

## At a GLANCE

### SPORTS BRIEFS

#### Barone pens four top Texas recruits

Three Texas high school stand-outs and one of the nation's top junior college players have signed national letters-of-intent to play college basketball at Texas A&M.

The signees are forward Jerold Brown of Aldine High School in Houston, guard Steve Houston of The Colony High School, guard Brian Barone of A&M Consolidated and forward/center Larry Thompson of Paris Junior College.

All three of the high school players were honorable mention All-Americans last year and Thompson is rated as one of the top 10 junior college centers in the country.

"We are extremely excited about this class because we have filled needs of the future," A&M Head Coach Tony Barone said. "Along with the class we brought in this year, we feel confident that we have a quality group of young people to move into the Big 12. We know that on a national basis, these Texas kids will make a huge impact."

#### Sailing team to hold regatta at Lake Bryan

The Texas A&M University Sailing Team's fall women's regatta will take place Saturday at Lake Bryan.

From 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., the Lady Aggies skippers will compete against teams from West Florida University, Baylor University, Southern Methodist University, Texas A&M University at Galveston and several other schools.

This will be a qualifying regatta for the national women's championship.

### SPORTS ROUNDUP

#### NBA

New York 103, Indiana 95  
Chicago 106, Cleveland 88  
Dallas 104, Milwaukee 94  
Hawks 125, Warriors 121

#### NHL

Boston 4, Ottawa 3  
Philadelphia 3, Calgary 1  
Florida 2, Edmonton 1  
Chicago 5, Vancouver 2  
Dallas 1, Colorado 1

### UPCOMING EVENTS

#### A&M Volleyball

Saturday the Lady Aggies travel to Houston to take on the Owls of Rice University at 7 p.m. at Autry Court.

#### Aggie Soccer

The Aggie Soccer Team will host Clemson University Sunday at the Aggie Soccer Complex in a first-round NCAA Tournament at 1 p.m.

#### Lady Aggie Basketball

Tonight the Lady Aggies host the Australian Junior National Team in an exhibition game at 7 p.m. at G. Rollie White Coliseum.

#### Aggie Basketball

Monday night, the men's basketball team will host the Melbourne Magic in an exhibition game at G. Rollie White Coliseum at 7 p.m.

#### Men's Tennis

The Men's Tennis team travels to Houston to take on Rice University Saturday.

#### Women's Tennis

The Women's Tennis team travels to Austin on Saturday to take part in the ITA Regional Qualifier.

#### Aggie Swimming

The A&M swimming and diving teams will participate in the Reveille Invitational at the Student Recreational Center Friday through Sunday.

#### NHL Hockey

The Dallas Stars do not play this weekend.

#### NBA Basketball

Friday: Milwaukee at San Antonio 7:30 p.m.

Saturday: Minnesota at Houston 7:30 p.m.

Atlanta at Houston 7:30 p.m.

Sunday: San Antonio at Cleveland 7:30 p.m.

#### NFL Football

Sunday: Bengals at Oilers 12:00 p.m.

49ers at Cowboys 3:00 p.m.

## Prime-Time Message: LeeMac is back

McElroy ran for 168 yards and one touchdown on 28 carries.

By Nick Georgandis  
THE BATTALION

HOUSTON—The Rice Owls had the razzle and the dazzle Thursday night against Texas A&M, but the Aggies had their own fireworks display — Lectric Leeland McElroy.

Re-energized for the first time since the Tulsa game, McElroy dashed through the Rice defense for 168 yards on 28 carries to lead the Aggies to a 17-10 at Rice Stadium.

After battling injuries and stacked defenses for the last six weeks, McElroy finally returned to the form that made him a Heisman Trophy hopeful during the early part of the 1995 season.

"I most definitely feel better after a game like this," McElroy said. "I have to give a lot of credit to my offensive line and the rest of the team because they did great jobs."

But it was McElroy who kept the Aggies in the game, running through the middle and around both ends almost at will against Rice. And the Aggies needed it, especially in the first half when senior quarterback Corey Pullig completed just 3-of-10 passes for 17 yards.

"He looked more like Leeland should," A&M Head Football Coach R.C. Slocum said. "He showed that extra burst that looked like the Leeland of old."

That extra burst was the difference on the play that got A&M on the board.

With Rice leading 7-0 early in the second quarter, Owls quarterback Chad Nelson mishandled the ball on an option play and it was recovered by A&M junior linebacker Keith Mitchell.

Two plays later, McElroy exploded up

the middle and did not stop until 45 yards later when he touched the Owls' goal line. The extra point tied the game at 7-7.

The Owls readjusted their defense at halftime to contain McElroy, which finally opened up the passing attack for Pullig and his receivers.

With the defense keying on the run, Pullig went 7-of-8 in the second half for 91 yards and the game-winning touchdown.

With 5:01 left in the third quarter and the Aggies trailing in the game 10-7, the offense was finally able to put it all together — successfully mixing the pass and the run to move the ball quickly and effectively down the field.

On the drive, McElroy carried the ball four times for 37 yards and Pullig completed three passes for 33 yards. The last completion by Pullig was a 26-yarder to a leaping Albert Connell in the end zone.

Connell, who has made a habit of game-winning touchdowns this season, said he was disappointed in the offense's performance but very happy with the end result.

"We didn't play to the best of our abilities," Connell said. "We still have some things we need to go back and work out, but we got the win."

Much like a year ago, the Owls contested the Aggies for that win at every turn, using almost every trick in the book to accomplish their goal.

Twice in the first half, the Owls ran successful fake punts — the first one a shocking 37-yard touchdown pass from punter Tucker Phillips to wide receiver Jeff Venghaus.

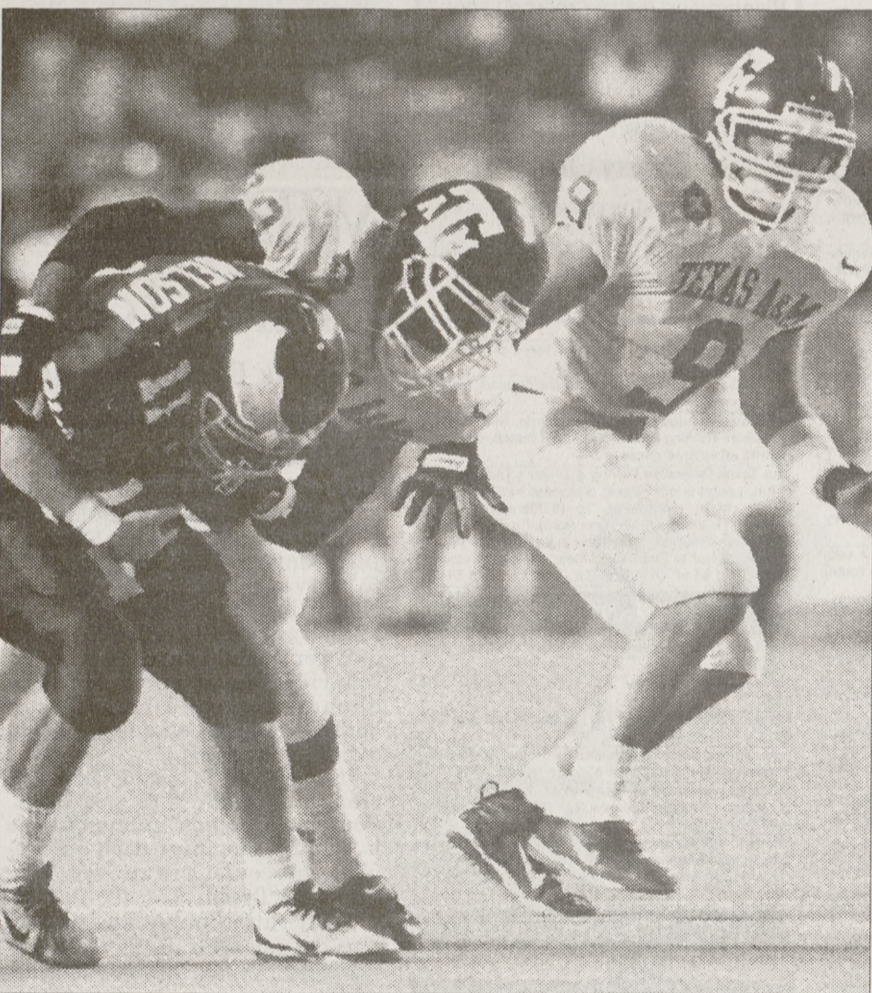
With 4:21 left in the first half, Phillips passed the ball again, this time for 27 yards and a first down. That time, the Aggie defense held and the Owls missed a 50-yard field goal that ended the half.

"I told our player tricks like that can only take you so far," Slocum said. "I knew sooner or later we would get something going."



Evan Zimmerman, THE BATTALION

Texas A&M junior tailback Leeland McElroy scampers past a Rice defender during Thursday night's game at Rice Stadium in Houston. McElroy had 168 yards and one touchdown.



Evan Zimmerman, THE BATTALION

A&M's defensive end Pat Williams nails Rice quarterback Chad Nelson while Aggie linebacker Dat Nguyen looks on at Rice Stadium Thursday night.

## 'Wrecking Crew' holds again

The Aggie defense allowed the no points and only 64 yards through the air against Rice.

By David Winder  
THE BATTALION

HOUSTON —The Rice Owls might have tricked the Texas A&M special teams twice but the "Wrecking Crew" was never fooled in the Aggies' 17-10 victory Thursday night at Rice Stadium.

"We came in prepared for the triple-threat offense," linebacker Dat Nguyen said. "But the tricks and all the gadgets (on punt returns) did catch us off guard."

On defense though, Nguyen and his teammates were wide awake for the most part. Two long runs by Rice running back Yoncy Edwards constituted most of the Owls' offense.

"I felt really good about our defense," Texas A&M Head Coach R.C. Slocum

said. "I thought the defense really played solid. They (Rice) were having trouble moving the ball."

Aggie defensive end Pat Williams was a big reason for the defense's success as he recorded nine tackles and two sacks.

Williams' second sack ended Rice quarterback Chad Nelson's night by separating his left shoulder.



"I thought the defense really played solid."

— R.C. Slocum  
A&M Football Coach

Nguyen finished the night with 11 tackles.

"Pat has practiced well all week," Slocum said. "There were a lot of runs inside where a guy like Pat could have a really good ball game."

The Owls' triple-threat offense did keep the Aggies guessing at times with misdirections and with an option pass.

"It was hard, but we had

a week-and-a-half to prepare for it," Nguyen said. "They showed us everything. They were really crisp in their execution."

Senior free safety Dennis Allen said the Owls' offense took away from what the Aggies' defense wanted to do for most of the game.

"They don't make many mistakes running the option," Allen said. "So we had to play not quite our style."

"We like to play with more reckless abandon."

After all, the gadget play the Owls had used earlier in the game, Allen was sure the Owls were going to use one more to win it.

They did not, but the Aggies defense would have been ready for it.

"I just knew they were going to try something," Allen said. "I thought they were going to throw the ball down the field with something like the option fake."

Slocum said with the defense playing so well, it did pose a problem with Rice's gadget plays.

"You're always hoping to get people into punting situations," Slocum said. "But then you end up sweating out the punting situations."

## Cities need a longer leash on moving franchises

Franchises are becoming more and more like disobedient pets.

When we don't have one, we want one. We like to complain about them, but ultimately, we like having them around. And sometimes, they run away.

Los Angeles, Cleveland and Houston are the three big losers in this trend. Houston has never had the best fans, but the few sports fans in town have little to cheer about.

The Astros and the Oilers are both probably leaving soon. But the Rockets will stay a while longer — of course they understand Houston fans.

Two years ago, after Houston fans didn't show up in force for a Mother's Day playoff game, a few players gave the fans a tongue lashing. Some of that Texas pride kicked in, and fans started to show up. And in true Houston fansmanship, team spirit arrived with a world championship, not before.

Since the Oilers and the Astros are not at that level in their respective sports, they might as well leave town.

Cleveland has a different problem. After 30 years without a championship, fans were still showing up with their "Dawg

MICHAEL  
LANDAUER

AGGIE LIFE  
EDITOR



Pound" pride. But team owner Art Modell said he had no choice but to move the team to Baltimore.

But it was his choice, and powerful economic reasons were the basis for his decision. Sports has become such big business that it makes owners feel like they have no choice, when in fact, they are the ones that must make the right decisions if sports teams are to ever stabilize.

Owners are driven by profit and nothing else. There is nothing wrong with that, but it isn't much fun for the fans. Of course, the players who are supposed to be more concerned with entertaining fans don't care about much other than money, either.

Dan Patrick, a radio station owner and sports commentator in Houston, challenged several Houston Astros to buy \$250,000 worth of season tickets each in an attempt to keep the team in Houston. Jeff Bagwell said he would not contribute because he's just an employee.

On the surface he is completely justified in his attitude. After all, he's from Boston, what does he care if the team moves? But such naivete from the players is only serving to dig a grave for the unstable sports world.

Players are not just employees. If they were, they couldn't justify their salaries. We've heard their argument before — "I deserve \$10 million a year because I generate \$13 million in ticket sales."

It's logical. It makes sense. But it's time for these business partners to start acting in the best interest of the company and not just themselves.

The way the baseball strike ended just leads to the disarray and uncertainty of the sports world. Nothing was decided, and we'll all just wait until the next contract expires until we'll actually try to change things.

Each city that has a sports team practices the same thing. When contract time rolls around, the Jacksonvilles and the Baltimores of the world start to woo other city's teams with new stadiums and greater fan interest.

At this rate, teams will become traveling circuses. Everyone is real excited when the circus first comes to town, but then they learn that clowns aren't happy, but in fact have serious problems like drug or spousal abuse. And eventually the team ... uh ... circus leaves. This is where things differ. Unlike the Baltimore Colts, who left town in the middle of the night in rental trucks, the circus leaves in a big parade complete with guys whose

sole job is to scoop up all the elephant crap left behind.

Now that is something teams ought to invest in. As it is, when a team leaves town, no one cleans up all the crap, which includes ill feelings and bitterness. Basically, the Astrodome will be a big piece of symbolic crap — we'll just call it a convention center, though.

The taxpayers of Maryland are footing the bill for the Brown's new stadium/future convention center, but why should they stop with just the stadium — why not buy the whole team. Hell, we'll all die before our government pays off its debt, let our kids pay for it.

It makes sense for cities and counties to own teams. Teams are supposed to bring fame to cities and fun to their fans. When you figure that teams claim to be constantly losing money, the marriage between government and sports seems like a good one. Neither side would have to change much, the teams would just have to stay put. Houston probably wouldn't threaten to move to another state for more money.

Unless cities enter into team ownership, no franchise is safe. They are the stray pets of the world looking for somewhere to lift their leg and a sap who will feed them regularly.

It's time to invest in a leash.