

SPORTS

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THE BATTALION

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Bee Gees and snot bubbles - it's just sports

Tell me, please, that everyone else is as upset as I about Texas A&M losing big to ex-Bee Gee Gary Gibbs.



WILLIAM HARRISON
Sports Editor

At least the Oklahoma coach wasn't wearing those polyester jumpsuits, chains, and cheesy seventies' hair indigenous to he and his brothers Maurice and Barry's Saturday Night Fever hey-day.

But better him than being beaten by the Village People.

Other random observations:

- Just as the fire in the press box symbolized the rise of Fred McGriff and his Atlanta Braves in August, can it be more fitting that the Houston Astros were snowed out last night in Denver? They just put Jeff Bagwell on ice for the season with a broken wrist, and I hear they're still thawing Greg Swindell and Doug Drabek.

- The Battalion staff picks took a woeful beating this week - but that's what happens when everybody picks A&M, Michigan and Washington. The staff's record for the week stood at 68-64, an average of .515. I hope no Bryan bookies are hunting us down.

- HOW BOUT 'DEM COWBOYS.

Yes, I am a Houston Oilers fan taking a swipe at the Emmittless Dallas Cowboys. Dallas not only flaunted its lack of a franchise tailback against Buffalo, but also its lack of a field goal kicker. -But let's not talk about

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A&M coaches look past loss, aim for Cotton

By Mark Smith

THE BATTALION

Texas A&M head coach R.C. Slocum said the first practice for the Aggies since their 44-14 loss last Saturday to the Oklahoma Sooners went well despite the team still being disappointed over the defeat.

"I would say that the guys came out somber," Slocum said. "But they came out with a work attitude."

A&M defensive coordinator Bob Davie said yesterday's practice is the beginning of a healing process.

"(This) is just the first step of coming back," Davie said. "Any time your pride's hurt and your ego's hurt, then you have to start somewhere."

"I think what you do as a coach is to try and stay on an even keel. You don't over-react when you win and you certainly don't over-react when you lose. There's no reason to panic and change anything."

A&M offensive coordinator Bob Toledo said his players had a good practice and he remained confident in his offense and quarterback Corey Pullig which stumbled against Oklahoma.

"I think the kids are resilient and have responded to what we told them - the game's over, there's not anything we can do about it," Toledo said. "We still have a season to play and a chance to win a conference championship and that's what our goals have to be right now."

Slocum said the loss, A&M's first in 22 regular season games, hurt a great deal because of the team's streak of success.

"When you lose all the time it becomes a habit," Slocum said. "You don't think much about (losing). The more you win, the more you want to win and the worse the defeats hurt."

A&M came into the game ranked fifth in the nation but fell to 16th in the Associated Press poll. Davie said that was to be expected from not only a national perspective from a team viewpoint.

"Any time you lose a game like we lost, when expectations were so high, there's always a little bit of a let down," Davie said.

Slocum said, however, the loss would not hamper the continued success of the team.



William Harrison/THE BATTALION

A&M tailback **Rodney Thomas** (20) runs into Oklahoma free safety **Larry Bush** (31) and strong safety **John Anderson** (39) with A&M linemen **Tyler Harrison** (55) and **Dexter Wesley** (75) pursuing. Thomas rushed 22 times for 106 yards against Oklahoma.

"We're not going to lay around and throw in the towel," Slocum said. "That (the 22 consecutive regular season wins) was the second longest streak in SWC history. That's something to be proud of. Now we just have to go back and start again."

Davie agreed: "I think I know what our players are made of and I think we'll find out something about our team this week," Davie said. "We'll put Oklahoma behind us and go on from there."

Starting over again might be a little bit more difficult on the defensive side of the ball, according to Davie.

Cornerback Ray Mickens, inside linebacker Larry Jackson and outside linebacker Steve Solari all received slight con-

cussions during Saturday's game. Defensive end Eric England has a knee and a finger injury and defensive end Sam Adams has an elbow injury.

All five players are probable to play against Missouri.

While Davie was concerned about his players' welfare, Slocum was miffed with the NCAA's choice of times to reveal its penalties for the five A&M players suspended because of money received for unperformed work.

"The timing was what was so important," Slocum said. "You wait nine months for something and then you get late in the afternoon, when you're leaving town for one of the most important games of the year."

"The timing could not have been

worse. "When you wait to give the decision, you interfere with the appeals process because we didn't even get the (NCAA's) penalties until we were right at the end of (the penalties) we recommended for the players."

"They almost denied them (the players) the right to appeal."

Davie said the A&M program has had too many positive results to let the negative result of the Oklahoma loss and the NCAA suspensions unravel the team. He asked only one thing of A&M's fans.

"Based on the success we've had, I think we deserve the right to get a second chance," Davie said. "It's a long season. With patience and maturity, things will turn around."

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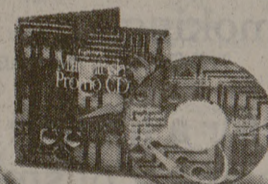
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