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# Defense

Continued from Page 5

quarter, sacking Tulsa quarterback Gus Frerotte and stripping the ball.

Buckley, not being one to rest on his laurels, then rolled over and recovered the fumble on the Tulsa 47, a play that resulted in no points but stopped a Tulsa drive and helped spark the rest of the "Crew" throughout the duration of the game.

"I just try to play hard every single down," an understated Buckley said, "and when you do that sometimes you make the big plays."

A&M noseguard Eric England, however, was a little more complimentary in his assessment of Buckley's performance.

"I thought the defense played really well, and we had Marcus Buckley back to his old form," England said.

Frazier's big moment came earlier on, when he picked off a Frerotte pass intended for receiver Gary Brown near midfield, ending the Golden Hurricane's game-opening 33-yard drive.

Following the game, Frazier was humble about his interception streak, one that might pull him out of former A&M corner-back Kevin Smith's shadow.

"I've had a pretty good start," Frazier said. "I just hope I can keep it up the rest of the season."

Although both Buckley and Frazier started quickly, they, along with the rest of the defense, were thrown into the fire at the end of the first half when Tulsa defensive tackle Cory Lax recovered a Rodney Thomas fumble on A&M's 21.

Instead of folding their tents and settling for a 10-3 deficit, the Aggies instead bowed up and put on a clinic on how to play defense under pressure.

Eric Lange's ensuing 40-yard field goal did give the Hurricane a 6-3 advantage, but the significance of not allowing a touchdown was great enough to offset Tulsa's lead.

"We don't like giving up the ball in our end of the field," Frazier said. "But when we did and then stopped them, that just broke their offense's confidence and gave us momentum."

"We knew we had to stop them, and we didn't do a good job of that last season," Buckley said.

As it turned out, the Hurricane could manage only one more field goal in the entire second half. The role his two seniors played in that shutdown was not lost on Slocum.

"When things go bad and you need a big play, you usually get one from the seniors," Slocum said. "You are always happy to have guys like that, and I wish I had more of them."

# A&M jumps to No. 5 in AP poll

FROM STAFF AND WIRE REPORTS

Texas A&M, by virtue of a 19-9 win over Tulsa, was voted the fifth-ranked team in the country in this week's Associated Press Top 25 poll.

The Aggies (3-0) moved up two spots from last week's poll after their win over the Golden Hurricane kept them undefeated. A&M also received one first-place vote.

San Diego State gained its first ranking in 15 years and Notre Dame dropped four spots after a controversial tie with Michigan.

San Diego State, which opened with a tie against Southern Cal, moved up to No. 23 after beating

Brigham Young 45-38 Thursday. It's the Aztecs' first appearance in the poll since finishing 16th following the 1977 season.

Notre Dame fell to No. 7 after tying Michigan 17-17 in a game that ended with Irish fans booing their own team for conservative play-calling on the final series. The Irish are now one spot below Michigan, which remained No. 6.

Miami, which didn't play Saturday, held onto the top ranking with 47 first-place votes and 1,534 points from a nationwide panel of sports writers and broadcasters.

Washington stayed No. 2 following a 27-10 victory over Wisconsin. The Huskies received 11 first-place votes and 1,481 points.

Florida State jumped two places to No. 3 after beating Clemson 24-20. The Seminoles got the first-place votes and 1,361 points.

Florida, which defeated Kentucky 35-19, is still fourth. Ranking out the Top 10 are A&M, Michigan, Notre Dame, Syracuse, Alabama and Penn State.

It is the first time in the poll's 56-year history that three of the top four spots are held by teams from the same state.

Syracuse climbed a notch to No. 8 after beating Texas 31-20. Alabama fell one spot to No. 9 following a 17-10 victory over Southern Mississippi, and Penn State remained No. 10 after trouncing Temple 49-8.

# Aggies

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Granger said after the victory over Tulsa. "Our offense put them in scoring position, and our defense didn't let them get a touchdown. Our team was playing a really physical game, and I thought we got better as the game progressed."

A&M head coach R.C. Slocum echoed Granger's comments that his team has seemed to progress as each game goes on.

"I think we got stronger tonight in the fourth quarter," Slocum said after the Tulsa game. "I think all season we've been a stronger team in the fourth quarter."

Atkinson said one of the reasons A&M has been able to pull out fourth-quarter wins is that the Aggies stress playing the entire game.

"It doesn't matter who wins the first three quarters, as long as we win the fourth quarter," Atkinson said. "These first three games we've had to struggle, but our defense and offense are getting better about coming together in the end."

"All we ever want to do is win, and it doesn't matter who is winning at the half. We proved that we're a real fourth quarter team, because we came together and put points on the board in the last quarter."

"We talk a lot about the fourth quarter," Hill added. "Every practice we hold up four fingers to signify that in every game there's four quarters, and we have

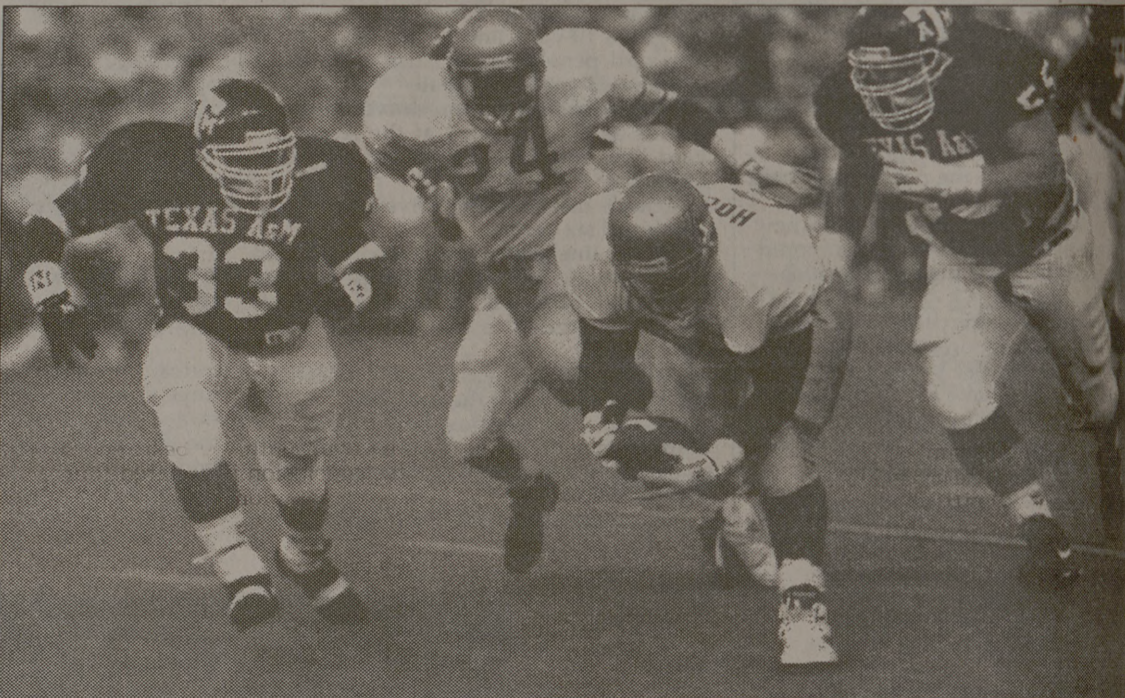
to play the entire game."

Golden Hurricane head coach Dave Rader, who saw his team's eight-game winning streak break with the loss to A&M, said the Aggie defense took over in the second half and didn't allow his team a chance to get back in the game.

"We're very disappointed with the loss," Rader said. "On offense, we couldn't do anything in the second half. Their defense was dominating. They played very well against us."

No matter how the Aggies went about winning their third game, Granger said all that matters was that his squad, which now ranked fifth in the nation, is still undefeated.

"It's nice to be 3-0," Granger said. "It's been a long time since Texas A&M was 3-0, and it's nice to be part of an undefeated team."



Tulsa's Phil Holmes grabs for a fumble chased by Texas A&M's Cliff Groce (33) and Tyler Harrison (55) in the second quarter of the Aggies' 19-9 downing of the Golden Hurricane Saturday at Kyle Field.

DARRIN HILL/The Battalion

# Whitley

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minutes compared to the 19 minutes that Tulsa had possession.

Halftime: Tulsa 6, A&M 3.

"We expected Tulsa to be ready to play, and we knew they were a good team," A&M center Chris Dausin said after the game. "We had some problems executing offensively in the first half. We weren't surprised with how well Tulsa played. After last year, we knew they had a good defensive unit."

"We hurt ourselves a lot, though. Even when one person isn't executing, it hurts the offense."

Fortunately for the Aggies, the situation in 1991 reversed itself on Saturday. Last year, the Aggies played a stellar first half and gave the game away late. This time, A&M turned it up a notch late in the game to keep from giving it away.

Greg Hill had eight carries for 39 yards in the opening drive of the second half, including an eight-yard scamper in the end zone that would end up being the game-winning touchdown.

Then, Hill cushioned A&M's lead with a 12-yard touchdown reception from Jeff Granger. Hill ended up with 125 rushing and 25 receiving yards. It marked the seventh time in his career that he has surpassed 100 yards rushing - not bad for someone who's only played 15 games.

After the game, Hill admitted that the defense, which kept Tulsa to three field goals instead of three touchdowns, was again the true MVP.

"We know we're going to have a great defense," Hill said. "It seems like sometimes the offense struggles, but the defense never struggles."

This game reinforced the notion that the Aggies are turning into a second-half team. They have been behind at halftime twice already this season. In contrast, last year, A&M led in every regular season game at the half.

Last year, this team didn't need to prove anything by the end of the game. This time, the Aggies have to prove it.

"All we ever want to do is win, and it doesn't matter who's


winning at the half," linebacker Jason Atkinson said. "Coach (R.C.) Slocum said he looks at it like a boxing match. When you've got them back on the ropes the entire time and you go back and forth, what matters is whoever is stronger in the fourth quarter."

"We proved that we're a real fourth quarter team."

And they will have to keep on proving it this season.

The Aggies are now the fifth-ranked team in the nation. They are undefeated in three games. Now, they head north to take on a nationally-obscure Missouri team, who doesn't have the talent A&M does, but plays deceptively well at home.

So, watch out. It could end up being another Tulsa.

  
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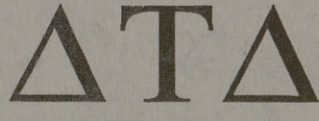
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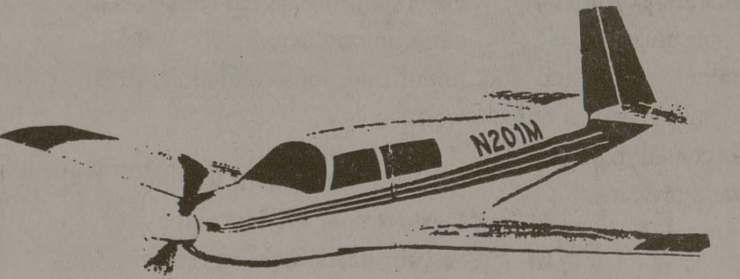
  
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Contracts are available in room 230 Reed McDonald, and must be returned by Thursday, September 17, to assure your group a page and avoid a late fee.

Prices are \$65 for a full page, which will include a group picture, candid of events during the year, a story about the group, and information about the group. \$40 buys a half page which includes a group picture and information about the group.

Spaces are limited so don't wait until the last minute, pick up your contract today.

For more information, contact the Aggieland at 845-2682