

Pirates' choke act beginning to get tiresome

Roberto Clemente and Honus Wagner probably rolled over in their graves.

Bill Maze-roski and Willie Stargell, wherever they may be, coughed up the large steak, southern-fried chicken and cold beer they were trying to stomach.

The Pittsburgh Pirates, the team that was part of some of the greatest and most exciting World Series victories ever during the '60s and '70s, can't even seem to make it to one during the '90s.

For the third straight season, the Pirates pulled their Denver Broncos impersonation and gave the big one away.

And last night, the Pirates not only let one slip away, they let the Braves take one that they had done everything humanly possible to win in the first place.

Four games into the National League Championship Series, how many people seriously believed that the Pirates would even be in Game 7 of the Series, much less hold a 2-0 lead going into the bottom of the ninth? It was a big enough feat just not to lie down and concede defeat after falling behind 3-1 when Atlanta took Game 4 in Pittsburgh.

Maybe they should have been behind in Game 7. Maybe the Pirates didn't know how to react because they found themselves in an unfamiliar position going into the bottom of



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LOOKING FOR A FEW BREAKS

Rice coach Goldsmith hopes to surprise A&M defense

By DON NORWOOD

Sports Writer of THE BATTALION

Rice head football coach Fred Goldsmith knows a good defense when he sees one. And as his team prepares for Saturday's game in College Station against Texas A&M, that defensive knowledge might be causing more than a little trepidation on his part.

Goldsmith has constructed a high-powered offense, led by preseason Heisman candidate Trevor Cobb at running back. Quarterback Bert Emanuel, a transfer from UCLA, has stepped in for previous starter Josh LaRocca and led the Owls to a 2-1 record.

And Rice enjoys as much receiver depth as any team in the Southwest Conference with a group led by Louis Balady and Herschel Crowe.

But the A&M defense has Goldsmith sweating. Just ask him.

"I haven't been able to find any weaknesses in that defense," Goldsmith said Wednesday. "The biggest difference (in the A&M defense) is those great defensive linemen from last year are still great. Most of them are sophomores or juniors, but they've got a year of starting experience under their belts."

Aside from A&M's front three, Goldsmith singled out new cornerback Aaron Glenn, a player he compared to the man Glenn replaced, former A&M defensive back Kevin Smith.

"Glenn has come in from Navarro (Junior College) and done a great job," Goldsmith said. "He's even more impressive on film than Smith was."

A&M's defensive athletes resemble the type Goldsmith coached for five years as defensive coordinator at Arkansas. Denver Broncos safety Steve Atwater and New Orleans Saints defensive lineman Wayne Martin are the two most well-known Arkansas products to have learned their trade under Goldsmith, whose Razorback defenses carried the

team to five straight bowl berths from 1984 to '88.

Things have not been so rosy for Goldsmith since taking over for Jerry Berndt at Rice in 1989. He has had to struggle with the Owls' reputation as a collection of players tops in the classroom but flops on the field, leading Rice to a 11-21-1 record over the last three years.

The prospects are brighter this year, despite the Owls' 2-3 record. Rice has defeated both much-improved Southern Methodist and Division I-AA Sam Houston State, and has suffered narrow losses to Texas, Duke and Air Force.

But last week's win over SMU revealed holes in the Rice pass defense, as quarterback Dan Freiburger burned the Owls for 393 yards through the air, the best single-game passing performance by any SWC quarterback this season.

Goldsmith said that for success against A&M, the type of defensive performance Rice put in a week ago will have to be a thing of the past.

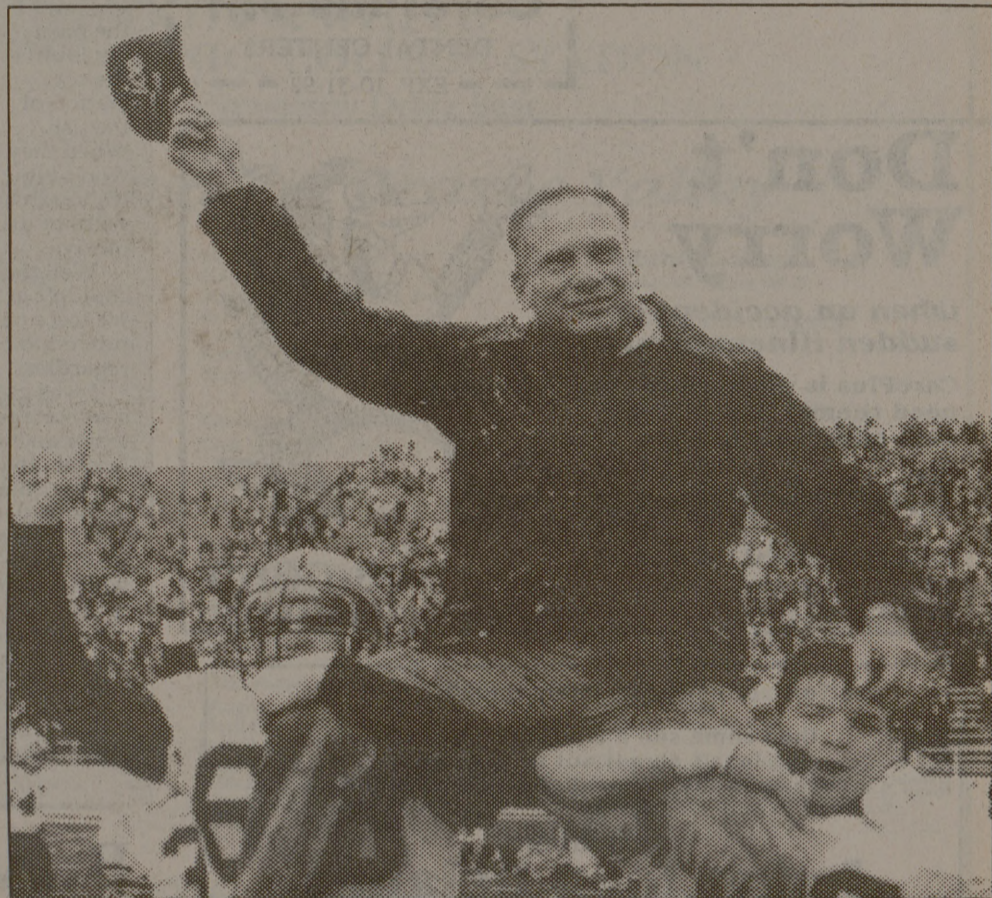
"They (A&M's offense) are a lot more crisp and solid," Goldsmith said. "The statistics may not bear it out, but this is a team that throws to the one and two-backs very well. There are some things that (quarterback Jeff) Granger is just starting to click on."

"We have to play better pass defense to have any hope of getting out of there alive with a win."

Goldsmith saw little on the A&M-Texas Tech game film to provide any encouragement for this week.

"They didn't have success that much of the time," Goldsmith said of Tech's performance during a 19-17 loss to A&M. "I was hoping to see a lot more, to be honest."

The Owls have seen more than they have wanted to of the Aggies in the past few years. Rice has been the one team A&M has been able to consistently dominate in the recent past, including last year's 38-21 loss to the Aggies in Houston.



Rice head coach Fred Goldsmith is carried off the field by his team after a 6-3 win over Baylor in 1989. Goldsmith is hoping to counter A&M's defense Saturday with the speed of tailback Trevor Cobb.

Goldsmith said that the key to A&M's mastery of the Owls lies in two areas - the Aggies' defense and ability to wear opponents down.

"We've done well (against A&M) in the first quarter," he said. "We've got to find a way to play four quarters against them."

"They've got guys on defense that can catch you. Two years ago, one of our guys pulled out to block Marcus Buckley. (Donald) Hollas pulled up to throw the ball, and Buckley was already up and in his face."

If Goldsmith ever got really desperate to find a way to finally top the Aggies, he would have the perfect opportunity to get an inside look at R.C. Slocum's game plan this week. Former Rice offensive lineman Trey Teichelman, the older brother of A&M defensive tackle Lance, is now a graduate assistant strength coach for the Aggies.

One might think Goldsmith would be tempted to let the elder Teichelman exercise his note-taking skills in practice for

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