

## Corso's thoughts just one man's personal opinion

It's amazing how one man's opinion can cause such an uproar amongst 40,000 people.

It seems all anyone has to do is get on television and say anything negative about the status of Texas A&M and its football team, and everyone in College Station is suddenly out for blood.

Lee Corso, ESPN's pride and joy, seemed to think last week that the fourth-ranked Aggies, who were 10-0 after their 38-30 win over Houston, would be jumped in the polls by Florida State after the Seminoles' 70-7 pasting of defenseless Tulane. The Aggies, Corso said, had played no one of worth. The Cougars, he said, were mediocre and A&M had just barely managed to escape the Astrodome with a win, and the Seminoles had routed a team for the second straight week. Despite the fact that Florida State's last two opponents combined couldn't beat Middle-Eastern Boise Community College, the Seminoles, he said, deserved the third spot.

So everyone waits for the polls. Waiting, knowing that if A&M doesn't move up after Michigan tied Illinois, they will have Corso to blame.

Sunday, the truth comes out. Florida State sits in the third spot, three points ahead of the Aggies, who are still fourth. And the entire Brazos Valley erupts in a hissy fit.

One thing to remember. Mr. Corso's opinions are just that, opinions. They are the beliefs of one man who happens to have a position where people get to hear his thoughts once a week. Even if he did have influence on AP voters, which he says he didn't, the vote is still close. Three points to be exact. So, those rankings are not set in stone. A blowout against Texas Christian this weekend, and the Aggies' National Championship hopes are breathing again.

While we're jogging our memories about all this Corso business, let's look



**J. DOUGLAS FOSTER**  
Sports Editor

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## ESPN analyst Corso visits A&M campus

By RULY MEDRANO  
Sports Writer of THE BATTALION

This season, the fourth-ranked Texas A&M football team has had a difficult time moving up in the polls to position themselves for a chance at winning the National Championship.

The Aggies have been skipped over in the Associated Press Top 25 by other teams four times this season. The last instance occurred this weekend when then fifth-ranked Florida State jumped to the third position while A&M remained fourth.

The FSU poll promotion has caused a stir among Texas A&M faithful, but the reason for the uproar is not simply a result of the polling.

Last Thursday, at halftime of the ESPN telecast of the A&M-Houston game, football analyst Lee Corso angered many A&M supporters as he proclaimed his expectations that Florida St. would pass A&M in the national rankings.

He based his prediction on the fact that A&M played a poor first half against a "mediocre" Houston team.

On Wednesday, Corso was in College Station and held a press conference before members of the local media.

Corso must have expected to be put on trial by the awaiting media. He strolled into the press conference with a transcript of the comments he had made on the air last Thursday.

Before the media had a chance to ask the former University of Indiana and University of Louisville head football coach any questions, he opened the conference

by saying he may have been misunderstood.

"What I said was to watch for Florida St. to leapfrog over A&M," Corso said. "I never once said 'should.' Put that down please. I said 'think,' 'will'."

"My job is to predict what happened and that's what I did."

Earlier this week, A&M head coach R.C. Slocum expressed his displeasure with Corso's comments. Slocum said he felt Corso was campaigning for Florida St., which happens to be Corso's alma mater.

"R.C. thought I was campaigning because I went to Florida St.," Corso said. "That's ridiculous."

Throughout the press conference, Corso kept a light-hearted attitude toward the situation and never backed down from his defense that he did nothing to hurt A&M's chances of moving up in the polls.

He pushed the media into laughter with his answer when he was asked how he would have voted if he had a vote in the AP rankings.

"Miami would be first, followed by Alabama and a tie for third between Florida St. and Texas A&M," Corso said. "Do you think I'm stupid?"

Corso explained that he found out on Monday that he was assigned by ESPN to come to College Station to work on a story about the Aggies for ESPN's Gameday to be aired this Saturday.

Although Corso had received some uncomplimentary phone calls over the weekend from A&M supporters, he said he was looking forward to his trip to

A&M. "I love it," Corso said in reference to A&M fans. "I love the emotional feeling that they have. That they love their team enough to care."

Corso said there is currently a problem in the way the AP voting is done. He said he felt the AP voting should take place on Mondays instead of Sundays as it is done now.

He explained that if the voters had an extra day to study what happened in college football over the weekend, the polls would be better rationalized.

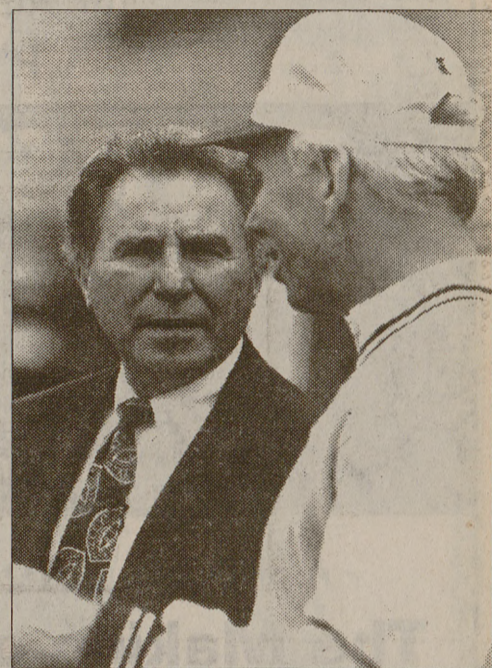
Another change Corso called for is for the scheduling of a National Championship game between the nation's top two teams after the bowl slate is completed.

"Absolutely," Corso said when asked if a unifying National Championship game should be scheduled. "They need a change for a National Championship game. It would be the Saturday before the Super Bowl and be played in Orlando, Fla."

"I say Orlando because I live there." Part of the reason why Corso said his prediction of Florida St. skipping over A&M is justified is because Florida St. trampled Tulane 70-7 on Saturday.

This brought up the question if a lopsided A&M win over TCU this Saturday would be enough to thrust the Aggies ahead of Florida St. in the AP poll.

"I think A&M will have a hard time beating TCU," Corso confidently said. "TCU is a better team than they are given credit for. If A&M wins, I would say that A&M just beat a very good TCU team."



RICHARD S. JAMES/The Battalion

ESPN analyst Lee Corso (left) discusses college football with A&M head coach R.C. Slocum Wednesday. Corso visited the A&M campus to interview Slocum for ESPN's "College Football Gameday" television program.

Throughout the press conference, Corso was repeatedly asked if his ties to Florida St. influenced the comments he made last Thursday.

"When I'm on the air, I'm no longer a Florida St. graduate," Corso said. "I'm no longer a coach. I'm no longer a Catholic. I'm no longer an anything."

## TCU head coach Sullivan still trying to ease transition

By DON NORWOOD  
Sports Writer of THE BATTALION

This football season has been a harsh introduction to the world of head coaching for new Texas Christian boss Pat Sullivan. The Horned Frogs won only one of their first eight games under their rookie head coach, with their 13-11 defeat of Oklahoma State sandwiched by losses to teams ranging from top-ranked Miami, to lowly New Mexico.

But on Nov. 7, Sullivan's Frogs pulled off the unthinkable by beating the University of Texas 23-14 in Fort Worth. It was TCU's first win over the Longhorns since 1967, and was the type of emotional win that can jumpstart an entire program.

TCU's 31-28 loss to an angry Texas Tech team the next week notwithstanding, the Frogs' upset of Texas infused new life into Sullivan's youthful, often-outmanned team. And it has made Sullivan's first head-coaching job a little less stressful.

"I don't think that there's any doubt about that (the positive effects of the Texas win)," Sullivan said Wednesday. "We are a very small, undersized football team. We only have 75 players on our roster, compared to A&M's 100."

"We're a very young football team. But I think that that (the Texas win) has been a plus with our team."

The 2-7-1 Frogs' rebound has been a welcome change for Sullivan, who got used to winning on a regular basis in his days as a player and assistant coach at Auburn. Sullivan capped off his three-year stint as the Tigers' quarterback in 1971, when he threw 20 touchdown passes en route to receiving the Heisman Trophy. Auburn finished with a combined 27-7 record and three bowl appearances in those three seasons, with Sullivan earning All-American and Southeastern Conference Player of the Year honors twice.

But Sullivan's preparation for his current job came as an assistant coach under Auburn head man Pat Dye. As the

Tigers' quarterbacks coach from 1986 to 1989, Sullivan molded signalcallers Jeff Burger and Reggie Slack into two of the SEC's best. And as offensive coordinator in 1990 and 1991, Sullivan helped current Auburn quarterback Stan White adjust to life as an underclassman starter in what is arguably the best football conference in the nation.

With a resume like that, it is no wonder Sullivan takes pride in the experience he brings to TCU, where senior Leon Clay and true freshman Max Knake have split time under center.

"I was pleased with the success that I had when I was coaching the quarterbacks at Auburn," Sullivan said. "We had two great quarterbacks in Jeff Burger and Reggie Slack, and Stan White, who is over there now, has turned into a good one."

Sullivan said he picked up many pointers from Dye, the most successful coach record-wise in the SEC throughout the past decade.

"Coach Dye was as fundamentally-oriented as (Texas A&M) Coach (R.C.) Slocum is," he said. "That's where it starts."

"I thought that Coach Dye had a great relationship with his players. He knew when to be tough and when to ease up."

Sullivan has had to walk the thin line dealing with Clay, who has seen some tough times this year while battling injuries. But Sullivan said the most experienced member of a green group of quarterbacks has shown flashes of the talent he displayed last year under Jim Wacker, who left TCU for the University of Minnesota. And Clay has also been adept at making the transition from Wacker's offense to Sullivan's more balanced attack.

"Leon hasn't had the kind of year we were hoping for," Sullivan said.

"I don't think he even played enough in the other offense enough (to get comfortable with it). He's adapted well."

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