

Mighty haves proving fatal for 1990 Ags

The Aggies could have been in the national title hunt if they had beaten Louisiana State. The Aggies would have been in the thick of the conference race if

Randy Lemmon

Reader's Opinion

Layne Talbot had made that fourth-quarter field goal against Baylor. Those should've, could've and would've are killing this year's football team. And although those should've, could've and would've are ambiguous in nature, they do a good job of describing the level at which the Aggies are playing.

The main question that needs to be asked is why the team seems to lack the knockout punch it needs to put teams away it has the opportunity. Why is it that this team lacks the appetite to go out and dominate another team for more than just one quarter of play?

Did they read their press clippings and prognostications about their supposed dominance of the SWC before they started their play?

Anyhow, there are many fans out there who think the coaching staff is to blame for the stumbling Ags. The team was supposed to be so loaded with talent that they probably could have won the conference all by themselves — no coaches, no nothing.

But it's that nothing that has plagued the Aggies this season. The coaches aren't inspired and the team is even less motivated.

These young men should be beyond high school pep rallies and spastic ravings of coaches looking for that extra edge. Most coaches have to depend on the want and desire of the players anyway. Unfortunately the Aggies haven't shown that want and desire, with the exception of the first quarter of the Houston game.

This lack of desire, evident in the second half of the Houston game, the first half of the Texas Tech game and too

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Aggie team tries to bounce back

By DOUGLAS PILS
 Of The Battalion Staff

Last week, in a do-or-die situation, the Texas A&M football team didn't 'die' — but it didn't 'do' either.

What the Aggies did, was fall flat on their face in a 20-20 tie with the Baylor Bears. The tie doesn't knock A&M out of Cotton Bowl contention, but it made the road to hoe a lot tougher.

Aggie head coach R.C. Slocum said in

A&M offensive coordinator answers critics/Page 8

his weekly press conference Tuesday that he's not going to worry about which team has to beat the other for A&M to fulfill its preseason expectations.

"I'm more concerned about us playing well this week against Rice," Slocum said. "We'll take care of whatever else happens down the road."

"Unless we can play at a better level of consistency and intensity it's no use worrying about any of that."

Slocum said the team, which is 1-2-1 in the last four weeks, wasn't psyched up for the Baylor game after an emotional 36-31 loss the week before to Houston.

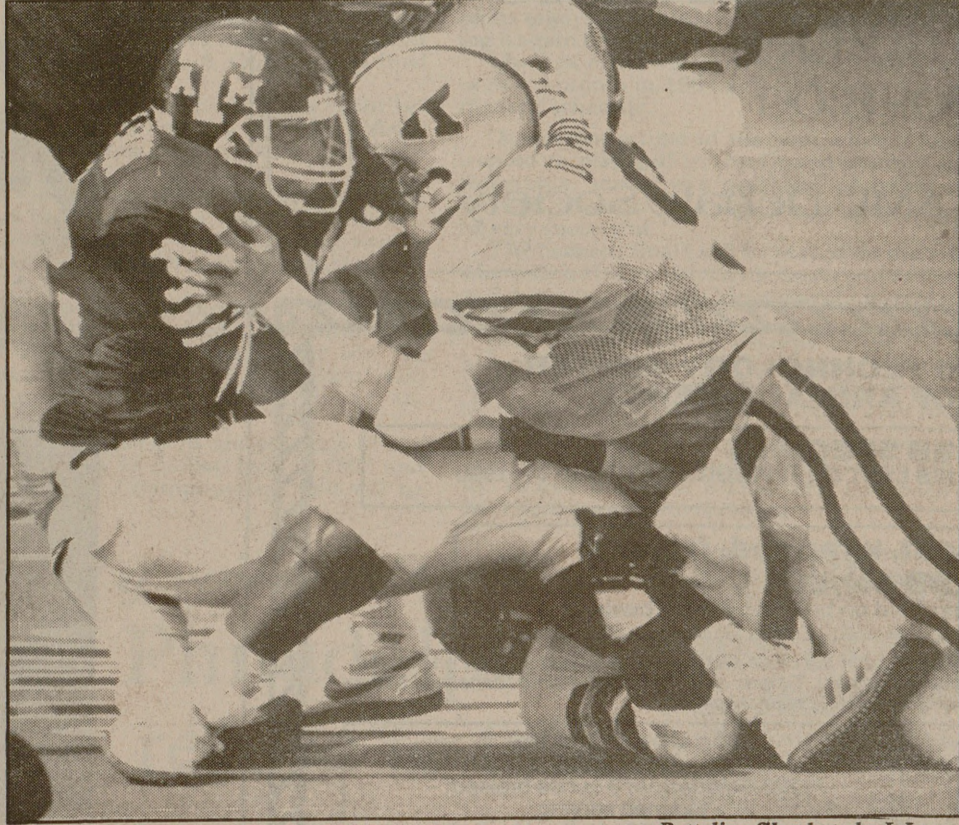
"To play that hard (against Houston) and come away shorthanded takes something out of a team emotionally," he said. "I thought we played flat against Baylor and our team saw that game as a loss. It felt every bit as bad as a loss would have felt."

"We're faced again with the situation of coming back and taking that game and putting it behind us and coming out and playing against an improved Rice team."

The lack of emotion exhibited by the Aggies particularly showed on the defensive side of the ball where A&M gave up 303 yards rushing — the most since the Bears racked up 320 yards in 1982.

"I was particularly disappointed with the play of our defense in the Baylor game," he said. "If I had to single out anything, it was more a case of us being a step short on our emotions and the intensity it takes to play defense."

"Defense is kind of strange. If you're one notch below wide-open, then it looks



Battalion file photo by J. Janner

The last time A&M faced the Owls in Kyle Field, Rice quarterback Donald Hollas was a safety (right). Hollas was named AP offensive player for this week.

like every play's going to score and that's about where we were the other day (against Baylor)."

A&M cornerback Kevin Smith said he doesn't know why the team's performance is sub-par of late, but he added that he has full confidence that the team will come around.

"Although we're not playing to the top of our ability we're still just a few missed reads or missed tackles from being 6-1," Smith said. "We're not winning but we're learning a lot from these games."

Slocum said that the team will get back to the basics to try to correct its defensive woes.

"We'll go back to the fundamentals of how you play defense," Slocum said. "You have chances to make plays and you've got to make those plays when they come up."

"In two situations (against the Bears) we had a stunt called anticipating the option and we ran the perfect defense for the play they ran but didn't execute the defense. We end up missing the quarterback on the stunts and they make the first down. We have to get back down and focus attention on the little things."

If the team doesn't get those little things accomplished, Slocum said, they

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Rice's Hollas named offensive player of week

HOUSTON (AP) — Playing football at Rice University has always been a family affair for the Hollas family. They just don't always agree how to pronounce their surname.



Hollas

Quarterback Donald Hollas (he's a HA-liss) identified himself indelibly to the Texas Tech Red Raiders last weekend with a 5-touchdown performance that earned him Associated Press offensive player of the week honors.

But back in Schulenburg where many of Hollas' family resides, it was Donald HO-lass who helped the Owls beat the Raiders 42-21 with their biggest point-production in a Southwest Conference game since 1961.

"If you go back to Schulenburg it's Hollas (HO-lass)," Hollas said. "I've always been Hollas (HA-liss)."

There was only one way to pronounce Hollas' effect on the Red Raiders — L-O-S-S.

He completed 7 of 18 passes for 97 yards, including a 5-yard touchdown to Courtney Cravin and rushed 35 yards on 12 carries and had touchdown runs of 8, 5, 4 and 5 yards for a 132-yard evening of total offense that improved Rice's record to 3-4.

"The start of the season was a nightmare for me personally," Hollas said. "Until the Houston game, I wasn't playing up to par. Until then, our running and passing game weren't complementing each other. We got it together against Houston."

Hollas has been moving up on the Owls' statistical charts since the season started. The Owls almost upset the No. 6-ranked Cougars before losing 24-22 in the final 10 seconds.

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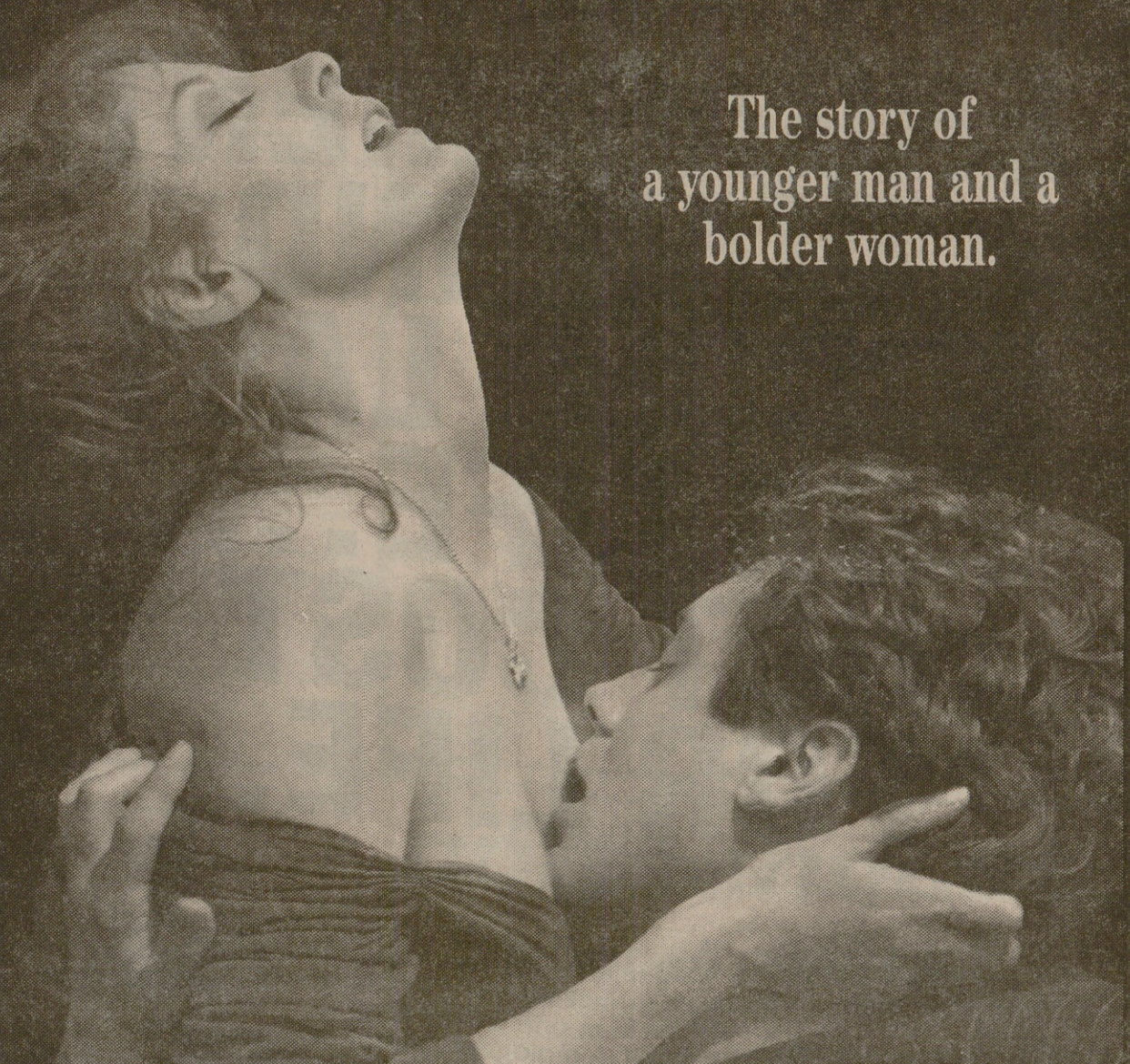
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