

Community

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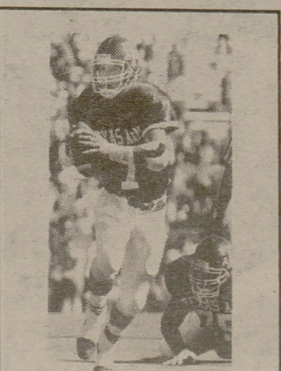
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Cover photo by Huy Nguyen

Quarterback Bucky Richardson leads a young and unproven team today against L.S.U.

Thousands of people visit B-CS Business owners look forward to Aggie football

By Troy D. Hall
Battalion Gameday

Tens of thousands of visitors will engulf the Bryan-College Station area during the next several months for the Texas A&M football season, creating a substantial increase in revenue for area hotels, motels and merchants.

While students, former students and visitors to the A&M campus might be looking forward to the home game schedule, area hotels, motels and merchants are looking forward to substantial revenue increases.

"A&M football games make a significant impact on the area economy and we are extremely happy about it," says Dick Forester, director of the Bryan-College Station Chamber of Commerce.

During football season weekends, every hotel room is booked for both Friday and Saturday night, while restaurants and retail stores stay very busy, he says.

Approximately 2,200 hotel rooms are available in the Bryan-College Station area and they are completely booked weeks in advance for every home game, Forester says.

"We run a very high occupancy rate all the time, but during game weekends, we are always full," says Jennifer Behrendt, rooms division manager for the College Station Hilton Hotel and Conference Center.

As the largest hotel in the area, the Hilton Hotel and Conference Center normally caters to the business people attending conferences, but on Aggie football weekends the mood of the hotel changes.

"During game weekends the hotel accommodates former students, the Aggie 12th Man foundation, A&M dignitaries as well as families," Behrendt says. "Aggie football games give us an opportunity to cater to the leisure market and that brings a more exciting, spirited atmosphere to the

"A&M football games make a significant impact on the area and we are extremely happy about it."

*- Dick Forester
director of the Bryan-College Station
Chamber of Commerce*

In addition to capacity room reservations, Behrendt says the Hilton dining and club facilities profit from increased business.

But increased business is the rule for the entire area during game weekends. John Beltrand, owner of Tom's Barbecue in Bryan, says it is commonplace for his customers to wait a couple of hours before being seated in the restaurant. He says most people do not even mind.

"Many of our customers are former students and they don't mind waiting to eat,"

he says. "We have people take their lawn chairs out of the trunks of their cars and sit in the parking lot talking about the game or reminiscing about A&M while they wait for a table."

Post Oak Mall, the largest retail center in the Brazos Valley, boasts retail outlets, movies and restaurants.

Kelley Durham, marketing director for Post Oak Mall, says mall merchants find a significant difference in revenues when Aggies play at home.

She says this year's football schedule will mean a significant increase in revenues for merchants because the games will draw large crowds. During some of the bigger football games, she says more people visit the mall than even during the crucial Christmas shopping season.

"We have as many as 12,000 to 13,000 cars in the parking areas," Durham says.

But the real concentration of visitors will be in the area around Kyle Field and the MSC.

Gary Spearow, general manager of the Texas A&M Bookstore, says about 40,000 people pass through the MSC during football games, but his staff is making preparations for the crowds.

"The design of the new bookstore caters around these type of events," he says. "During preparation we widen our aisles and make the entrances easy to access."

This is the first time game visitors will be able to enter the remodeled bookstore through the main entrance across from G. Rollie White Coliseum.

Texas A&M will have a host of activities going on this home football weekend:

- * Watch the Corps of Cadets during their traditional march in before the game. The procession begins at 10 a.m. on the Quadrangle.
- * Celebrate Mexican Independence Day from 7 to 11 p.m. Sunday in The Grove. Activities include Mexican folk dancing, ethnic food and music.
- * Feed your face at the Aggie Players membership drive pizza party at 8 p.m. Sunday at Mr. Gatti's. Proceeds benefit the Aggie Players Association. Pizza costs \$5 per person.
- * Watch the British Aggies play soccer at noon Sunday at Hensel Park.
- * The Outdoor Recreation Club is having a picnic/meeting with food at 4 p.m. Sunday in Hensel Park.

T h i s W e e k e n d

Greetings from The Battalion

Readers:
Welcome to the first-ever Saturday edition of The Battalion.

Our goal is to offer A&M visitors, including former students, parents and yes, even L.S.U. fans, the opportunity to learn a little more of what Texas A&M is all about. We will continue to publish the Saturday paper during every A&M home football game weekend.

Campus news, local activities and the effects of so many football fans in Bryan-College Station are just a few examples of information you will find in today's paper. As the Saturday edition develops, we will continue to gather more pertinent news that will interest the first-time reader as well as the long-time Battalion fan.

Our sports personnel have put together a comprehensive preview of today's game, and our Lifestyles writers have included a few entertainment tips as well. The paper in your hands is the result of several industrious students who deserve more accolades than we can provide.

Still, there is so much more we want to do, and we encourage you, the reader, to offer any suggestions that may help us improve the paper.

Again, read the paper, enjoy the game and get home safely. Thank you for your interest.

Holly Becka and
Todd Stone
Associate Editors

Kinchen

While they are ranked No. 20 in the nation, there are many question marks as A&M begins its season playing as many as eight true freshmen. The Tigers on the other hand are coming off a 31-10 season opening loss to Southeastern Conference rival Georgia, in which LSU's offense never got on track.

As a result, Kinchen said he felt like he had to do something extra to jump start the team. He ended up fumbling twice despite five catches for 83 yards

and a touchdown to go with 71 yards on four punt returns.

"I felt a little bit of pressure to make the big play but I always put that kind of pressure on myself in a game no matter what the score is," Kinchen said.

LSU head coach Curly Hallman said he understands Kinchen's competitive nature and said in no way does he want to impede upon that competitiveness. However, he would like Kinchen to hang on to the ball.

"I don't want Todd to slow it down," Hallman said. "He's got a lot of imagination. He's got a lot of energy and he gives an outstanding effort. The only thing he needs to do is keep that hand around the point of the ball and bring it into his rib cage."

The senior split end said the win last year over A&M has a lot to do with the team's confidence coming into Kyle Field, where the Aggies won 28-16 in 1989.

"I think that coming up on the

second week having won last year is going to be a big boost for the younger guys mainly," Kinchen said. "The older guys are always going to be ready to play the Texas A&Ms. Number one because A&M is a Top 25 team. Also because we have a lot of Texas football players on our team. Those are big emotional boosts for our team."

Kinchen said he's aware of the fact that he won't be able to hide from the A&M secondary this time around.

Slocum

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good ol' boy charm come to learn this lesson of life?

"It's just the right thing to do," Slocums said modestly. "We're all a product of our upbringing. You're taught to be honest with people."

"My reason for coaching is that I enjoy being around young people," he explained. "And I would hope that a player coming out of our program would have more than just say he played on some winning teams - that the lessons he learned in our program were the ones that he could take from here and be assets to him as he tries to go out in the real world and earn a living and deal with his fellow man."

Slocums recalls his junior high school football coach and the effect he had on his career.

"I don't even know if he was a good football coach or not," he said. "But he was a caring guy that cared about his players."

"I've never had any question that he cared about me more than just being a football player."

The lesson he learned from that experience has influenced his method of coaching young players. He has spent many hours teaching the aspects of the Golden Rule.

"I think it's like the drip-effect - If you keep saying the same thing over and over, then you do have an influence on young kids."

His coaching career began at a high school in Lake Charles, La., where he also taught five classes a day before going to graduate school at night. During that time he also had to practice two nights a week with his semi-pro football team, the Lake Charles Pelicans. Slocum spent two years playing for the Pelicans before he was hired at Kansas State University as an assistant coach.

Two years later the coach came home to Texas for Christmas. One day he found himself in then first year A&M coach Emory Bellard's office, waiting for hours to be interviewed for a coaching job in Aggieland. The next day he was hired as a defensive assistant.

"I don't spend a lot of time thinking about it. All of life is timing - being at the right place at the right time."

A&M is the right place for Slocum and now is the time for football.

THE WAITING IS OVER!

GGIE

VISION 90-91

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