

# SPORTS

Monday, November 2, 1992

The Battalion

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## Stomping SMU sets up Aggies for title chase

DALLAS - Texas A&M got what they oh, so desperately needed Saturday: A dominating victory.

Two-thirds of the way through this agonizingly long season, the Aggies came into Cotton Bowl I looking desperately for a jump-start to get them through the rest of the season. They got it.

Their 41-7 win was a complete demolition of an obviously weaker Southern Methodist team. In every facet of the game, A&M came away victorious. The quarterbacks were better. The lines were better. The secondary was better. The backs and receivers were better.

It was good for A&M to prove that it was the fifth-ranked team in the country over someone else. Sometimes beating the tar out of someone feels better than a last-second field goal, and this was an example.

Granted, it was SMU, the team that is perennially placed at the Southwest Conference's basement. But the Mustangs have shown marked improvement this year and have already won more games than they have in any season since coming back to life in 1989.

And even if the Mustangs aren't that great...so? A&M needed to steamroll someone, and SMU fulfilled that wish.

Now, the Aggies are ready for the home stretch. A&M's eight wins in its previous eight games is a tremendous accomplishment, but one loss

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CHRIS WHITLEY  
Sports Editor

## Aggies harness Mustangs, 41-7

### Third-quarter surge helps A&M cruise past SMU

By K. LEE DAVIS

Sports Writer of THE BATTALION

DALLAS - When Texas A&M came to the Cotton Bowl looking for a blowout win, Southern Methodist was more than happy to provide them with one.

Despite having its best season since its return from the NCAA grave, the Mustangs were no match for the fifth-ranked Aggies, who took a 41-7 victory on Saturday in front of 41,417. The win kept A&M's perfect season intact (8-0, 4-0 in Southwest Conference play) and gave the Aggies their largest margin of victory this season.

The Aggie defense looked like a beast on this Halloween afternoon, devouring all of SMU's offensive threats by posting four sacks and three interceptions, two by defensive linemen.

The Mustangs (3-5, 1-4) continued their four-game losing streak and gained only 179 total yards in the process, including 25 yards on the ground. They could have come seven points closer, but a goalline stand by A&M in the final minute kept SMU in single digits.

The Aggies took the opening kickoff of the game and marched 80 yards in 16 plays, culminated by a six-yard touchdown pass from Jeff Granger to Ryan Mathews.

But Greg Hill was the primary threat in the drive, carrying the ball eight times for 37 of his 138 total rushing yards.

"I got so many carries there at the beginning that I was starting to get tired," Hill said. "I was glad I had Rodney (Thomas) there to split time with."

Hill and Thomas finished the

afternoon with a combined 216 yards rushing and five touchdowns.

SMU exercised its one big play of the afternoon on the ensuing kickoff. Mustang kick returner Jason Wolf fielded the kick, broke through a huge hole at the SMU 25-yard line and scampered 51 yards to give the Mustangs the ball at the A&M 36.

An 11-yard pass from Dan Freiburger to John DeVoss tied the score at seven with 4:35 left in the first quarter. SMU didn't run the ball once in its six-play scoring drive.

"Our offensive scheme today was to throw short, quick passes," SMU head coach Tom Rossley said. "I thought Dan Freiburger did a good job with that early on, but then A&M dropped back into some zone coverage and challenged us to run the ball."

"It was a good job of coaching on their part."

After the opening drive, the Aggie defense would allow only 143 yards for the rest of the game, holding in check an SMU offense that was averaging 338.3 yards per game.

After the Mustang touchdown, the Aggies took 6:01 off the clock on another 80-yard drive that put A&M on top for good.

"The first two drives were very long, and I think they set the tempo for the day," Hill said.

Rossley, who has lost both of his meetings with the Aggies, characterized A&M as the most dominant team he has seen this season.

"I think Texas A&M is at a

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RICHARD S. JAMES/The Battalion

Freshman quarterback Corey Pullig tries to avoid a Southern Methodist defender during the Aggies' 41-7 win over the Mustangs Saturday. Pullig replaced an injured Jeff Granger and went 7-for-15 for 114 yards with one interception.

## Defensive line shines in rout

By K. LEE DAVIS

Sports Writer of THE BATTALION

DALLAS - On a day that Texas A&M dominated every facet of the football game against Southern Methodist, the defensive line was the most dominant unit of all.

Sam Adams, Lance Teichelman, Eric England and Kefa Chatham combined for seven tackles, two passes broken up, three quarterback sacks and two interceptions.

The two interceptions, by Adams and England, are the most by A&M defensive linemen in a game since 1981.

In fact, the two interceptions marked the first time during that span that two A&M defensive linemen have intercepted a pass in the same season.

"We've been working all week on receiving drills with our defensive linemen, and it looks like those drills have paid off," A&M head coach R.C. Slocum joked.

With 7:58 remaining in the second quarter, England came up with A&M's first turnover of the afternoon, intercepting a Dan Freiburger pass that was tipped by inside linebacker Larry Jackson.

England said that he was as surprised as anyone that he came up with the ball, and felt that his four-yard interception return was fairly impressive, given the traffic in which he caught the ball.

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