

University cuts funds to women's soccer team

Players looking for way to reinstate program

By Tanya Sasser
The Battalion

The Texas A&M women's soccer team is kicking around some ideas in an effort to bring back their program after team members were informed Wednesday that they would no longer be able to compete at the NCAA level.

Dennis Corrington, director of recreational sports, said the primary reason for the cancellation of the program was lack of funding in two separate areas.

"The first area that was hurting was the travel budget," Corrington said. "The team wasn't traveling in the same class as other sports teams and that was a negative. The second was that the coach's salary was not adequate. There was simply no money coming forth."

Debbie Michael, women's varsity soccer coach, said the team members and coaches are trying desperately to find a way to reinstate the program.

"We were working on an extremely small budget," she said. "It is hard to be competitive

when you don't have any money. We don't want to be dropped, so the girls are actively trying to get something done."

Casey Hamre, a team member, said the girls on the team plan to do all they can to bring back the program.

"A lot of the parents of the team members are getting together to see what they can do," she said. "We're hoping that if we do well, there will be some kind of change."

Hamre said the women's soccer team will continue to exist through next season because contracts with other teams have already been signed.

Lynn Hickey, associate athletic director, said the athletic department has suffered, as have all the other departments at A&M, because of the flagging economy.

"The original idea was to start the team with the idea of re-evaluating it after three years," she said. "No one anticipated what would happen to the economy of Texas. It is difficult, when all sorts of classes are getting cut, to go to the president and ask for money for a sport."



Battalion file photo

The Texas A&M women's soccer team will try to exist without University funding after A&M cut the program due to a lack of revenue.

See Lack/Page 6

Aggie baseball stops in Houston

By Chris Whitley
The Battalion

Texas A&M head baseball coach Mark Johnson is looking for a road to the NCAA regionals. He hopes that trip doesn't stop in Houston this weekend.

The Aggies face a pivotal series in their mission to get back to the NCAA tournament against the University of Houston this weekend. The two meet for a single game Friday at 2 p.m. and again for a doubleheader Saturday at noon at Cougar Field.

A&M defeated Sam Houston State Wednesday at Olsen Field, 3-0, to keep their lock on second place in the Southwest Conference with a 15-12 record, and 31-16 overall.

The Cougars currently reside at the bottom of the SWC standings with a 9-18 record, and 21-24 overall.

Houston, however, has improved since A&M swept the Cougars at Olsen earlier this season. Johnson said the Cougars have been a problem for the Aggies in the past, and look for the same this weekend.

"Going down to Houston hasn't been a pleasant experience for us,"

See Aggies/Page 6

Road to NFL runs through Aggieland

A&M manufactures stock of pros

By Scott Wudel
The Battalion

Texas A&M football coach R. C. Slocum has plans to watch the NFL draft this Sunday. Slocum isn't one of those diehard draft fanatics. Instead, he watches to see the fruits of his labor - the Quentin Coryatts, the Kevin Smiths, and the others who wore the maroon and white last season and now make their way into the professional draft.

Slocum has pointed a number of A&M players in the direction of the NFL.

In his 20 years as an assistant and head coach, the list of Aggies in the NFL has grown longer and longer, almost too many to mention - Jacob Green, Curtis Dickey, Ray Childress, Larry Kelm, Rod Bernstine, Richmond Webb, John Roper, Aaron Wallace, and more. And last year's crop that included Robert Wilson, William Thomas, Mike Arthur and Darren Lewis.

Thirty-three former Aggies were on NFL rosters when the 1991 season began. The list continues again this year. Besides Coryatt and Smith, apparent first-round locks, quarterback Bucky Richardson, defensive back Chris Crooms, along with six others, have told the NFL they are interested in extending their football careers.

"If you talk to other NFL teams, they would say that there are certain programs in college football that turn out large numbers of players," Slocum said. "Because we've had pro

linebackers, it's easier to go recruit other linebackers who aspire to the pros.

"We've had a lot of pro running backs and offensive linemen. You kind of get that thing going where it snowballs."

So go the terms, "football factory," "NFL farm team," and so on. Terms synonymous with schools like Miami, Notre Dame, and Michigan in the past, and now used to describe the A&M football program.

"I think it's our styles of offense and defense," Slocum said as a reason for the number of Aggies in the NFL. "We've spent a lot of time over the years visiting with the pros, and the things that we do are similar to what's done at the professional level."

"That, coupled with the fact that we've been able to recruit good players. We've started with a good product. We bring in some talented guys and coach them in a scheme where they do well."

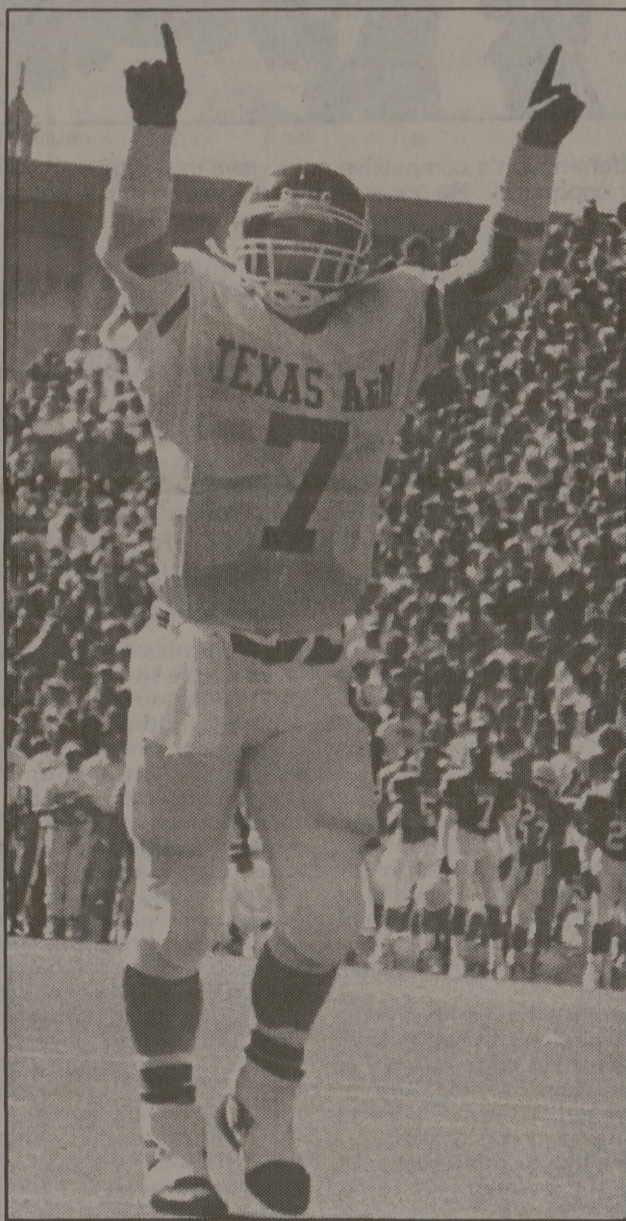
But the index of past and present NFL Aggies goes beyond high-round draft choices. A&M may have that intangible that other schools envy. The intangible that can give the nod to players like Mark Wheeler, Ramsey Bradberry and Kary Vincent.

"When you take the Wrecking Crew, for example, the way we play defense, there are guys that get caught up in that, and they get some attention," Slocum said. "Normally, if they're stuck off at some other school, they wouldn't even get looked at."

See NFL/Page 6



DRAFT PREVIEW



Battalion file photo

Bucky Richardson hopes the NFL will have the same respect for his abilities as A&M opponents did.

HERO FOR HIRE

Richardson bucks NFL odds

By Steve O'Brien
The Battalion

Former Texas A&M quarterback Bucky Richardson has been called a lot of things. Some good, some bad.

He's been called the best competitor in Southwest Conference history, the next great all-purpose player in the National Football League and one of the best option quarterbacks ever.

He's also been called a quarterback who has trouble reading defenses and throwing the ball deep.

During the NFL draft on Sunday, Richardson doesn't care what he's called. He just wants the phone to ring.

"It's just an honor to be considered to play in the NFL," Richardson said. "There are a lot of players all over the country that aren't going to get drafted."

Richardson was an option quarterback for the Aggies from 1987-91, rushing for more yards (2,095) over his career than any other quarterback in SWC history. Richardson also had the best winning percentage for a quarterback in A&M history (24-6-1).

But the past will mean little to Richardson this Sunday as he waits to be drafted.

"It's a pretty big deal for me," he said. "But I think it's something you have to go into open-minded and not expecting anything. You can't count on it, because you don't have any control over it."

If any player in this year's draft has the athletic ability to make the NFL as an all-around player, it's Richardson. At 6-foot-2, 221 pounds, he is big enough to play a number of different positions and has the speed to go with it.

The chances of Richardson making an NFL team strictly as a quarterback may not be as great as he likes, but his athletic ability makes him a tempting pick for a number of teams.

"I think you talk about winners and losers, and he's a winner," A&M offensive coordinator Bob Toledo said. "Some way, he's going to find a way to get things done."

"He wants to play quarterback, but on the other hand, he just wants to play. I think that is what excites a lot of pro teams."

Early in the spring, it was thought Richardson would be picked as high as the third or fourth round, but he may drop into the later rounds if no teams choose to take the risk.

Either way, Richardson is confident about being able to make it in the NFL.

"I think I can play several positions," Richardson said. "I can be a utility player. I can provide leadership."

Richardson, who played defensive back in high school, interests many professional teams, because he could be a special teams player or a defensive back and also serve a reserve quarterback.

The current rule in the NFL concerning third-string quarterbacks adds to the appeal of players like Richardson.

The rule states that if, the Dallas Cowboys for example, use their third-string quarterback during a game, then starter Troy Aikman and backup Steve Beuerlein must stay on the bench for the remainder of the game. A third-string quarterback is allowed as the 47th player above the 46-player limit in

See Bucky/Page 6

Track teams take next step in Penn Relays

The Battalion News Services

The Texas A&M men's and women's track teams will take part in the world's oldest and largest track and field meet this weekend when they travel to Philadelphia to compete in the Penn Relay Carnival.

The three-day event, which is sponsored by the University of Pennsylvania, hosts more than 13,000 athletes from all 50 states and 30 countries representing six continents.

More than 45 world records have been set at the Penn Relays and 19 world records from the event are still intact. The competition has hosted such athletes as Carl Lewis, Joan Benoit-Samuels, Bob Beamon, Valerie Brisco-Hooks, Jesse Owens, Raghib Ismail, Knute Rockne, Wilt Chamberlain and comedian Bill Cosby.

Last year the Aggies made their mark

See Penn/Page 6

An armchair view of Draft Day extravaganza



CHRIS WHITLEY
Assistant Sports Editor

Sports fans will unite Sunday as football comes back to life.

The NFL draft starts, which will bring the gridiron junkies out of hibernation for one day to watch Hall of Famers of tomorrow have their fate decided.

But for the average fan, what will the NFL draft be like? No matter how the players change, or the commissioner's change or the sport changes, the event is always the same.

People flock to their television sets, with beer and nachos in hand, and flip over from "This Old House" to ESPN. There the "Total Sports Network" shows up to ten straight hours of men sitting in a hotel ballroom talking on the phone.

The crowd, who gathers from all over, cheers boisterously, as if the Marriott Hotel was actually RFK Stadium in November. It's the only meeting room you'll ever see where men in blue suits discuss million-dollar deals next to a guy in a hog nose and a baseball cap buying a pretzel.

Meanwhile, the television announcers speculate on who will take who and when. The network brings in experts like Mel Kiper, Jr. to give their "insight" into how the draft proceedings will go. But in the end, no one really knows how everything will fall.

Always a surprise in store

When the draft begins, the teams and the crowd study their available data, whether the data are in-depth scouting reports or newspaper clippings.

Occasionally, NFL Commissioner Paul Tagliabue, who runs the show, will get up to the podium and read from a card in a thick New York accent, "The San Deago Chawgers select Louie Spanowski of Notuh Dame," as the crowd murmurs suspiciously.

Then, anchor Chris Berman shouts at the top of his lungs that this is the draft's biggest surprise since the last pick.

Paul Zimmerman of Sports Illustrated then says that Spanowski is an animal. He is a workhorse. He can read an offense like no one he has ever seen before. He will make a great player for the struggling Chawgers.

Switch on over to Nowhere, New Jersey, where Louie, his mom, his dad, his girlfriend, his aunts, his uncles, his cousins, his new agent, and anyone else that has met him in the last twelve years sits in his living room cheering that he will be leaving the house.

Louie says how grateful he is to get the opportunity to go to San Diego and play for such a great coach like Don Coryell, even though Coryell hasn't coached there for years. Louie says that playing professional football will be the realization of his childhood dream, and now he won't have to go to work with his brother at the lumber yard.

His agent says how nice San Diego is, but it isn't that nice and that their front office better be expected "to shell out the dough that a high-kaliber player like

what's-his-name here deserves."

His mom rejoices because she knows Louie will be happy. That plus she can go to the local grocery store and brag to her friends, "My son's making \$1.3 million a year. What about yours?"

First round eternity

Then, the scene switches to San Diego where the Chargers coach comes on the screen and boasts proud about his new pick, "Well, we think that he was one of the best players available and, with a lot of training, he could develop into a pro player worth using."

Suddenly, word breaks that the owner of the Chargers collapsed and is in stable condition after learning the going rate for a high first-round draft pick.

This scenario goes on every fifteen minutes as picks are being made and goes on long after ESPN ends its coverage. In fact, the entire draft will not end until the late hours of Monday.

But for fans starving for football after months of nothing but the World League, the draft keeps interest in the fall game for a couple of days in April.