SPORTS

SMU gives impressive performance

STEWART DOREEN

Sportswriter



"t's a good thing daylight-saving time came when it did. All Ag-Lgie fans now have an extra hour to sleep off that hangover caused by the frustration of being a member of A&M's 12th Man on Saturday. The Aggies went into this

weekend's game against SMU as a heavy favorite.

SMU, the conference doormat since its return from the "Death Penalty", came out to ruin the Aggies' day and perfect season. SMU wanted a win and according to head coach Mark Rossley, "The eyes of the nation can come to SMU". Instead, SMU tied the Aggies 21-21 and brought a little respect to the Mustang football program. FLANIGAN: A ONE MAN GANG.

SMU quarterback Ramon Flanigan might have established himself as the conference's most dominant player. In the offense that looked more like a playground offense where everybody goes out, spreads the defense and lets Flanigan throw or run; Flanigan picked and chooses his opportunites.

There were the times when Flanigan lined up over center and got yard after yard with everyone in the Alamodome knowing he was going to get the ball.

"When (Ramon) Flanigan is healthy, he's a heck of a player," A&M head coach R.C. Slocum. "He demonstrated that today. He made some key plays.'

Flanigan left only one question on Saturday unanswered: What if Flanigan was 100 percent?

Rossley labeled his signal caller as being at 80 percent due to a strained left hamstring. This was demonstrated by Flanigan's inability to change gears when in the open field. It would have been interesting to see how good Flanigan could have been.

OH WELL, BETTER GET READY FOR TEXAS.

A quality team will learn something from a game like this. For the Aggies, it is that they know they are mortal, and they have to work hard to get a win. the year.

The Texas game might have lost the luster with the Aggies not on the tube, the Longhorns not in the top 25 and both teams coming off suspect weeks (that's putting it kindly). To the players, this won't matter.

SMU's strong effort takes A&M by surprise

Aggie turnovers, Flanigan's scrambling leads to tie

By Stewart Doreen

THE BATTALION

Saturday was supposed to be another day of food, fun and blow out football in San Antonio's Alamodome. However, the incredible happened, and a 21-21 tie between the Texas A&M and Southern Methodist University changed everything.

"I have no idea what happened to us," head coach R.C. Slocum said. "It was the perfect situation. Our fans turned out and filled the stadium. We had every reason to play well. At no time time until the end of the game did I feel like we wouldn't win the game.

The tie brings A&M's record to 7-0-1, 3-0-1 in the Southwest Conference and has dropped them to eleven in the Associated Press' latest poll. After the game, the Aggies expressed their con-cerns about the problems of a tie with

the 1-7-1, 0-4-1 Mustangs.
"What you'd like to do when you lose a game is go out and say You know we had great preparation and went out and played our hearts out and just weren't good enough to win'," Slocum said. "I can't say that about this game."

You've got to come into a game like this prepared to play," junior safety Dennis Allen said. "I don't think we were prepared to play. We were 7-0 and not supposed to tie them."

"I consider a tie a loss," senior running back Rodney Thomas said. "To lose against SMU, it hurts, but this team is going to learn from that.'

Mistakes proved to be a key factor demonstrated early in the first when senior cornerback Billy Mitchell fumbled a punt at the A&M 31-yard line. Folwing an A&M offsides penalty, SMU's junior quarterback Ramon Flanigan beat the A&M blitz and hit senior wide receiver Mick Rossley over the middle

for the first score of the game. "Turnovers play a big part in every game," Slocum said. "A team that turns the ball over and gets penalties has a hard time winning.

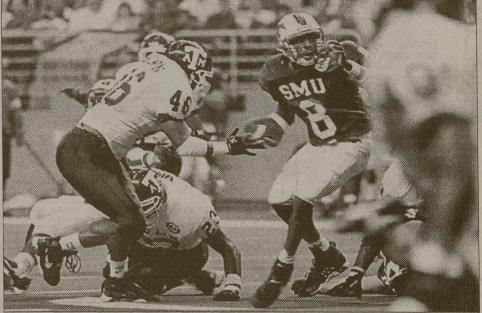
Another A&M mistake translated immediately into seven points. Following a interception by SMU's junior cornerback Cornell Parker of junior quarterback Corey Pullig, Flanigan capped a five play, fifteen yard drive with a threeyard run around right end. All the plays is scoring drive were rushing plays by Flanigan whose influence in the game was felt despite the limits in his ability due to a strained left hamstring.

"Ramon made key plays in key drives," SMU head coach Tom Rossley said. "Our players believe in him and rally around him. There was confidence in

our team when he was out there."

"Ramon is a scrambler," Dennis
Allen said. "You've got to make sure you contain someone like that.'

The Aggies came out in the second half down 14-0 to tie the game on Rodney Thomas' 57- yard touchdown run. Thomas, who rushed for 134 yards and two touchdowns on 18 carries, scored on the fourth quarter's opening play on a 25-yard pass from Pullig. Junior kicker



Reggie Brown (#46) charges toward SMU quarterback Ramon Flanigan.

Keith Waguespack missed the extra point to give SMU a one point lead.

A fumble by Pullig on the A&M 29 gave SMU only a short distance to go for their final touchdown. Two rushes and a pass interference on A&M paved the way for Flanigan's threeyard touchdown run.

A third Rodney Thomas touchdown from 35 yards out and following two-point conversion from Pullig to senior flanker Brian Mitchell made the score 21-21.

We came out more focused in the second half," Pullig said. I think it was too late by then. We are not satisfied with a tie. It's unacceptable for any game.

SMU marched down the field but Ben Crosland missed his third field goal of the day wide right. A&M had only 29 seconds and could only muster a 67-yard attempt by Kyle Bryant that fell short.

It's obvious by our play on the field that we didn't play our best," Allen said. "We're not invincible."

Tie game with SMU ends 26-game SWC winning streak

A&M players treat draw with Mustangs like loss; Slocum says team must prepare for Texas game

By Drew Diener THE BATTALION

The nation's longest conference win-

ning streak came to a stunning halt Saturday in San Anto-nio when Southern Methodist and Texas A&M played

to a 21-21 draw.
Going into the contest as the seventh-ranked team in the nation, the Aggies were expected to

easily add to their Slocum
record 26-game
Southwest Conference winning streak.
The pregame question was not whether the Aggies would defeat the 1-7 Mustangs but by how wide a margin.

Plagued by turnovers and penalties, the Aggies had to battle back from a 14-0 halftime deficit just to tie the game.

"Over the years, you always wonder and figure sooner or later it will happen (the streak will end)," A&M head coach R.C. Slocum said. "You wonder who it will be and under what circumstance. Obviously, you just don't know who it will be. Although the outcome will go down

in the record books as a tie, Slocum-said the result feels like a loss.

"Things like this happen every week in college football," Slocum said. "When it happens to you, it's no fun. I've said every week that this is a possibility.

"We've gone through three and a half years, and it hasn't happened to us, but every time I've gone out there, I thought that there was a possibility that it could and it finally did.

A&M's record streak began with their 1991 conference opener, a 37-14 victory over Texas Tech.

Over the next three years, the streak was threatened quite a few times, but

the Aggies always prevailed.

With an 18-9 victory over the University of Texas last season, the Aggies set the SWC record with their 22nd consecutive conference victory.

This season the Aggies added to that total with victories over Tech, Houston, Baylor, and Rice.

Senior outside linebacker Antonio Armstrong, who was a true freshman when the streak began, said he feels like the team let a lot of people down by tying SMU.

"I feel as though we didn't carry on the tradition that was passed down to us," Armstrong said. "I wanted to go out of here (finish my A&M career) winning every game. A tie is like kissing your sister, it's no good, and it's just not right.'

Junior free safety Dennis Allen, who contributed six tackles in the game, said he was stunned by the outcome

"It feels like a loss," Allen said. "We're 7-0, and we're not suppose to tie teams like SMU. You have to give them credit. They came out, played well, and executed their game plan.

"We can't take things for granted

when we come out and play."
Offensive lineman Tim Vordenbau-

men, a senior from San Antonio Clark, said his homecoming was spoiled by his team's uncharacteristic performance.

Vordenbaumen anticipated the Aggies would play well in front of such a pro-A&M crowd.

"For me it's disappointing that it happened here in my hometown," Vor-denbaumen said. "We didn't play like the A&M team I've been a part of. We didn't want to be the (A&M) team that broke the streak

"The fact is, we didn't go out there and play our best, and the team that had more will and heart tied us today."

Armstrong pointed to the upcoming game against Texas as a test of how his team will respond to the tie.

"It's kind of hard for me to swallow right now," Armstrong said. "A good football team shows character. When you win, you've got to show character, when you lose you've got to show

'We tied a game so we've got to come back and show character by getting prepared to play Texas next week."

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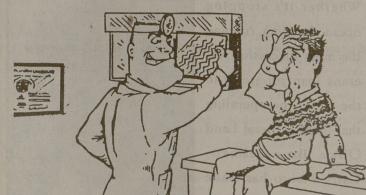
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