

K. Lee Davis
Guest Sportswriter

Astroturf? Kyle Field blasphemy!

Why is there plastic grass on the floor of Kyle Field? That might not be the burning question of the '90s, but it should be. We are talking endangered world-class status here!

At this self-proclaimed world-class institution of ours we have Dr. James Beard, who just finished growing natural sport turf grass inside of the New Orleans Superdome. According to reports the grass worked superbly.

So if we have a professor that can grow grass inside of a parking garage on steroids like the Superdome, I would be willing to bet my last dollar we could grow some fairly decent grass in wide open Kyle Field.

But has Dr. Beard been contacted by anyone to tear up that goop on the floor at Kyle and put in real grass?

I never did understand why Aggies decided to use the plastic turf anyway. I remember my elementary school principal, Mr. J.C. Miles, an Aggie through and through, proudly displaying a patch of the junk on his desk.

"That is the future of sports, son," he said, urging me to touch his turf. "The future looks ugly," I replied.

Apparently Principal Miles was in no mood to entertain smarmy comments from an eight-year-old who had popped Paula Peavy's pumpkin head for making fun of his haircut. I was, of course, properly punished for my lack of foresight.

It strikes me that there might be a lot of Aggies like Mr. Miles, Aggies that for some reason believe artificial turf is better than the real McCoy.

That seems to be the belief of our fabled athletic director, John David Crow. He allowed a new rug to be put into Kyle Field just back in 1989.

I suppose Crow never had to play on it himself. Maybe this love of fake turf is a manifestation of some sort of Freudian turf envy for that other school in Austin.

Texas A&M already has one of the finest all-grass sports facilities in the United States. Leo Goertz, the groundskeeper at Olsen Field, regularly wins awards and recognition for the high-quality playing surface he maintains for baseball.

A&M could be the first school in the Southwest Conference to switch back to a natural grass football field, a move that some other schools across the nation have started to make.

A grass stadium could be turned into an exceptional recruiting tool as well. Fewer serious injuries occur on grass than on turf, where "blown" knees are all too common.

Natural grass could also be a great home field advantage because no other conference team plays on it more than once or twice a season.

I'm sure the average fan would love to see and smell beautiful, cool, fresh-cut grass at an Aggie game rather than that slime-green, petroleum-smelling garbage down there now.

I'm sure they would rather see our gridiron heroes galloping up and down the field with dirt and grass stains on their uniforms instead of turf burns and rug-rash.

Besides, that noted world-class university in Boston has natural grass, and they are a bunch of lawyers and doctors. What do they know that we don't? Think of what A&M could be with a natural grass football stadium.

Instant world-class status!
Texas A&M is one of the greatest agricultural institutions in the world, and it is an unseemly abomination that we put plastic and rubber in our football stadium. We should once and for all make the switch back to natural grass.

As J.C. Miles would say, it's the future of sports.

Pardee, Johnson evaluate talent

By Jayme Blaschke
The Battalion

Although the Dallas Cowboys ran roughshod over the Houston Oilers en route to a 24-6 victory during the teams' Sunday night scrimmage in San Antonio, both coaches agreed the numbers on the scoreboard were only a secondary concern.

Houston head coach Jack Pardee, hoping to correct problems evident in the previous week's scrimmage with the Cowboys, spent the evening in frustration as the Cowboy defense stuffed the run-and-shoot.

"I'd love to look great every time out, but I didn't figure going in we were going to look great, because of who we were going to play," Pardee said. "The Cowboys are a better team than last year."

"They came in with Troy Aikman and their first offense getting 30 plays, and the same went for their defense," he said. "I knew they were going to do that, and I knew a lot of our matchups weren't going to be too good once we started substituting."

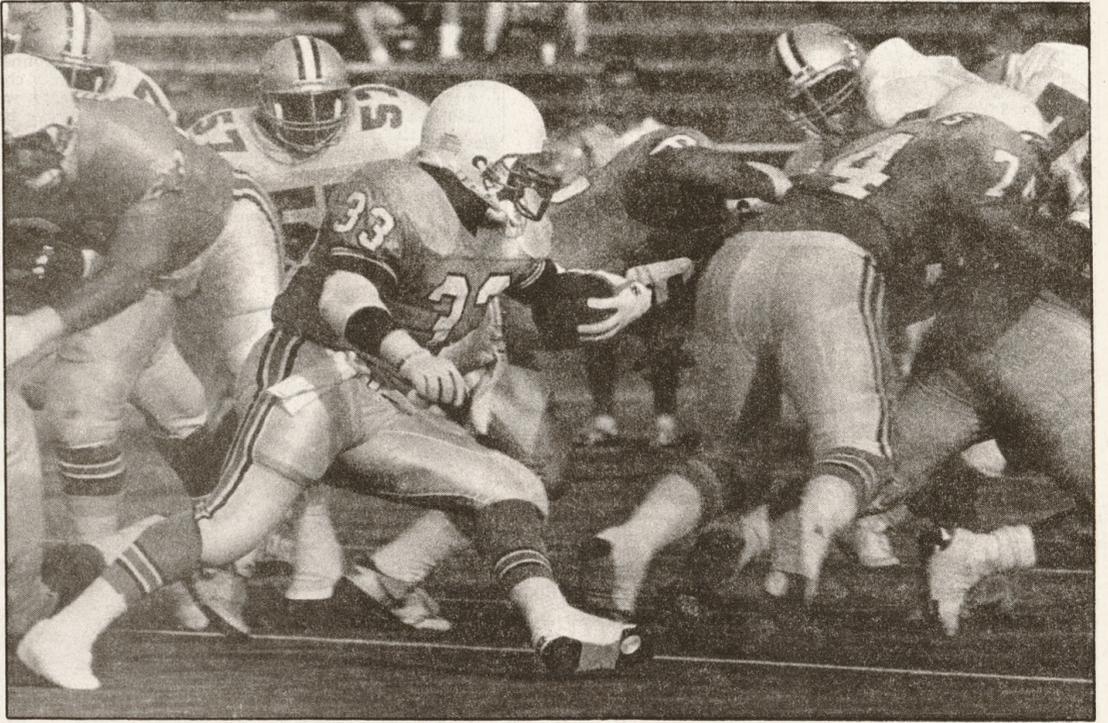
Dallas head coach Jimmy Johnson agreed there was a mismatch, but felt it was a mental one.

"I think that once you get into your final line of players, and they're not executing real well, I think there's a tendency to get demoralized," Johnson said. "But I'm not taking anything away from our players, they played real well."

"I was happy with the way our defense was disciplined and played the run better," he said. "They were more disciplined in their coverage of the run-and-shoot. We practiced against our offense every day except this morning, when we had a 15 minute walk-through against the run-and-shoot. This is the first time they've seen the run-and-shoot since Thursday night."

Pardee said his main concern was to get a better look at the talent in pressure situations. One obvious area of concern was the number of dropped passes by the receivers, a major problem in the first half of the 1990 season.

"We'll get through this problem," Pardee said. "This wasn't a real big night, but we did end up having some good catches. Some individuals really helped



Gary Brown (33), a rookie running back from Penn State, looks for a hole in the Dallas defense during the Houston-Dallas scrimmage.

themselves tonight. Frank Miotke came up with some big catches.

"It's too bad Shawn Jefferson got hurt. I was hoping we'd get to see him, because he'd made some good plays a week ago in the kicking drills," he said. "A lot of people tonight got a little better, but we didn't look good as a team."

Johnson's main concern coming into the season was to find a capable backup for quarterback Troy Aikman, and the scrimmages apparently gave him what he wanted.

"I'm happy with Cliff Stoudt," John-

son said. "He's done a good job and I really think he's going to help this offense."

"Of course, Troy's a great quarterback," he said. "I was happy with the way the offense executed, scoring four touchdowns with the first unit. Troy did a great job."

Johnson said his team's impressive showing was due mainly to the Cowboys' growing confidence.

"When you're comfortable with what you're doing, and know what you're doing, you become more aggressive," Johnson said. "When you're unsure

about things, when you have doubts, you're not going to be an aggressive football team."

Pardee said despite the Oilers' poor showing, no one should write them off yet.

"We're not as bad as we looked tonight," he said. "We didn't leave our first teams out there, because they know what they're doing. We're not going to use the first team in a scrimmage."

"Overall, with everyone on the team, we didn't look like a good team tonight," he said.

Muecke fighting for third Oiler quarterback spot

By Jayme Blaschke
The Battalion

After three seasons in the Canadian Football League, and one year of retirement, former Baylor quarterback Tom Muecke is battling for a job in the NFL.

Unfortunately for him, his performance against the Dallas Cowboys in Sunday night's scrimmage did nothing to improve his chances of making the team, and Muecke is the first to admit it.

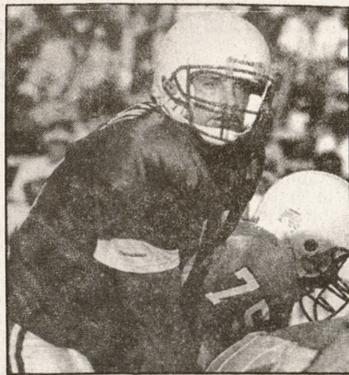
"I'd say my performance was both good and bad," Muecke said. "The first 12 plays were good. We drove down and had a chance to take it in (for a touchdown) and I fumble the snap to kill the drive. Then I came back and threw the interception. That was bad."

Muecke, who was not drafted by the NFL after he left Baylor, is not dwelling on his performance, and takes it with a grain of salt.

"Of course I wanted to play my best out there, but I don't know, some bad things have to happen so you can learn from them," he said. "Hopefully I'll get some more opportunities in the preseason to do some things."

Muecke's main competition is with Reggie Slack, a 12th round draft pick from Auburn, who was cut by the Oilers in preseason last year. The two are fighting for the third quarterback spot with the Oilers, behind Warren Moon and Cody Carlson. The situation isn't new to Muecke, who competed with Carlson for playing time when they both played for Grant Teaff at Baylor.

Fortunately for Muecke, Slack did not play well in the scrimmage against the Cowboys, and Carlson's holdout has allowed Muecke to increase his practice time.



Houston backup quarterback Tom Muecke.

Muecke, however, is not pleased that his position is still open because of poor play on his teammates' parts. He, like most of the team, is disappointed with the ease the Cowboys manhandled them.

"We scored one time with Warren on the first series, but I think they (the Cowboys) were a little bit more ready to play than we were today," Muecke said. "It showed on the scoreboard."

"Dallas scored some early touchdowns, and we didn't score for the rest of the ballgame," he said.

Despite the adversity, Muecke believes Houston's poor showing was a fluke, and not an indication of things to come.

"It's early, and these are scrimmages," he said. "I think things'll pick up in the preseason, and I would say by the time the season starts we'll be rolling full speed ahead."

Dallas to make AlamoDome their preseason home in 1993

San Antonio to host NFL football action

By Jayme Blaschke
The Battalion

The San Antonio Riders of the World League will not be the only professional football team playing in the AlamoDome if Jerry Jones has his way.

Jones, an Arkansas businessman and owner of the Cowboys since 1989, said his team plans to use the San Antonio stadium upon its completion.

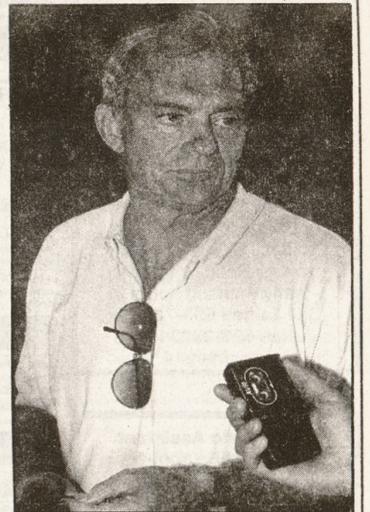
"We've tentatively — but not definitively — set up a game for preseason in '93 when the AlamoDome opens, with the Oilers," Jones said. "I'm excited for all the sports fans in San Antonio, that the facility's going to be here so they can be more a part of the NFL and can see some games."

"Certainly the Cowboys, whenever we can, are going to take advantage of that opportunity, and get down here and be visible to these fans," he said. "It may be a time when we can play the Oilers, or it may be another team we play down here in preseason."

Jones said moving some of the Cowboy's pre-season games to San Antonio was a natural progression.

"A lot of these fans have grown up in Cowboy families, rooting for the Cowboys, and so one of the reasons we went to Austin was to be closer to the San Antonio Cowboy fans," Jones said. "We know of the great Cowboy tradition here, and we are going to always be sensitive to it."

If there were any doubts about the support the Cowboys would receive in San Antonio, the scrimmage with the Oilers laid those fears to rest. De-



Dallas Cowboys owner Jerry Jones.

spite the fact Houston's training camp is in the Alamo City, the majority of the 10,000 plus fans at the scrimmage were partisan Cowboys.

"We're very pleased with the enthusiasm and support we've received here," Jones said. "It was great to hear all the Cowboy support up there."

"My main job is to do everything I can for the Cowboys to be out and be a playoff team and a superbowl contender," he said. "I think our fans' loyalty in San Antonio will take care of itself."

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