

SWC '93: Football Previews

Part 4 of 4

Texas A&M

By MARK SMITH

The Battalion

With nine of 11 starters returning, Texas A&M's offense appears primed for another productive season.

"In the last four years we've done some good things," Bob Toledo, A&M's offensive coordinator, said. "We've broken the Southwest Conference rushing record, we've broken the school scoring record twice. We're going to continue to do the things that we have been doing."

An integral part of the offense's continuing its success will be the line. The only starter not to return will be guard John Ellisor. The line will feature seniors Chris Dausin (center), Tyler Harrison (guard) and tackles Jason Mathews and Dexter Wesley.

"I think the key (for the offensive line) is to find a replacement for John Ellisor," Toledo said. "Right now we've got several guys competing for that position, so hopefully one of them will come to the forefront."

Several of the competitors for Ellisor's vacant spot are junior John Richard, junior Todd Mathison and freshman Chris Ruhman, considered the best lineman recruit in the state.

Experienced offensive could be key to another SWC title

The offensive line only allowed 16 sacks in 13 games last season, which means that returning starting quarterback Corey Pullig will have time to find receivers downfield.

A&M coaches said Pullig was having an excellent spring training until linebacker Jason Atkinson accidentally ran into him, resulting in a tear of the medial collateral ligament in Pullig's left knee.

The knee did not require surgery and Toledo says that Pullig is back in shape and ready to begin fall workouts.

"Right now Corey is 100 percent," Toledo said. "He feels great and he's lost a little weight. He's down from 210 (pounds) to 195 (pounds). That will help out the knee with less weight to carry around."

Pullig completed 69 percent of his passes with only four interceptions in spring training. That shows he has a better knowledge of the offense and will have a chance to audible more in the 1993 season, Toledo said.

The receiving end of Pullig's passes could be A&M's weak spot. A lack of depth at wide receiver means that if injuries do

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Wrecking crew seeks SWC defensive domination again

BY MATTHEW J. RUSH

The Battalion

Over the past several years, the Texas A&M football team's defense has established itself as one of the top in the nation. Here again in 1993, the Aggies will look to continue their dominance, even after the loss of four starters to the National Football League.



Davie

Missing from the defense this year will be Patrick Bates, Marcus Buckley and Derrick Frazier. These players will be replaced by Steve Kenney, Ray Mickens and an open spot in Buckley's spot.

Bob Davie, the defense coordinator of the A&M team, said the losses were crucial, but that the team has a strong group of players to choose from so that they can fill the void without problems.

"We've got a good nucleus of players," Davie said. "Last year we didn't lose quantity, we lost quality."

Davie cited a need for someone to fill Buckley's spot, but sees Steve Kenney or possibly Junior White taking Bates slot at safety. Kenney was pegged as a top defensive player before suffering a season-ending injury against Stanford in the opener last season.

As for Frazier's old spot, Davie is high on Ray Mickens and Billy Mitchell to help fill the cornerback position.

"It is critical to find someone to be a marquee player," Davie said. "We need someone to emerge at linebacker."

Davie said that Aaron Glenn will be a definite name to watch, although Davie also admits that most players are prone to 'sophomortitis'. Glenn, a

Junior College transfer from Navarro Junior College in 1992, is seeing his second year of full eligibility and has already been picked to be an All-SWC and All-American pre-season safety.

"He is a special talent," Davie said. "I'm sure he's going to be all of that."

Jesse Cox is a name that could step up to fill Buckley's spot, but only if he can avoid, along with six of his teammates, NCAA allegations.

Davie said Cox played outstanding football in his last few games, recording 32 tackles in his last three games, including a career high 17 against Notre Dame in the Cotton Bowl. Davie is hopeful that Cox will return to give the defense even more strength.

"I've seen Jesse go through the highs and lows," Davie said. "I hope for him that he can get all of this straightened out because he can be a heck of a player. For us, I hope for him personally so that he can go out there and show how good he really is."

Davie looks for seniors Steve Solari, Eric England, Lance Teichelman and Jason Atkinson, along with junior Aaron Glenn, to be the leaders and to anchor to the 1993 version of the 'Wrecking Crew.'

"They've all paid their dues," Davie said. "We've definitely got good senior leadership."

Coming into the 1993 campaign, the Aggies are looking to accomplish a feat that has never been done in the history of the Southwest Conference. The A&M team ranked first in every defensive category each of the last two years and will look to make it a hat trick this season.

"If we do it three times in a row," Davie said. "We will put it out of reach and it will probably never be done again."

"Last year we did not play up to our potential in some situations," Davie said. "The goal for our defense is to return to Dallas and play again in the Cotton Bowl."

Texas

FROM STAFF AND WIRE REPORTS

The start of the 1993 football season for the University of Texas is almost a carbon copy of last season. The Longhorns have a quarterback controversy.

Of the two leading candidates, highly touted redshirt freshman Shea Morenz split time between football and baseball during the spring, which allowed room for junior Chad Lucas. Lucas performed well during spring drills, giving head coach John Mackovic a tough choice for the starting role. Mackovic also hinted that the two freshmen recruits, James Brown of Beaumont and John Dutton of Fallbrook, Calif., might receive more than just a casual look in preseason drills.

Mackovic hoping youthful Longhorns have good showing in national arena

"Our offense will begin with much of the same looks as we had last year," Mackovic said. "However, we will definitely need to make some adjustments and be flexible to the play of the quarterback position."

"A year ago we had Peter Gardere who was learning a new offense, but he had game experience. This year we have different quarterbacks who do not have game experience, and they will dictate the ebb and flow of our offensive planning throughout the year."


On offense the Longhorns' return five starters. The offensive line seems to be the hardest hit, with only left tackle Troy Reimer and right tackle Blake Brockmeyer returning.

The Longhorns' have some depth at wide receiver with the return of Lovell Pickney and Mike Adams, both of whom were elected to the 1992 USA Today Fabulous Freshmen team. Pickney and Adams averaged 20.8 yards per reception in 1992 and junior Justin McLemore led the team with 4 touch down receptions.

The offensive backfield for the Longhorns has 3-year-letterman Phil Brown returning at full back. Sophomore Curtis Jackson and Anthony Holmes both had good games last season.

On the defensive side of the ball Texas returns five starters. Their secondary was depleted with the losses of All-America

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