

## A&M's big day shows glimpse of the future

Texas A&M's 35-9 victory over Rice Saturday showed the masses three things.

■ Trevor Cobb actually can be shut down.

■ A&M can win big without a tremendous rushing performance.

■ Corey Pullig might be the quarterback of the future.

However, it might be a blessing that AP poll voters didn't see any of these things since the game was not televised. Even though the offense put more points on the board than they have all season and A&M's margin of victory was the largest that its been all season, there are still a few kinks to be worked out.

The Aggies uncharacteristically were set back 112 yards in penalties Saturday. Quarterback Jeff Granger, despite completing his first four passes, nearly threw four interceptions.

On the field, it looked like the game was closer than the score indicated. But hey, the Aggies can say now that they beat the tar out of some team.

Cobb, who ranks fourth in the country in rushing and who broke the Southwest Conference all-purpose yardage record Saturday, still only had 88 yards in the contest. That was the second-lowest total of the year for him.

A&M head coach R.C. Slocum commented before the game that you don't stop a running back like Trevor



**CHRIS WHITLEY**  
Sports Editor

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# A&M slow-cooks Rice, 35-9

## Despite Owls' surge, Aggies conquer in end

By J. DOUGLAS FOSTER

Sports Editor of THE BATTALION

Texas A&M running back Greg Hill said the Rice Owls were a much better team than the one the Aggies defeated 38-21 last season in Houston.

At the half of A&M's 35-9 win over the Owls Saturday, most of the 53,387 at Kyle Field probably agreed with Hill.

After opening the game with two quick touchdowns and a 14-0 lead over the Owls, the Aggies watched Rice change offensive formations and close the gap to 14-9 by intermission. Not only had the Owls cut the deficit to five points, but they actually held a 184-162 advantage over the fifth-ranked Aggies in total yardage.

Rice threw the A&M defense off balance in the second quarter, moving away from its previous offensive scheme which is centered around 1991 Doak Walker Award winner Trevor Cobb. The Owls moved Cobb out of the backfield, and used three and four wide receiver sets to try and offset A&M's blitz.

After the half, the A&M defense made the necessary adjustments as the Aggies outgained the Owls 248-89 in the final two quarters on the way to a 21-0 scoring run.

A&M defensive coordinator Bob Davie, who had the unenviable task of preparing his defense for Cobb, said the Owls did a good job of keeping his defense off-balance early in the game by switching up their gameplan.

"We prepared all week for Cobb running the football and for (quarterback Bert) Emanuel to run the option quite a bit," Davie said. "They really took us by surprise with some of the four-wide receiver sets and when they put Cobb in the slot."



RICHARD S. JAMES/The Battalion

A&M defensive end Sam Adams (95) bats down a pass from Rice quarterback Bert Emanuel as linebacker Marcus Buckley (9) blitzes around the end during the Aggies' 35-9 win over the Owls Saturday.

## Linebackers keep Owls' big threats in check

By DON NORWOOD

Sports Writer of THE BATTALION

When the Rice offense threw Texas A&M a curve with its extensive use of four-receiver sets Saturday afternoon, the Aggies' "Wrecking Crew" defense nearly whiffed.

With all the attention directed toward running back Trevor Cobb, speedy quarterback Bert Emanuel started scrambling and passing to his heart's delight, bringing the Owls to within five points at half-time.

The challenge for A&M defensive coordinator Bob Davie was obvious — adjust to an offense that was totally the opposite of what the Aggies had spent two weeks preparing for.

The Aggies' 14-9 lead forced Davie to issue a call for someone to step forward and take control of the game. Leave it to the A&M linebackers to answer it.

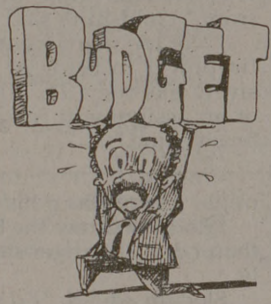
Aside from outside linebacker Marcus Buckley, A&M's own personal "Terminator", the linebackers for the Aggies are a working-class group of players, enjoying little fanfare but tons of output. But with their step to the next level against Rice, that quintet of athletes proved they were ready for prime time.

Buckley, Steve Solari, Jason Atkinson, Larry Jackson and Reggie Graham combined to help hold Cobb to only 84 yards and one touchdown on 18 carries. Maybe most importantly, Cobb was unable to reel off any long runs, something that can break a defense's back.

Emanuel's outburst notwithstanding, Atkinson said that putting Cobb on the ground was the number one objective.

"I think the most important thing in this game was to keep Cobb contained," Atkinson said. "For two weeks, we've been practicing (against the run). We came in and put some things in (during

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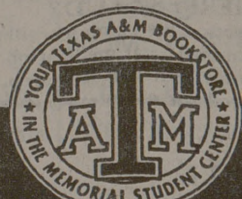
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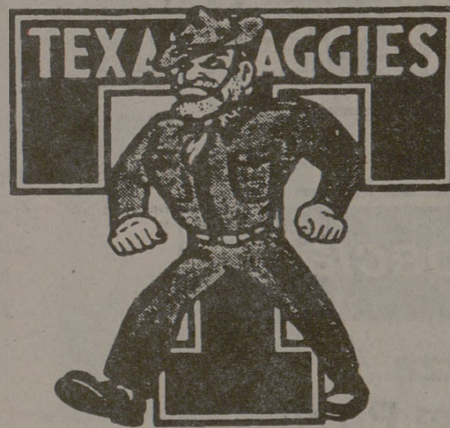
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