

# Final shootout fitting ending

**NICK GEORGANDIS**  
SPORTS EDITOR



If you've got this special section in one hand and a ticket to Saturday's Texas A&M-University of Texas showdown in the other, pat yourself on the back. You are a part of history. The end of Southwest Conference football is upon us, and fittingly enough, the Longhorns and Aggies will be there to duke it out for the final championship. Sure, Rice and the University of Houston will really turn the lights out on the final game, but what would you rather see, a championship game between two old rivals or a lame clash for the rusty old Bayou Bucket? Since the late 1980s, talk of teams bailing out of the conference for greener pastures has been the norm. Rumors had Texas and A&M going to the SEC, the Pac-10 and just about every other conference in the nation. When the Big 12 merger was finally agreed upon in February 1994 and the subsequent deals to move Southern Methodist University, Texas Christian University and Rice to the WAC and the University of Houston to the newly-formed Conference USA, the realization finally hit a lot of people. The SWC was on its death bed. A staple in Texas since 1915 as much as a part of the state as red-hot summers and construction work on Highway 6 the conference did the state proud by showcasing its finest young men week after week, year after year.

The first time I saw a SWC team play was when my family attended the 1977 Bluebonnet Bowl between Texas A&M and the University of Southern California at the Astrodome. The No. 17 Aggies were powered at the time by running backs Curtis Dickey and George Woodard. Unfortunately the No. 20 Trojans had a certain Heisman Trophy winner named Charles White, who sealed A&M's fate. But the game took on very special meaning when my father stood up in a crowd and speared an A&M football. A&M became the team of my heart — watching the SWC.

**"Saturday's title tilt at Kyle Field is the kind of game that captures the attention of the nation."**

my favorite weekend activity. As I grew up in the 1980s, there was a fresh new race each year for the right to go to the Cotton Bowl. Sure, the Aggies were always my favorites through the years, but I was always cheering for the teams from Texas. My family would go to games at least once a season, either at the Astrodome, Rice Stadium or Kyle Field. With the grim reaper bearing down the conference this weekend, I have taken some time to remember what the conference meant to me. It meant a perfect ending to every Thanksgiving Day, with

the Aggies and Longhorns throwing out records and rankings to beat the crap out of each other for the ultimate bragging rights as the best football team in Texas.

That changed when ESPN got the rights to the games, and since we didn't have cable, I was reduced to listening to Dave South call the games.

The games were nearly as enjoyable simply because of the competition, but the feeling that the conference was selling out was starting to grow.

As I entered high school and began considering where I might continue my academic pursuits when I graduated, I became even more obsessed with the SWC.

I got to see some of the greatest stars of the last 15 years — Andre Ware, Darren Lewis, Bucky Richardson and Trevor Cobb — the list goes on. And once, even though I've tried to bury it deep in my subconscious, I once saw the University of Houston beat the Aggies, 36-31.

Although the conference's national standing has declined greatly in recent years, Saturday's title tilt at Kyle Field is the kind of game that captures the attention of the nation.

If you're a college football purist, you know what I'm talking about when I envision the first mighty rumble when the seniors are introduced Saturday, or the first bloodthirsty cry from the Twelfth Man when A&M's Keith Mitchell introduces UT quarterback James Brown to a new kind of pain with a bonecrushing sack.

If you're not looking forward to the game or you aren't excited about being in that kind of atmosphere, then you never understood what SWC football was about anyway.

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# Loose Diamonds

## Marquise Cut

Carat	Color	Clarity	Price
.31	I	SI1	\$475 <sup>00</sup>
.31	H	VS2	675 <sup>00</sup>
.47	I	SI1	1,700 <sup>00</sup>
.49	J	SI2	1,150 <sup>00</sup>
.49	G	SI1	1,519 <sup>00</sup>
.50	F	SI2	1,475 <sup>00</sup>
.54	F	SI2/SI1	1,674 <sup>00</sup>
.57	K	SI1	1,150 <sup>00</sup>
.68	J	VS2	1,900 <sup>00</sup>
.69	K	VVS2	1,750 <sup>00</sup>
.71	H	VS2	3,100 <sup>00</sup>
.71	G	VS2	2,900 <sup>00</sup>
.76	F	SI3	2,250 <sup>00</sup>
.83	H	SI1	3,150 <sup>00</sup>
.84	K/L	SI1	2,150 <sup>00</sup>
.94	K	SI1	2,650 <sup>00</sup>
1.01	I	SI1	4,500 <sup>00</sup>
1.21	K	SI3	3,750 <sup>00</sup>
1.86	J/K	SI3	4,350 <sup>00</sup>

## Round Diamond

Carat	Color	Clarity	Price
.72	I	SI1	2,160 <sup>00</sup>
.72	I	VVS2	2,875 <sup>00</sup>
.91	J	SI2	2,960 <sup>00</sup>
.95	I	I1	2,275 <sup>00</sup>
1.00	G	I1	2,600 <sup>00</sup>
1.03	H	SI3	3,450 <sup>00</sup>
1.11	F	SI1	3,950 <sup>00</sup>
1.16	J	SI1	3,950 <sup>00</sup>
1.64	I/J	SI1	6,600 <sup>00</sup>
1.89	K	SI3	4,350 <sup>00</sup>

## Pear Shape

Carat	Color	Clarity	Price
.47	F	SI1	\$1,300 <sup>00</sup>
.49	H	SI1	1,253 <sup>00</sup>
.50	F	SI2	1,100 <sup>00</sup>
.79	K	SI1	1,675 <sup>00</sup>
.92	K	VS2	2,300 <sup>00</sup>
1.02	J	SI1	3,250 <sup>00</sup>

## Princess

Carat	Color	Clarity	Price
.49	K	SI1	\$875 <sup>00</sup>
.53	K	VS1	975 <sup>00</sup>
.72	H	I1	1,475 <sup>00</sup>
.80	J	I1	1,375 <sup>00</sup>
.80	H	I1	1,475 <sup>00</sup>
1.00	H	SI3	2,325 <sup>00</sup>
1.42	H	SI3	3,900 <sup>00</sup>

## Round Diamond

Carat	Color	Clarity	Price
.41	H	SI2	\$495 <sup>00</sup>
.44	J	SI1	\$750 <sup>00</sup>
.64	H	VVS2	1,990 <sup>00</sup>
.70	I	I2	\$850 <sup>00</sup>
.70	I	SI1	2,100 <sup>00</sup>
.71	H	SI1	2,200 <sup>00</sup>

## Oval

Carat	Color	Clarity	Price
.40	J	VS1	\$675 <sup>00</sup>
.50	I	SI2	1,383 <sup>00</sup>
.81	I	VS2	3,225 <sup>00</sup>
.93	I	SI2	2,860 <sup>00</sup>
1.00	G	I1	2,700 <sup>00</sup>
1.53	I/J	SI1	5,800 <sup>00</sup>

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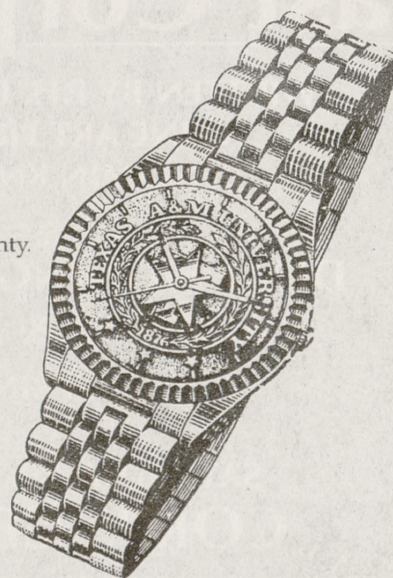
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