

Sports

Monday, November 4, 1991

The Battalion

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Aggies stay on track

A&M wins fifth straight, holds at No. 12 in poll

By Steve O'Brien
The Battalion

HOUSTON - The freight train is gaining momentum. A second half couldn't even derail the Texas A&M football team.

The 12th-ranked Aggies moved their overall record to 6-1 and climbed into first place in the Southwest Conference with a 38-21 pounding of the Rice Owls on Saturday at Rice Stadium. The Owls dropped their record to 3-5 overall and 1-4 in conference.

A&M stayed at No. 12 in the Associated Press Top 25 Poll released Sunday.

The victory was the Aggies' fifth straight and marked only the second time this season A&M has outscored an opponent in the second half.

A&M head coach R.C. Slocum was pleased with his team's performance after taking a 28-14 lead into halftime.

"We came out to start the second half and stopped them on defense with a real solid series," Slocum said. "Then we took the punt, went down the field offensively and scored a touchdown."

A&M piled up 556 yards of total offense to Rice's 256. The Aggies beat Rice in every statistical category except average yards per punt.

A&M quarterback Bucky Richardson accounted for 359 yards of offense, passing for 231 and rushing for 128.

"I thought that was vintage Bucky today," Slocum said. "He was running and passing, and when the team was kind of stalling today and we needed to make something happen, he was the guy that made it happen."

"Once again, I think when you start talking about great players that have an impact on the team they play on, there

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KARL STOLLEIS/ The Battalion

Texas A&M cornerback Kevin Smith returns a punt 71 yards down the sideline for a touchdown in the first quarter of the Aggies 38-21 victory over the Rice Owls Saturday. Smith also grabbed his second interception of the season in the second quarter of the game.

Smith shows Rice old form after slow start

By Steve O'Brien
The Battalion

For a moment, A&M All-American cornerback Kevin Smith looked like he was lost in Rice Stadium. Ten minutes later, it looked like he owned the place.

In the first quarter of A&M's win over the Owls, Smith made two uncharacteristic plays. He was burned for a touchdown and flagged for interference.

The Owls, trailing 7-0, had the ball on the Aggies 6-yard line when they decided to challenge Smith. Wide receiver Eric Henley shot into the end zone, cut left and pulled down a Josh LaRocca touchdown pass.

"I've been kind of free lancing on the field, because teams haven't been throwing the ball my way," Smith said. "I figured today was going to be kind of the same way, and that's how I went into the game mentally."

"I figured they weren't really going to try to throw the ball my way."

But the Owls challenged Smith twice.

On third-and-five from the A&M 15-yard line, LaRocca dropped back and rifled a pass to Henley. Henley dropped the pass, but Smith was called for interference on the play, giving the Owls first-and-goal inside the five.

"It was interference," Smith said after the game. "I can't say for sure until after I see the film, but I got there kind of early."

"It actually just made me mad, and I figured he wasn't going to catch anymore passes."

Rice took the lead after the penalty with a 2-yard touchdown dive by LaRocca. After the Aggies tied the score at 14, the A&M defense held Rice on its next possession.

Smith received the kick by Rice punter Darrell Richardson and ram-

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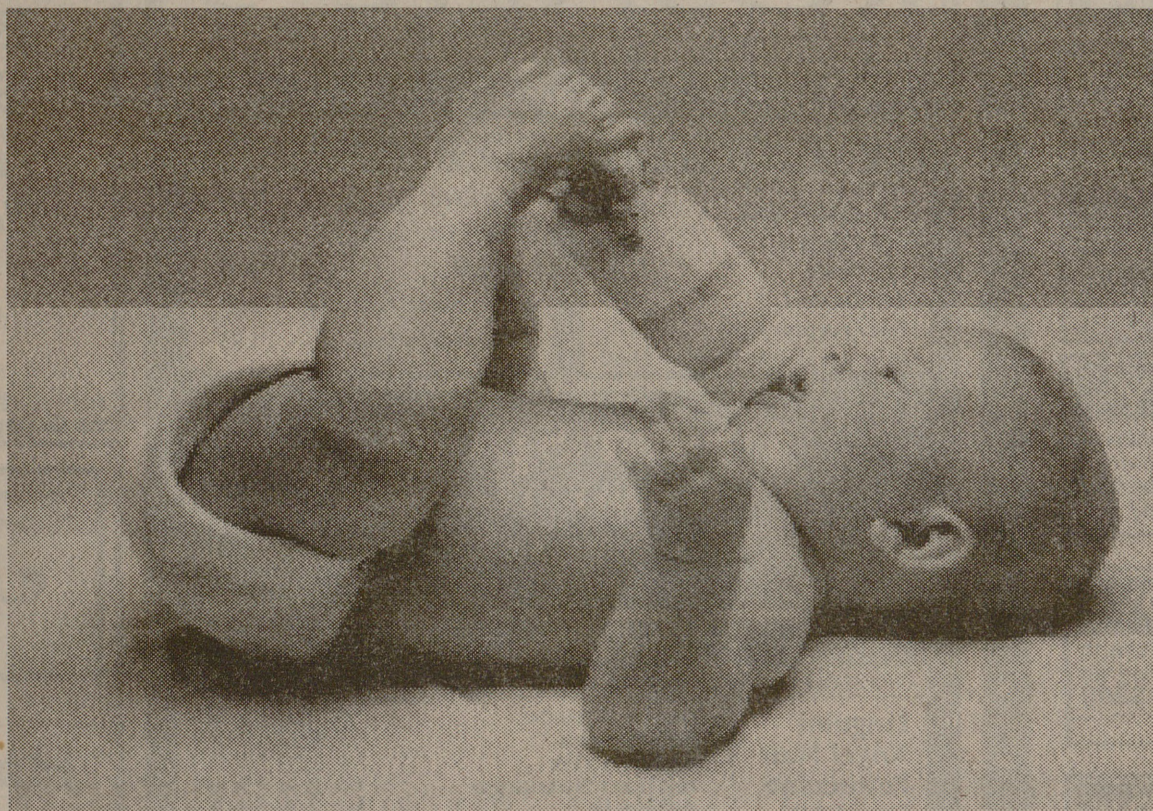
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