

Pay for play



Jayme Blaschke
Sports Editor

Student athletes that play for universities across the nation should be paid for their efforts.

Paying players is not a new idea. In fact, they were up until about 1976. The NCAA ended the practice however, mainly because certain institutions used it to grant players illegal benefits. The NCAA is more vigilant now, though, so it's time to return to the old ways.

Sure, the university grants scholarships to athletes. It's a hell of a deal, but unless a player's parents have an abundance of wealth, that player has no income. Right now, players can only hold jobs during the summer.

Big deal? Yes it is. That means no internships or co-ops for the 'student athlete.' If anyone had wanted me, a journalism major, to continue my football career after high school, I wouldn't be able to work here at the Battalion. Try getting a job with only summer experience.

Now stop for a minute, and think about what the athlete gives back to the community.

Say the average crowd at an A&M football game checks in at about \$5,000, with tickets averaging \$15. With concessions, that's over \$1 million a game, not including television money or bowl appearances.

Add in the money our baseball program makes, and our basketball program should make. It's quite a hefty number, but there's more.

Local business, including hotels, restaurants, and retailers rake in the dough. Sales tax receipts don't suffer. National exposure generated by the team increases enrollment, adding more bodies, and money, to the area. Without the athletes, the economy might not collapse, but it would sure deflate.

So is a monthly allowance to each player such a big price to pay for their efforts? I think not.

Wilson passes on college ball

By David Leahy
The Battalion

Tom Wilson has always been a battler. Through his playing and coaching days at Texas Tech, Texas A&M, and now at Palestine High School, Wilson has always overcome adversity.

After being fired as head football coach at A&M following the 1981 season, Tom Wilson spent the next two years as vice-president of an oil and gas company in Bryan before taking over the duties of offensive coordinator and quarterback coach of Texas Tech for the 1983 and 1984 seasons.

For most of his life he had spent his time in the collegiate ranks, but after 1984 he felt it was time for a change, so he entered the world of high school coaching.

"It's the first time I've ever coached at the high school level," Wilson said. "It has been a big transition for me, but I've really enjoyed it. My career has been a little in reverse order, but it has been a good experience for me."

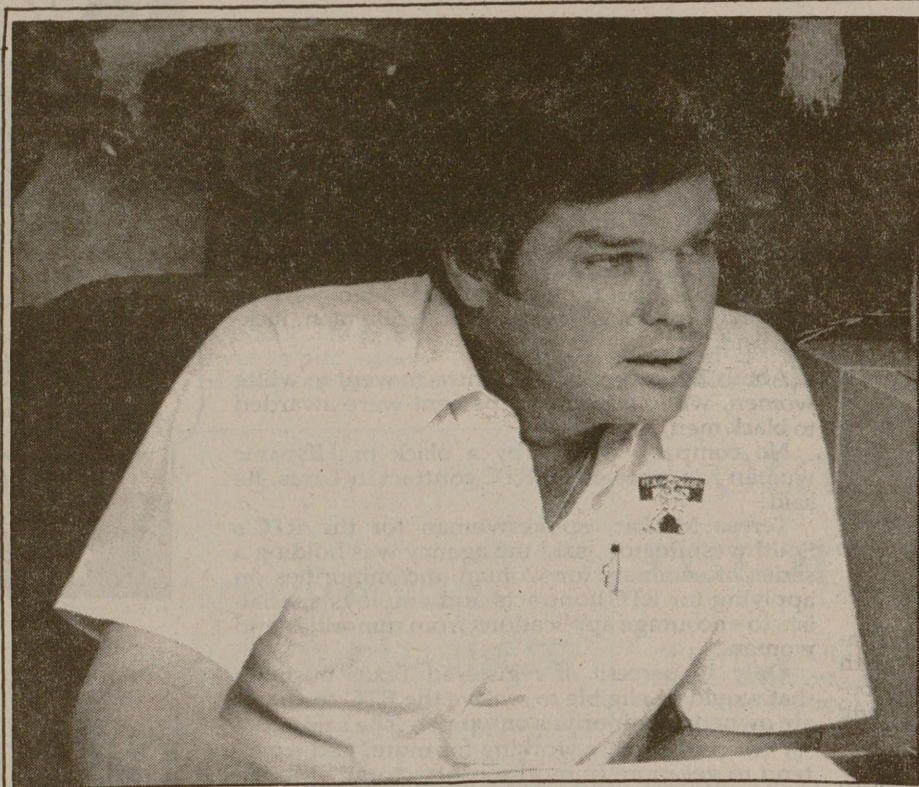
Tom Wilson's first victory as Palestine coach came over Cameron, 33-26. At the time Cameron was ranked #7 by the United Press International in Class 3A. The next year (1986), Wilson lead Palestine to its first district title in 17 years. In 1987, Palestine went to the state playoffs.

With so much success at the high school level, one might wonder if college coaching is back in Wilson's future.

The past two seasons have been fairly difficult, but I haven't given much thought about going back to college," he said. "My wife and I really like it here."

Tom Wilson started out as a 150-pound fourth-string quarterback at Texas Tech in 1962. In the preseason analysis of SWC quarterbacks for 1965, Wilson was ranked far behind the others in the league, but that didn't inhibit his determination. Wilson went on to become all-SWC his senior year, ranked #3 nationally in passing, and lead Tech to the Gator Bowl.

Immediately following his graduation from Tech in 1966, Wilson became offensive coordinator and quarterback coach for the Red Raiders. After nine years at this position, he took the similar job at Texas A&M under Emory Ballard. When Ballard suddenly resigned halfway



Tom Wilson coached Texas A&M on the gridiron from 1978 to 1981, leading the team to a 21-19 record, which included victories in the Independence and Hall of Fame bowls.

through the 1978 season, Wilson was named head coach at the age of 34.

One of the first moves he made in re-vamping his coaching staff was promote R.C. Slocum to defensive coordinator.

Following Ballard's resignation, Wilson made an immediate impact on the team by defeating Rice in his first game, 38-21, to stop a two game losing streak. He went on to lead A&M to a 4-2 record that included a Hall of Fame Bowl victory over Iowa State.

The next two seasons were a little disappointing for Wilson, despite some tremendous victories.

"Three of my biggest victories occurred during those years (1979 and 1980)," he said. "We defeated powerhouse Penn State at Penn State and defeated Texas both times."

Playing Texas was what Wilson enjoyed the most.

"The Texas games are what college football is all about," Wilson said. "Playing our arch rival in a packed stadium

was great. The week before the game was always crazy."

When 1981 came, the season looked a little bleak for A&M. The preseason SWC polls picked A&M as high as 7th and as low as last place. Wilson again exhibited his leadership qualities in leading A&M to a 7-5 record and fifth place finish in the conference standings. Included in the 7 victories was an Independence Bowl victory over Oklahoma State, 33-16.

Although Wilson isn't thinking about getting back into college coaching, he clearly remembers his A&M experience.

"I miss A&M and all the tradition there," Wilson said. "I really miss the atmosphere surrounding the campus."

"I miss the midnight yell practices and bonfires," he said. "I would always get goose bumps when standing out in the middle of Kyle Field and watching thousands of students swaying from side to side."

Reid Ryan tired of riding Texas' bench

ARLINGTON, Texas (AP) — Reid Ryan, son of Texas Rangers pitcher Nolan Ryan, has asked for a release from his baseball scholarship at the University of Texas, saying he needs more playing time to improve.

Reid and his father said they were disappointed that the younger Ryan did not get more opportunities to pitch during his freshman season with the Longhorns.

Reid, who appeared in only two games for Texas last spring, is considering transferring to Texas Christian University in Fort Worth, Blinn Junior College or Pepperdine University in California.

The younger Ryan is currently playing amateur baseball for the Anchorage Bucks in a summer league in Alaska.

"Right now, I need to pitch," Reid told the San Antonio Light. "I felt I needed to get in more innings if I wanted to improve."

"The way they do things at Texas, they're trying to win as many as possible. If that means using three starters only, that's what they're going to do. It's been successful for them, but it also means that other guys don't get used."

"If I want to be one of the guys who gets to pitch, I've got to get some innings in."

Nolan Ryan agreed with his son's decision to move on.

"He needs to pitch and it doesn't look like he'll get a chance to at Texas," he said. "He'd be better off somewhere else."

Nolan Ryan and Reid opposed each other in an exhibition matchup in early April at Austin, but the younger Ryan made just two appearance totaling 3 1-3 innings in non-conference games and did not see any Southwest Conference action.

Gustafson said Wednesday night that he was trying to bring Reid along slowly.

"I felt like he did about what we expected and what he was ready to do," said Gustafson. "It's not necessary to get a release (to transfer to a junior college), but we'll probably put one with it in case he wants to go somewhere else," Gustafson said.

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High-schooler Jesse Davis (Corey Feldman of "The Lost Boys" and "License to Drive") and his band, the Eradicators, know bad news when they see it. And the ba-a-a-dest news of all is the school's new V.P. of Discipline, who rules with an iron fist-literally. Can the Eradicators eradicate the V.P.? Does rock 'n' roll rule? It doesn't just rule... it totally dominates the entire student body in this outrageous, prank-filled comedy, based on characters created by Joe Dante ("Gremlins") and Allan Arkush ("Caddyshack II"). Mojo Nixon joins the fun as the Spirit of Rock 'n' Roll. And a red-hot lineup of classics and rad new tunes keeps rockin' from beginning to end. What an awesome way to save school from the uncool!

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