

## Aggies should get best possible bowl opponent

Those who support the Texas A&M football team are sure there is a communist plot to keep the Aggies from having a shot at the national championship.



**J. DOUGLAS FOSTER**  
Sports Editor

If the officials of the Mobil Cotton Bowl Classic pass on the highest-ranked team to invite Notre Dame to play the Aggies, we will be sure that Cotton Bowl executive Jim "Hoss" Brock is behind that conspiracy.

We all know Brock has a love affair with Notre Dame. We all know he would probably kick his mother if it meant keeping Lou Holtz happy. That's because they are Notre Dame. They are the 'almighty.' They are the biggest television draw in the entire nation.

But they are also ranked lower than the Aggies. They are also 9-1-1 on the season. Which means the 'almighty' has lost one more and tied one more than the undefeated Aggies.

It also means a win over the Fighting Irish would get the Aggies absolutely nowhere in the final Associated Press poll.

Brock and his crew need to realize one thing: When the Southwest Conference made a deal to send its host team to the Cotton Bowl every year, there was an understanding that the bowl was there to help the conference improve. The agreement was that the Cotton Bowl would do everything it could to bring the highest-ranked team to Dallas every New Year's Day for the conference champion. This agreement becomes even more vital when your host team is ranked in the

See Foster/Page 8

## Linebacker Cox becomes late-season spark for A&M

By RULY MEDRANO

Sports Writer of THE BATTALION

At Texas A&M, the fourth-ranked Aggies have a reputation for having an established linebacker monopoly in the Southwest Conference.

The traditionally linebacker-rich Aggies recently got richer as their present defensive stock has recently taken a tremendous rise with the improved performance of sophomore linebacker Jessie Cox.

In last Thursday's matchup with the University of Texas at Memorial Stadium in Austin, Cox demonstrated why the Aggies' future may be even brighter as he led the A&M "Wrecking Crew" defense with eight tackles, including one for a loss of two yards, and a fumble recovery.

The Texas game was only the 6-2, 220 pounder's second starting assignment in his fledgling career at A&M.

Cox, a former Parade All-American at DeSoto High School, explained that his performance against the hated Longhorns was a result of a heavy adrenaline flow.

"It's (Texas game) the game of all games," Cox said. "I was really pumped up. I was hyped, I was real hyped."

"It was a matter me trying to prove to myself that I could play and I really wanted to help the team."

Cox may have also proved his worth to people other than himself. He began the season as a reserve and special teamer and didn't see his first start until the Texas Christian game Nov. 21. It was A&M's eleventh game of the season.

Against the Longhorns five days later, Cox showed that there is no slack in the Aggies' conference leading defense with him in the lineup.

Cox explained that whether he is starting or not, he takes the same approach to every game.

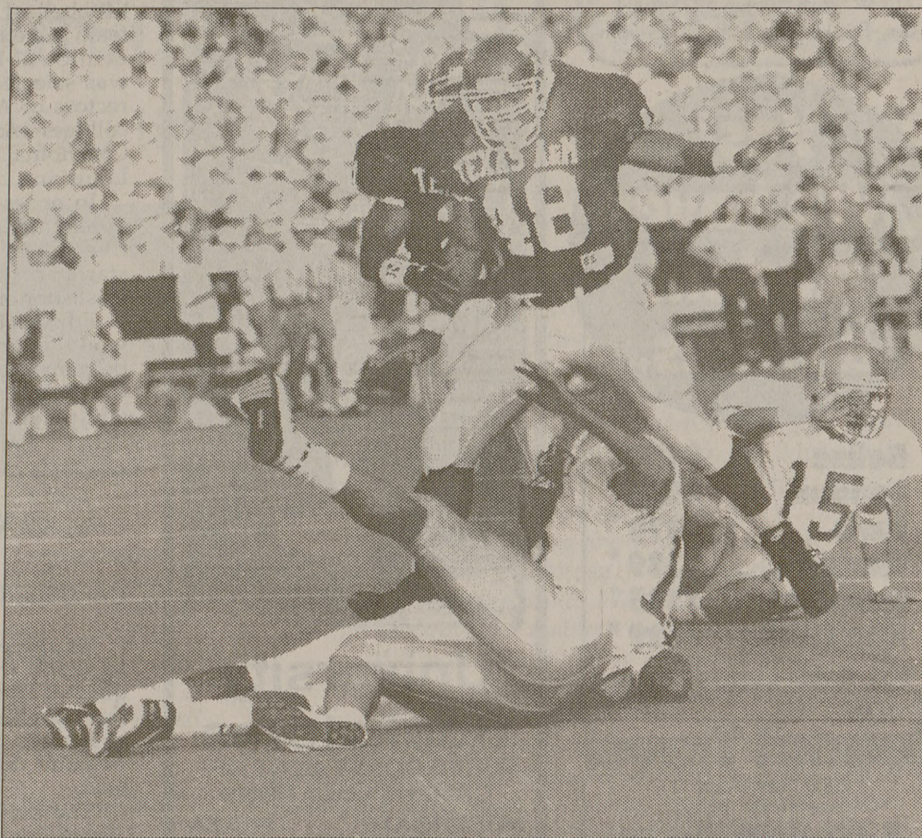
"There's no difference," Cox explained of his roles as a reserve and as a starter. "I still have the same intensity. I'll always try to make every tackle I can."

Along with success comes notoriety. That is something that is new to Cox on the college level and he is not quickly responsive when asked to speak of himself. But if he continues to produce as he is, Cox had better get used to it.

His modesty was something that was apparent on Wednesday when Cox took some ribbing about being interviewed from teammates Antonio Shorter and Wilbert Biggens. Cox only smiled embarrassingly and mumbled "Where were we?"

But when it comes to talking football, Cox is not shy about anything.

See Cox/Page 8



DARRIN HILL/The Battalion

A&M linebacker Jessie Cox (48) leaps over Tulsa quarterback Gus Frerotte during the Aggies' 19-9 earlier this season. Cox has started the last two games for A&M at the inside position, and recorded eight tackles against Texas in the final game.

## Aggies open 1992 season on road against New Mexico

By K. LEE DAVIS

Sports Writer of THE BATTALION

A new season of hope for Texas A&M basketball dawns this evening as head coach Tony Barone and the rest of his Aggies travel to Albuquerque to take on the University of New Mexico Lobos.

Barone picked a difficult site to start his 1992 campaign as the game will be played in the University Arena, better known as 'The Pit,' because of the raucous fans and the level of noise that emanates from it.

The pit has proven to be quite a home court advantage over the years as New

Mexico has posted a 356-89 record including winning 14 straight heading into the tonight's matchup.

A&M lost last year's matchup in College Station, 94-72.

The Lobos lead the all time series 4-1, with the Aggie's only victory coming in 1979 by a 79-68 margin.

Barone said he realizes the Lobos are a tough challenge, especially for an opener, but if his team is going to improve it is going to have to do it by playing against quality teams.

"You have a couple of choices in scheduling," Barone said. "One, you can build gradually toward a crescendo. Two, you can go into the fire right away. We're

going into the fire.

"That may not be the right way, but you have to expose yourself to these type of games when you are trying to build a program."

The Lobos advanced to postseason play for nine straight seasons, and has posted four-straight 20-win seasons.

Sophomore forward Damon Johnson supported the assessment of his coach as to why such a young team seeks out tough games on the road.

"If you want to win, you have got to play winners," Johnson said.

Johnson added that he might have preferred playing a tuneup match before traveling to 'The Pit.'

"I think I would have liked having at least one exhibition," Johnson laughed.

Barone said he expects the game to be an up-tempo affair, and feature a lot of running.

"I think the game is going to prepare us for all the running that will go on in the Southwest Conference this season," Barone said. "New Mexico is one of the best running teams we will play."

Barone also said that he was most concerned with Ike Williams, who led the nation in scoring two seasons ago in junior college, and scored 31 against the Aggies last year.

See Aggies/Page 8

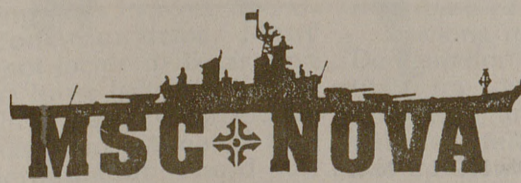
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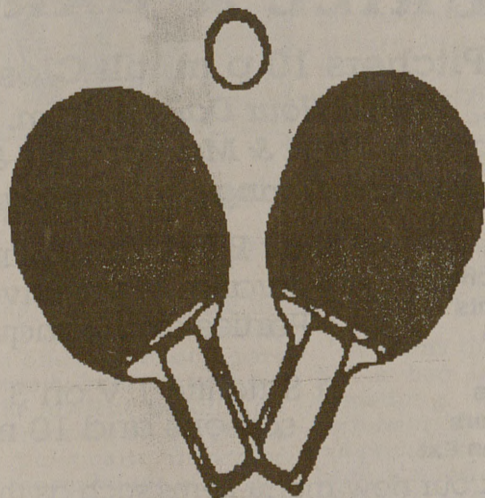
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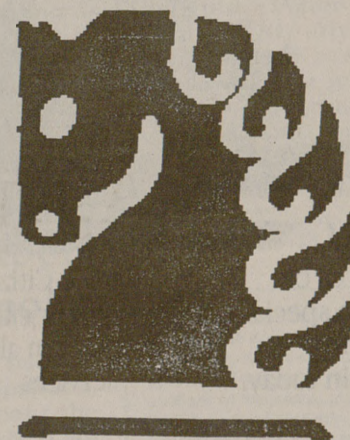
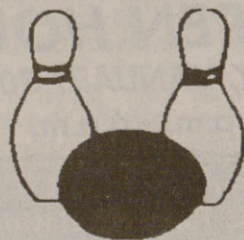
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