

# Aggies looking for redemption in Lafayette



Sophomore wide receiver **Donte Hawkins** cuts through the field against BYU in the Pigskin Classic.

By TOM DAY  
THE BATTALION

Bring it on.

After waiting patiently for three long weeks since its embarrassment at Brigham Young University, the Texas A&M Football Team is ready to redeem itself Saturday in Lafayette, La., against an explosive University of Southwestern Louisiana squad.

Like BYU, the Ragin' Cajuns are a pass-oriented team, but the well-rested Aggies have no fears. They are just anxious to show the rest of the college football world that the Wrecking Crew is far from dead.

A&M Head Coach R.C. Slocum said the team could benefit from playing and shutting down USL's touted air attack.

"I think it's positive that we're [playing] another team that their plan of attack is to pass," Slocum said. "They may try to run a little bit more than BYU, but if I had to guess, I would say they are going to take some shots at our secondary and try to test us."

"I think we've made some progress [in practice], but we'll know how much after the game."

Since BYU torched the Aggies for 536 passing yards and six touchdowns in their Pigskin Classic match up Aug. 24, the A&M defense has had a lot of time to pick up the pieces — maybe too much time.

After three weeks of practicing, the

team is ready to get into a groove of playing every week and develop a rhythm.

A&M outside linebacker Keith Mitchell said he is ready to silence the critics who have berated the team recently.

"People have been asking what's wrong with the team," Mitchell said. "That wasn't the real Wrecking Crew [against BYU] and that's not how we play. It's been a rough three weeks, and I'm ready to play."

A&M senior cornerback Andre Williams said the Aggie secondary is prepared to bounce back from its performance in Provo.

"We're just going to look at [the game] as a motivational thing," Williams said. "We've been working real hard and we're hungry. The tradition of the Wrecking Crew is going to live on, and that's what we're anxious to show."

The A&M defense will have its work cut out for it against the potent USL offense. The Cajuns ranked No. 20 nationally last year in total offense and the team managed to rack up 213 passing yards in its 55-21 loss to the University of Florida two weeks ago.

USL quarterback Jake Delhomme leads the Cajun attack. The senior has 6,315 career passing yards and 44 touchdowns.

"He is a good competitor," A&M Defensive Coordinator Phil Bennett said. "His freshman year, they weren't doing much on offense. So they started him and

they went on to win the Big West."

Delhomme's favorite targets are wide outs Donald Richard and Brandon Stokely. Richard caught 38 passes for 777 yards and five touchdowns last season, while Stokely's 75 receptions for 1,121 yards and nine touchdowns in 1995 made him the most prolific freshman receiver in NCAA history.

A&M also cannot forget USL tailback Kenyon Cotton. The senior ran for 82 yards against the Gators.

"Their scheme is similar to a lot of teams we'll play in that they run multiple formations with a lot of one-back sets," Slocum said. "They know what they're doing. They'll be calling the right plays and doing the right things for their personnel."

With the focus being placed on the A&M defense recently, Aggie quarterback Brannndon Stewart and the offensive unit have been lost in the shuffle. Stewart passed for 232 yards and two touchdowns in Provo as the Aggies racked up 489 total yards against the Cougars.

"It felt good that I had a pretty strong performance [against BYU]," Stewart said. "But I had a fumble at the end of the game and I had a couple of bad passes that could have been key first downs that may have turned into points. You look at the positives and learn from the negatives and go on."

"I was anxious to play. I had waited for so long, and it felt good to get out

there and get the game under my belt. I felt pretty comfortable after a couple of plays."

Despite putting 37 points on the board against the Cougars, Stewart said the Aggie offense is capable of a lot more.

"We had a couple of opportunities in the BYU game where we stopped ourselves," Stewart said. "If we could have taken advantage of those things and executed well enough, we could have put at least 14 more points on the board. Hopefully we've worked through those things in practice and we'll be able to perform better against USL."

A&M wide receiver Aaron Oliver is probable to play after recovering from a hamstring injury suffered at BYU. However, center Koby Hackradt is still questionable with a preseason knee injury.

Saturday's 7 p.m. game marks a homecoming of sorts for a pair of Aggies. Senior defensive end Brandon Mitchell was raised in Abbeville, La., just a few miles from Lafayette.

Slocum was born in Oakdale, La., and played football at McNeese State from 1964-67, facing USL all four years he was there.

"I've got a lot of friends coming out of the bayous for the game," Slocum said. "Before the game we reminisce about our friendship, but just before they leave they invariably say, 'By da way, I'm pulling for the Cajuns.' They're pretty honest about their true loyalties."

## UNDER FIRE

### Despite losing starting role, Williams ready to help Aggie secondary get back on track

By MATT MITCHELL  
THE BATTALION

A&M senior cornerback Andre Williams knows a little something about pressure playing for the Texas A&M Football Team. Pressure for Williams is having the expecta-

tions of his coaches, family and teammates following him day and night.

That pressure comes from knowing that a position and the responsibilities it entails is a key to the team's success. Standing 10 feet off the line of scrimmage, a few yards away from a man who

knows exactly where he is going, which is straight to the end zone unless Williams can stop him — that is pressure.

All this happens while a legion of football-crazed fans roars in the stands while playing in front of a nationwide television audience.

Following the worst performance of an Aggie defense in school history against BYU three weeks ago, times have been tough for the Wrecking Crew, the secondary in particular.

The inexperienced A&M defensive backfield has taken the heat lately, and Williams has been right in the middle of it. It has been a bumpy road for the senior since last season.

The 5-foot-9-inch, 178-pound Sherman native battled a nagging knee injury for much of the 1995 season, which for a cornerback can make a huge difference in coverage ability, something Williams considers one of his greatest strengths.

Off-season knee surgery helped him regain the athleticism that he lost to the injury.

"I'm better than last year as far as mobility," Williams said. "I was limited a lot last year with all the tape on my knee, but the surgery really helped and I'm back to 100 percent. I don't have any worries going into a game about my knee."

Despite the injury in 1995, Williams was responsible for perhaps the most exciting play in the Aggies' Alamo Bowl victory over Michigan. With time running down in the fourth quarter and the Wolverines driving for a potential game-winning score, Williams

### A former walk-on, Coady has assumed a major role on the reeling Aggie defense

By JAMIE BURCH  
THE BATTALION

Richard Coady III was ending an eight-year NFL playing career with the Chicago Bears just a year before his son Rich Coady IV was born. So it comes as no surprise that Coady, born with football in his blood, has followed in his father's footsteps as a defensive back on the Texas A&M Football Team.

Coady's ascent to the starting strong safety role for the Aggies can be described as a Cinderella story. After graduating from J.J. Pearce High School in Dallas, Coady came to Aggieland without a football scholarship and little chance to play the game he loved to play. But the determined safety refused to end his football career at the high school level.

Coady made the A&M team his freshman year as a walk-on in 1994, but spent the season learning the Aggie defense as a redshirt. While Coady waited in the wings, he was able to observe a talented secondary which boasted such players as current NFL cornerback Ray Mickens.

"Ray was confident in his abilities and skills as a player," Coady said. "I've tried to copy his style by just being confident in my abilities any time I step out onto the field."

Coady also had the chance to observe former standout free safety Dennis Allen.

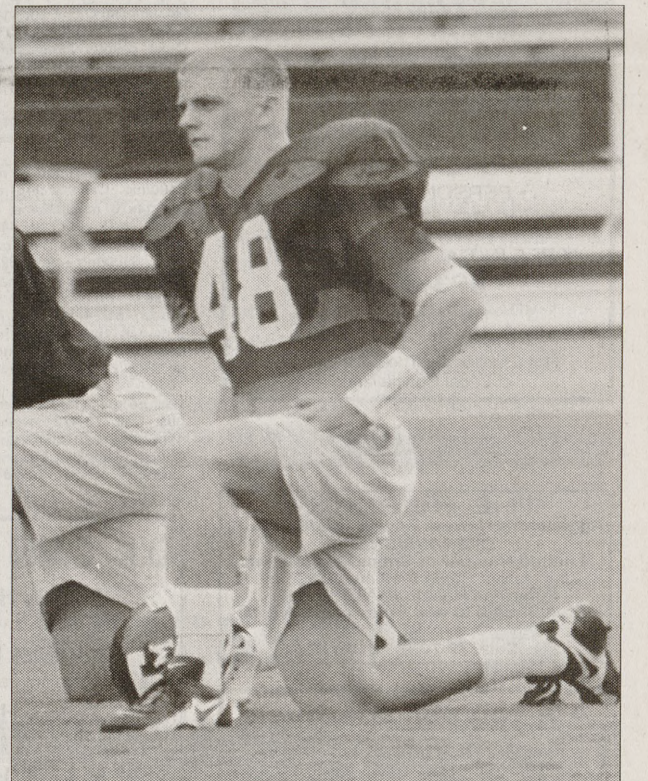
"I took a lot from Allen," Coady said. "I saw the way he studied the films and his smart play on the field. I'm just trying to do the same."

After a year of observing the Aggies' defensive scheme, Coady made an immediate impact during his first year of eligibility last season. He posted 23 tackles in 11 games, including 12 solo stops. He posted a season-high 10 tackles against the University of Colorado.

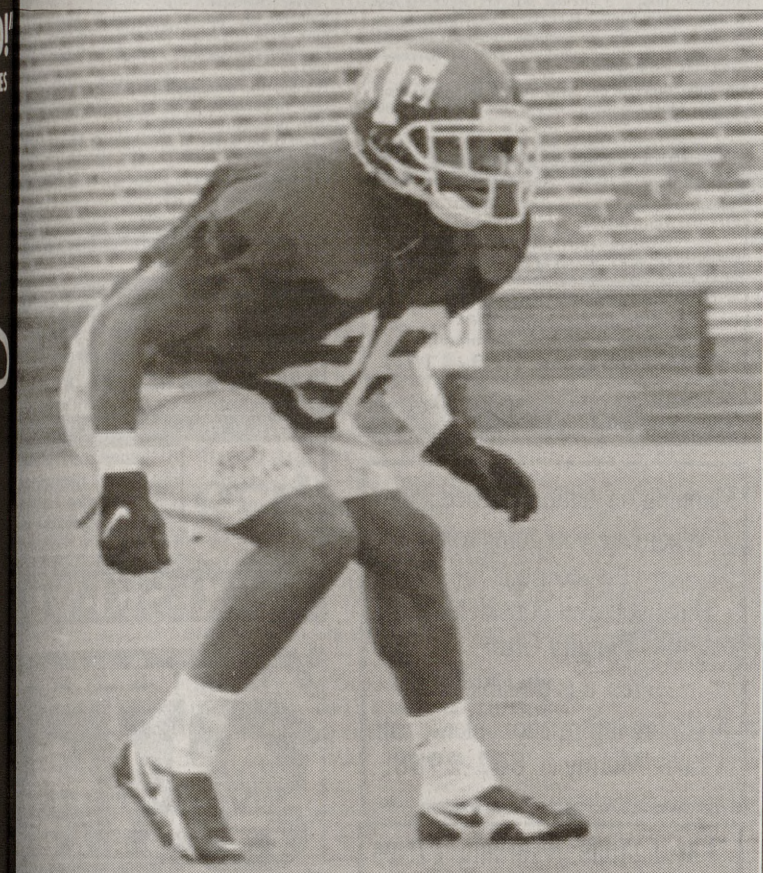
After an impressive freshman season, A&M Head Coach R.C. Slocum awarded Coady a scholarship. But the accolades didn't stop there. During the offseason and spring drills, Coady earned a starting role at safety.

"It's something you think about coming in," Coady said. "It's a goal you set to someday be able to play, and eventually start."

Coady continued to showcase his abilities in the season opener against Brigham Young University. After a long string of completions by Cougar quarterback Steve Sarkisian, Coady intercepted a pass and returned



Sophomore strong safety **Rich Coady** is looking to justify his elevation into the starting lineup.



Senior cornerback **Andre Williams** is looking to regain the form he showed in last December's Alamo Bowl victory over Michigan.

See **WILLIAMS**, Page 10

See **COADY**, Page 10

## THE BATTALION'S 1996 STAFF PICKS

### THE MATCH-UPS

	Tom Day	Kristina Buffin	Jamie Burch	Sara Duesing	Jeremy Furtick	Colby Gaines	Ross Hecox	Matt Mitchell	Dennis Ramirez	Nicole Smith	CONSENSUS
25 Texas A&M at USL	A&M	A&M	A&M	A&M	A&M	A&M	A&M	A&M	A&M	A&M	A&M: Aggies come out of hibernation.
11 Michigan at #5 Colorado	Colorado	Colorado	Colorado	Michigan	Colorado	Colorado	Colorado	Colorado	Colorado	Colorado	CU: Buffaloes won't need a Hail Mary this time.
Cincinnati at #17 Kansas State	Kansas State	Kansas State	Kansas State	Kansas State	Kansas State	Kansas State	Kansas State	Kansas State	Kansas State	Kansas State	Kansas State: KSU wins Cat fight.
Iowa State at #21 Iowa	Iowa	Iowa	Iowa	Iowa	Iowa	Iowa	Iowa	Iowa	Iowa	Iowa	Iowa: Hawkeyes ride out Cyclones.
24 Kansas at TCU	Kansas	Kansas	Kansas	Kansas	Kansas	TCU	Kansas	Kansas	Kansas	Kansas	Kansas: Horned Frogs get WAC-ed.
Baylor at Louisville	Baylor	Baylor	Baylor	Louisville	Baylor	Baylor	Louisville	Baylor	Baylor	Baylor	Baylor: Bears clip Cardinals' wings?
Memphis at Missouri	Memphis	Missouri	Missouri	Missouri	Missouri	Memphis	Memphis	Memphis	Missouri	Missouri	Missouri: Tigers go walking on Memphis.
Tulsa at Oklahoma State	OSU	OSU	OSU	OSU	Tulsa	OSU	OSU	OSU	OSU	OSU	OSU: Tulsa downgraded to tropical depression.
14 BYU at Washington	BYU	BYU	BYU	Washington	BYU	BYU	BYU	BYU	BYU	BYU	BYU: Cougars gunning for undefeated season.
Baltimore at Oilers	Oilers	Oilers	Baltimore	Oilers	Baltimore	Oilers	Baltimore	Oilers	Oilers	Baltimore	Oilers: Ravens, Browns, what's the difference?
Indianapolis at Cowboys	Cowboys	Indianapolis	Cowboys	Cowboys	Cowboys	Cowboys	Cowboys	Cowboys	Cowboys	Cowboys	Cowboys: Pokes break Colts.
Buffalo at Pittsburgh	Buffalo	Buffalo	Buffalo	Pittsburgh	Buffalo	Buffalo	Pittsburgh	Buffalo	Pittsburgh	Pittsburgh	Buffalo: Bills claim AFC supremacy.
Last Week	12-0	9-3	7-5	11-1	9-3	9-3	9-3	8-4	9-3	8-4	91-29 Sports Desk knows its football!
Cumulative	12-0	9-3	7-5	11-1	9-3	9-3	9-3	8-4	9-3	8-4	Day goes undefeated, quest for repeat off to good start