

## Aggies-Owls might be good game after all

Saturday's game against Rice may be one of those games which causes not-so-devoted A&M football fans to say, "Well, I don't think I'm going to the game this weekend."



**RULY MEDRANO**  
Sports Writer

Don't leave town. If it isn't enough to say you can watch the fifth-ranked team in the nation, you may not realize that there might be a good game in store tomorrow.

This is not just A&M vs. Rice. It's the Wrecking Crew against Heisman Trophy candidate running back Trevor Cobb.

It's like Ali vs. Frazier, the Men of Troy vs. the Spartans, Andre the Giant vs. Hulk Hogan.

Because of that, tomorrow, the Rice Owls will come out to Kyle Field fired up. Real fired up.

Although the Aggies own an unblemished record, you can get the feeling that they're a bomb getting ready to explode in someone's face.

It doesn't take a genius to tell that these Aggies are darned talented. They beat a very good Stanford team who, if you haven't checked the polls lately, is sitting at No. 8.

But the Aggies may be a victim of their own capabilities. On paper, they can match up with, if not overwhelm, ANY team in this country, and they are expected to blow the ever-living doors off of everybody they face.

They haven't. They have outscored everybody, though, and they are still in contention for the national championship. All the more reason to make it to the ballgame tomorrow.

The Aggie football team is in one of those situations where the better you are, the more people expect of you. It may not be fair, but it's reality.

Especially since Rice is not that bad of a football team. Yes, their 2-3 record isn't going to scare anybody, but they did play those T-sips to a 23-21 game. And folks, them 'Sips aren't as bad as we'd like to think. Did you watch them drill Oklahoma, the team that

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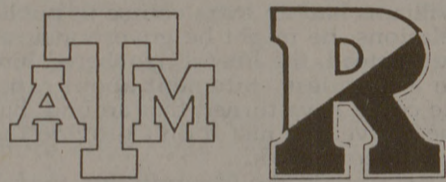
# Aggies back in action against Owls

## Pullig to see playing time

By CHRIS WHITLEY  
Sports Editor of THE BATTALION

After its second hiatus in three weeks, Texas A&M starts the long haul of its season tomorrow.

The fifth-ranked Aggies (5-0, 1-0 in the Southwest Conference) meet up at 2:00 p.m. with Rice University (2-3, 1-1 in SWC) at Kyle Field, starting a stretch for A&M that continues every weekend until the season ends Thanksgiving night against the University of Texas.



**Time:** 2:00 p.m., Saturday  
**Place:** Kyle Field  
**TV/Radio:** None, KTAM 1240-AM  
**Records:** A&M (5-0, 1-0), Rice (2-3, 1-1)  
**Line:** A&M by 18

To prepare for this stretch, A&M head coach R.C. Slocum said that he will take out starting quarterback Jeff Granger during the game and give freshman Corey Pullig some game experience.

"I'll very likely, this week at some point in the game, regardless of the situation, whether we're behind or ahead or even, it's my plan going in the game to try to get Pullig into the ballgame," Slocum said.

Slocum reasoned that if Granger, who has played the last four games from start to finish, were to suffer a year-ending injury down the road, there would be no quarterback with game experience to come in and take Granger's place.

It is a problem that has plagued Slocum over recent weeks, and that's why he decided to make the move now.

"I think that we're getting to the point, and maybe this week, that I go ahead and just play someone else," Slocum said. "And right now I'd say Pullig would be the guy to do that."

"It's not going to be a negative thing



Battalion file photo

Rice quarterback **Josh LaRocca** avoids an ankle tackle from A&M's **Marcus Buckley** in last year's 38-21 win for the Aggies in Houston. LaRocca went down with a broken collarbone early in the season and has been replaced with Bert Emanuel.

for Jeff. I think it's going to be a positive thing for the team."

Granger and Pullig will be matched by Owl quarterback Bert Emanuel, who is notorious for throwing on the run. In fact, the junior transfer from UCLA ranks second on the team in rushing behind All-American running back Trevor Cobb.

Rice coach Fred Goldsmith said he hopes to utilize Emanuel's running game to avoid the Aggies' tenacious blitzing defense Saturday.

"It's a good idea to have a real fast quarterback when you play the Aggies because they like to go after your quarterback," Goldsmith said. "I'm going to tell him, 'Get your head on a swivel, look both ways and take off.'"

Slocum, who had to deal with a similar

type of quarterback in Robert Hall against Texas Tech University on Oct. 3, said that he knows the threat that a leader like Emanuel can provide.

"Bert presents a problem," Slocum said. "It's a unique problem because you seldom ever face a team that has a quarterback with the capabilities of Emanuel."

"I was always concerned when you ran across a guy who had the capability to hurt you running and who had the desire to hurt you running. And it looks like Bert Emanuel likes to run it."

Against Southern Methodist University last week, Emanuel rushed for Rice's first two touchdowns. He gained 109 yards on the ground while completing five of 12 for 123 yards passing, leading the Owls to a 28-13 victory.

And, of course, there's Cobb. Last year's Doak Walker Award recipient ranks fourth in the country in rushing with an average of 133.2 yards a game this season. Again, he is listed as a candidate for this year's Heisman Trophy.

"Trevor Cobb - I don't see people stop him," Slocum said. "I see him getting slowed down in a game or two, but that doesn't happen very often. No one just goes into a game to stop Trevor. He's going to get his yards."

Cobb, who already has chapters of the SWC record book dedicated to him, will shoot for yet another one on Saturday. He stands 79 yards behind former University of Houston running back Chuck Weatherspoon in career all-purpose yardage, who had 5,715 yards.

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