

The junior from Houston Stratford is posting numbers similar to Ware's while leading the Cougars to the same 4-0 record that the team had last year when they faced the Aggies.

"The Slinger," who has played every down this year, is averaging 430 yards a game with 14 touchdowns and just three interceptions in four games. So far this season, the Houston quarterback has spread the wealth around. Twelve receivers have caught at least one pass.

Quarterbacking the A&M offense will be ... Lance Pavlas or Bucky Richardson.

Aggie head coach R.C. Slocum said all week that he would hold off on announcing his starting quarterback until Saturday morning.

Slocum said there was not a quarterback controversy and he has not lost any confidence in Pavlas.

"In being fair to Lance, I realize that had he stayed in there (against Texas Tech) he might have made some of the big plays that Bucky made," Slocum said. "Bucky showed us some of both. He made some bonehead plays but also made some big ones in critical situations."

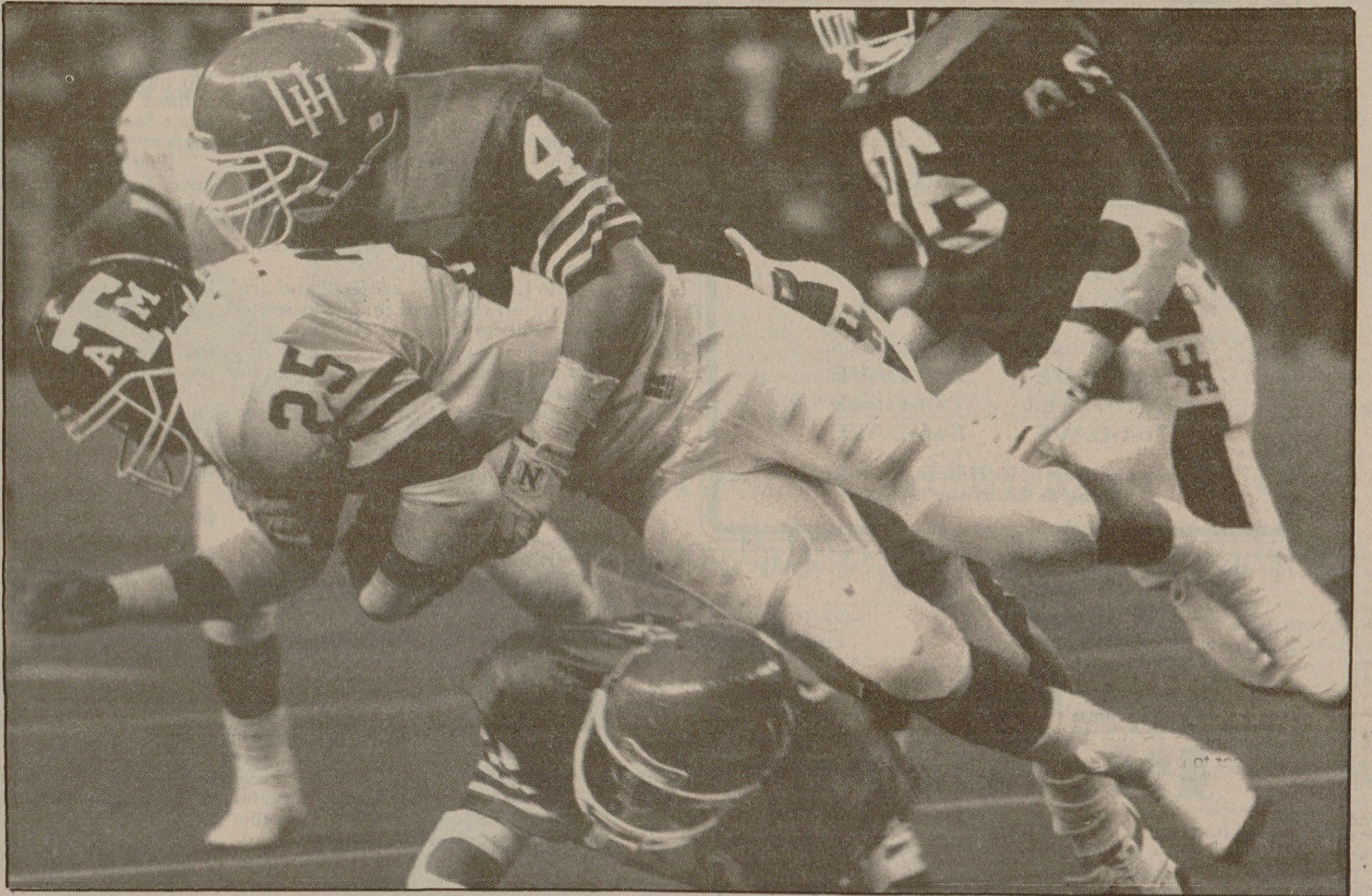
Slocum said the quarterbacks, which until the Louisiana State game two weeks ago had not thrown an interception, have to improve.

"We've got to throw better," he said. "Those first three games we weren't playing against who we've played the last two weeks."

"You wonder as a coach if it's the opposition, or if we're not throwing as well. I think we're not throwing as well."

The Aggies may end having to rely on their defense, like they did last year.

Last year when Ware came to Kyle Field, A&M killed the Run-and-Shoot hype by blitzing on almost every down



Battalion file photo by M. Mulvey

Last time the Aggies traveled to Houston, tailback Darren Lewis rushed for 201 yards on a career-high 40 carries.

and coming up with six sacks in the Aggies' 17-13 victory.

A&M lined up in a multitude of defensive sets and even lined up with one down lineman and a combination of 10 linebackers and defensive backs. They were continually in Ware's face, wreaking havoc all over the field.

Slocum said he will try to do the same thing this year, but there certainly will be a few different twists.

"I want (Klingler) to decide first of all if it's zone or if it's man," Slocum said, "and if they're coming or not coming, and if they are, where they're coming from? If it's zone, what kind of zone?"

"We'll give him a little bit to think about."

A&M defensive coordinator Bob Davie agreed that A&M will need to put constant pressure on Klingler and make him find the open man with everyone in his face.

"I've watched teams sit back in coverage and wait," Davie said, "and they still get the same results. We're going to do what we do best (play man-to-man and blitz)."

"I'd rather take my odds with the quarterback having to execute with the whole thing in one-on-one with the blitz coming."

Slocum, the defensive coordinator at A&M before becoming head coach, added this is nothing new to his or Davie's way of thinking.

"That's our philosophy against everybody, not just them," Slocum said. "I get worried about a talented quarterback standing back there flat-footed, just waiting to throw to an open guy."

The fact that Klingler has completed passes to 12 different Cougars means the A&M secondary — which is giving up only 135 yards a game — will have its hands full and its legs run ragged.

Houston's big-play receiver is Patrick Cooper. The senior from Wilmer-Hutchins has 20 receptions for a 22.6 yard average per catch and seven touch-

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Rocket's first-round pick signs four-year, \$3.5 contract

HOUSTON (AP) — Guard Dave Jamerson, the Houston Rockets' first round draft pick, ended a five-day holdout Thursday and signed a four-year contract worth a reported \$3.5 million.

"The role that I'll fill on this ball club, I feel I'll be able to fill," Jamerson said.

Jamerson, the No. 15 pick overall in the June NBA draft, is expected to help the Rockets' outside shooting.

"But I don't feel any pressure, I feel confident that I can carry the load," Jamerson said.

Jamerson had been seeking a contract worth \$1 million per year before the Rockets took all offers off the table last week.

"There was a determination on both sides to get the job done and move forward," Rockets general manager

Steve Patterson said.

Jamerson led Ohio University in scoring last season, averaging 31.2 points, third-best among NCAA Division I scorers. He had individual games of 60 and 52 points.

Jamerson said he felt he could learn quickly but didn't know if he'd be ready for the Rockets' exhibition opener Friday night against the Philadelphia 76ers.

"I wanted to be here June 28 (for summer camp) but business is business," he said. "I'm just really happy now that this is all behind me and I can concentrate on basketball."

"It would have been an advantage to be here in the summer but it doesn't take me long to adapt. Eventually the cream will rise to the top."

The Rockets have been seeking a pure shooter since Calvin Murphy retired in 1983 and Jamerson offers hope of filling that void.

Jamerson's college career was in jeopardy because of a knee injury four years ago. But he says his repaired right knee is stronger than his left knee.

Guard Vernon Maxwell is still holding out in a contract dispute with the Rockets.

"It's two separate issues, one had nothing to do with the other," Patterson said.

Jamerson finished his career at Ohio as the second all-time leading scorer in Mid-America Conference history with 2,336 points and he set an NCAA record for most 3-point baskets in a game when he hit 14 of 17 against Charleston Dec. 21, 1989.

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