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VOLUME 94



Ags, this season was my fault

LISA NANCE

SPORTSWRITER



I can't let it go on any longer. All season long students, alumni and Aggie fans have looked for someone to blame the demise of the Aggie football team on.

Head Coach R.C. Slocum has gotten the blame. Offensive Coordinator Steve Ensminger has gotten the blame and Corey Pullig has received more than his share of the blame as well. Well it's time to start putting the blame where it belongs — and that's on me, Ags.

I'd like to take this time to publicly apologize to you the students, alumni, and fans of Texas A&M and especially to Coach Slocum, Coach Ensminger and Corey Pullig for letting them take the blame for so long.

Wednesday night as I was

awarded the "Worst Jinx to the Football Team" award at The Battalion banquet, I realized that I couldn't keep quiet any longer and decided that it was time for me to take the responsibility.

It's true, all of my life I have had the worst luck and have spread that luck to others around me.

This time it started back in October when I was assigned to cover the Texas Tech game, a sure win, for The Battalion. So I headed to Lubbock with a careful of friends, looking for a big win after the loss at Colorado just two weeks earlier. However, the game didn't go as expected and as I watched in horror from the press box the game ended with the Red Raiders victorious. The Aggies were sent on their way home trying to swallow their second loss in a row.

When I got back to College Station my friends kidded about the loss saying that it happened because I covered the game. I laughed.

Then we won our next few games, and I was sure that the

Aggies were back on their way to winning the SWC, so I didn't think anything of it when the sports editor asked me if I wanted to cover the Texas game.

I said yes thinking only about what great seats I'd have from the press box.

During the game, he made several comments about how maybe it wasn't such a good idea to have me cover the game given my record at Tech. I laughed again. However as the game came to an end, I wasn't laughing anymore.

In my short career as a sportswriter I have only covered two football games, and the Aggies have lost those games. Coincidence maybe, but the fact remains that I am 0-2 covering the Aggie football team.

So when Aggie fans are looking for someone to blame, it's not Slocum, Ensminger or even Pullig — it's Nance.

And don't worry, I'll be at the Alamo Dome as a spectator only. The Athletic Department has already bought me a ticket as far away from the press box as you can get.

FOOTBALL: Up-and-down season unexpected

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chances at winning the game.

"We had some dropped passes and some bad passes," Ensminger said. "We had some turnovers which cost us that big game."

With an open date the next weekend, the Aggies had time to shake off their loss to Colorado and prepare themselves for the start of SWC play against Texas Tech. Apparently it was not enough time because the Aggies lost to the Red Raiders 14-7.

Although no complaints were officially made, Bennett said the referees' decisions definitely hurt the Aggies' chances at victory.

"At Texas Tech, we didn't get the calls that we actually deserved, and it was pretty obvious that those cost us the game," Bennett said.

Ensminger said that after the

Tech game, the team tried to do get reorganized.

"We tried to regroup and went through the rest of the season trying to regroup and trying to develop a little more of a balanced attack, running the football and throwing the football," Ensminger said. "We were a little inconsistent during the next four or five games. One game we would run the ball well, the next game we'd throw the ball really well. We never really put it together."

The Aggies played the Southern Methodist University Mustangs next and won their game in the last seconds when Albert Connell grabbed a Pullig pass to lift the Aggies over the Mustangs, keeping the home streak alive.

The Aggies won the next five games, beginning at Baylor and ending at Texas Christian.

Ensminger said that the TCU game was the best game of the year for the offense. Corey Pullig connected on 24-of-36 passes for 253 yards making him the A&M career passing leader.

Even though they were coming in with a six-game winning streak, the Aggies knew the Texas game would be a challenge.

With six turnovers, the Aggies handed the game to Texas giving the Longhorns a 16-6 win and ending the Aggies home winning streak at 31 games.

Bennett said that the loss to the Longhorns was the hardest to swallow.

"Defensively the first half, I thought we played about as good as we could play," Bennett said. "I was disappointed the second half. We became a little tired and they started making some plays on our running the ball."

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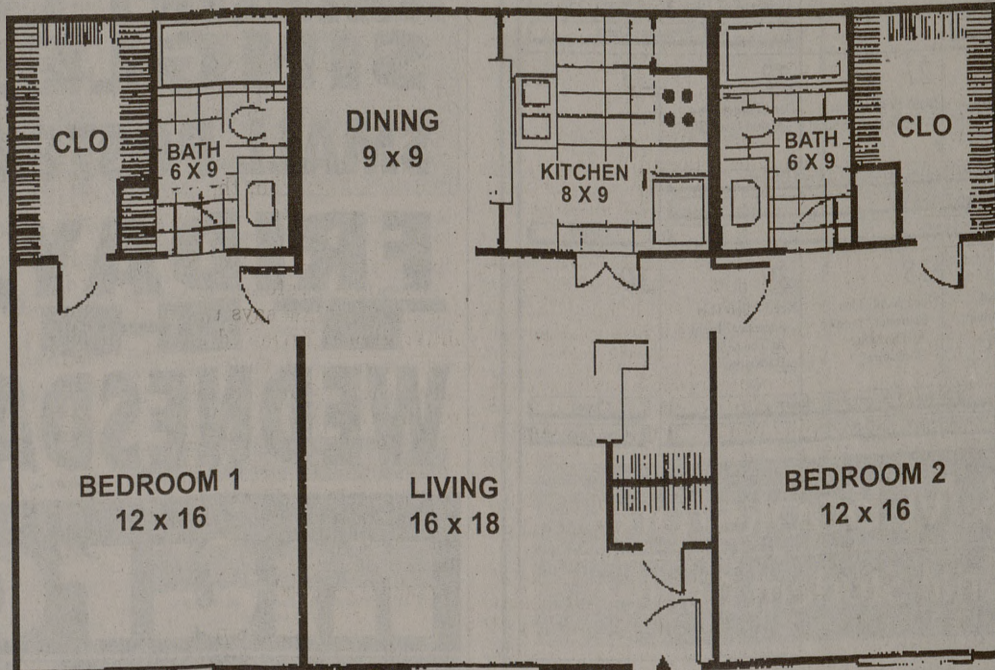
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