

Fired-up Aggies send message to Blake, Oklahoma, 33-16

By TOM DAY
THE BATTALION

As Aggie wideout Albert Connell dove for a 31-yard touchdown grab with 2:24 remaining in Saturday's game, the 66,161 fans at Kyle Field may have heard a big thud. And it wasn't the ent of Health and Persons Mounted Cavalry firing his cannon.

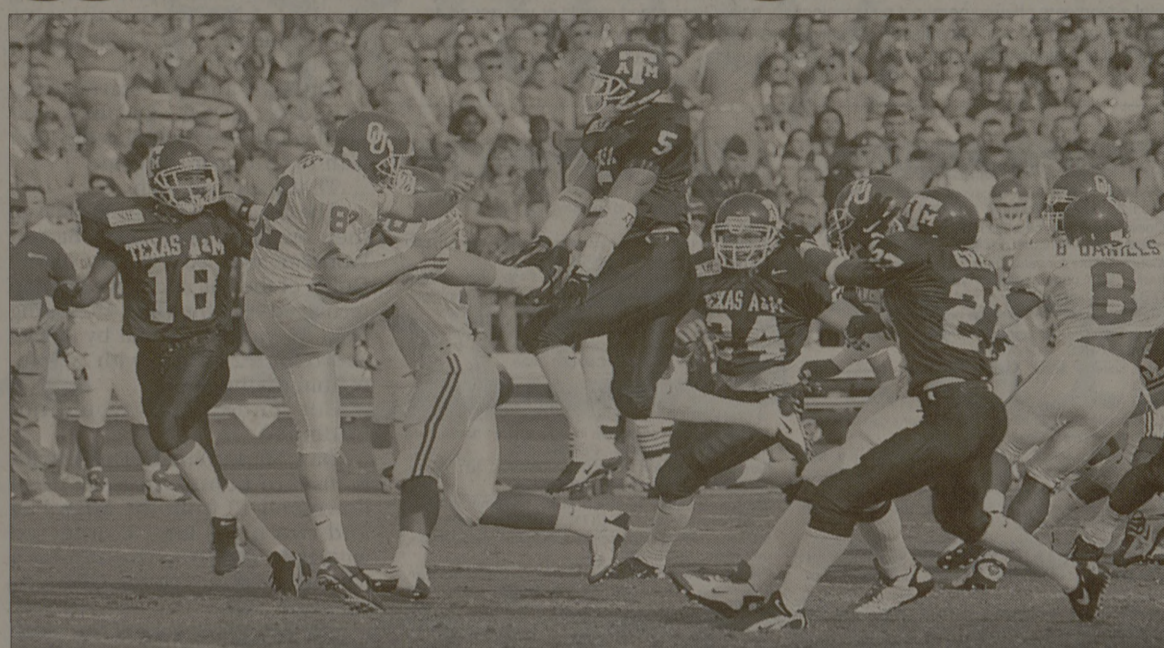
It may have been University of Oklahoma Head Coach John Blake's jaw dropping to the ground as the Texas A&M Football team converted the unlikely pass play to cap off a 33-16 victory over the Sooners.

Already up by 10 points and seemingly content with running at the clock by keeping the ball on the ground, A&M Head Coach R.C. Slocum went for the knockout punch and called for the pass play to Connell.

The play was an interesting explanation point in the wake of comments supposedly uttered by Blake about the A&M team earlier in the week, and also followed a heated exchange between the two coaches during pregame warm-ups.

"I was complimentary all week (posed by Blake) about whether our teams played hard or that they were underachievers and I take exception to that," Slocum said. "We've won a few games around here, and I'm very proud of my players. Coaches have enough problems that they don't need to be taking shots at each other."

However, Blake was reportedly quoted as saying Slocum's description of the Sooners was to "protect himself" in case something happens, and that the Aggies were more talented, but did not play as hard as the Sooners for 60 minutes.



Pat James, THE BATTALION

A&M safety **Toya Jones** blocks an Oklahoma punt in the first quarter of the Aggies' 33-16 victory.

Slocum said he was angered by Blake's statement concerning the Aggies and the Texas Longhorns.

"There was some question (posed by Blake) about whether our teams played hard or that they were underachievers and I take exception to that," Slocum said. "We've won a few games around here, and I'm very proud of my players. Coaches have enough problems that they don't need to be taking shots at each other."

Although he would not say it was a statement of touchdown, Slocum said Connell's late score was meant to show A&M was not coasting home.

"They were going for it on fourth down and were still trying

to make some plays," Slocum said. "I didn't want it to look like we were letting up in the fourth quarter and not playing hard."

Whatever was said between Slocum and Blake on the field prior to the game, A&M outside linebacker Keith Mitchell said the altercation pumped up the team.

"Coach Slocum was really offended," Mitchell said. "Coach Slocum is a really laid back guy and it was good to see him get in coach (Blake's) face like that. It pumped me up personally and it was something that got us started and we came out ready to play."

The fired-up Aggies jumped on Oklahoma early. With winds gusting up to 23 mph at their backs, the Aggies took advantage of great field position in three instances to grab a 13-0 first-quarter lead.

A three-yard touchdown run by sophomore tailback D'Andre Hardeman and two chip-shot field goals by junior place kicker Kyle Bryant staked A&M to an early advantage.

"We really wanted to focus on coming out in the first half and playing well like we did in the second half against Baylor (last week)," A&M junior quarterback Brannon Stewart said. "We scored early on the first series and were able to put some points on the board, but we struggled until halftime."

The Sooners took advantage of the wind and the sputtering A&M offense in the second quarter to strike back at the Aggies, putting 16 points on the board to grab the lead.

However, the Aggies recharged their batteries at halftime and came out smoking in the second half. The Wrecking Crew held the Sooners to minus-one yard on 10 plays in the third quarter and the A&M offense maintained possession of the ball for over 20 minutes in the second half.

A one-yard Hardeman touchdown run and two more Bryant

field goals put the Aggies up by 10 before Connell's touchdown in the closing minutes.

Hardeman finished the game with 92 yards on 23 carries while freshman Dante Hall carried nine times for 47 yards.

Hall's 18-yard run in the third quarter put him over the 500-yard rushing mark for the season, as he joined Hardeman and tailbacks Eric Bernard and Sirr Parker as the only foursome in school history to each reach the 500-yard barrier.

Hall also returned six Oklahoma punts for 102 yards.

Saturday's contest also marked the final Kyle Field appearance for 11 A&M seniors.

"It was my last game here, and having won the game, I wouldn't trade it for the world," senior guard Calvin Collins said.

Brandon Mitchell said up until the final period, it was hard to imagine it was his final home game.

"In the fourth quarter, I was looking around at the faces in the crowd," Mitchell said. "I am really going to miss playing ball here."

A&M 33, Oklahoma 16

OU	0	16	0	0	—	16
A&M	13	0	10	10	—	33

	OU	A&M
First Downs	14	16
Rushes-yards	42-110	62-188
Passing yards	145	94
Comp-att-int	8-22-2	6-14-0
Return yards	26	102
Punts-avg.	8-39	8-37
Fumbles-lost	0-0	3-1
Penalties-yards	7-77	5-41
Time of possession	28:11	31:49

Ags' 2nd-half surge downs Sooners

By SARA DUESING
THE BATTALION

If anything can be concluded following the Texas A&M Football Team's match-up with the University of Oklahoma Saturday, it would have to be that A&M has simply dominated opponents recently — in the second half.

For the third straight week, A&M found itself behind on the scoreboard at halftime only to fight back to gain victory late in the game.

As the Aggies rallied to defeat the Sooners in the third and fourth quarters in the face of winds up to 23 mph, A&M junior quarterback Brannon Stewart said the team was focusing on giving full effort for the entire 60 minutes.

"We really did play the whole game," Stewart said. "We just didn't have some of the things go our way early on. In the second half, we played better and made some big plays to keep up the momentum."

After gaining only 80 total yards in the first half, the Aggies improved in the second half, gaining 202 yards. The Wrecking Crew also came through for A&M, holding Oklahoma's offense to just 34 yards in the second half after a 221-yard first-half showing.

A&M Head Coach R.C. Slocum said A&M's ability to move the ball on offense and take time off the clock in the second half recharged the defense.

"It's a part of football," Slocum said. "If you give them a little lead to work with, most defenses do play better. I thought we were in a dangerous position, to be behind at

halftime and to be facing that stiff wind in the third quarter. You'd like to come out and take control early, but it doesn't always work that way."

The Aggies' sharp level of play in the second half was in part sparked by words of motivation by seniors who were playing their last game at Kyle Field.

Senior noseguard Edward Jasper said the seniors really wanted to finish with a win.

"Early in the game, it was just the same mistakes that had been plaguing us all year," Jasper said. "We had a talk with all the seniors and we said that since this is our last game round, we couldn't go out this way."

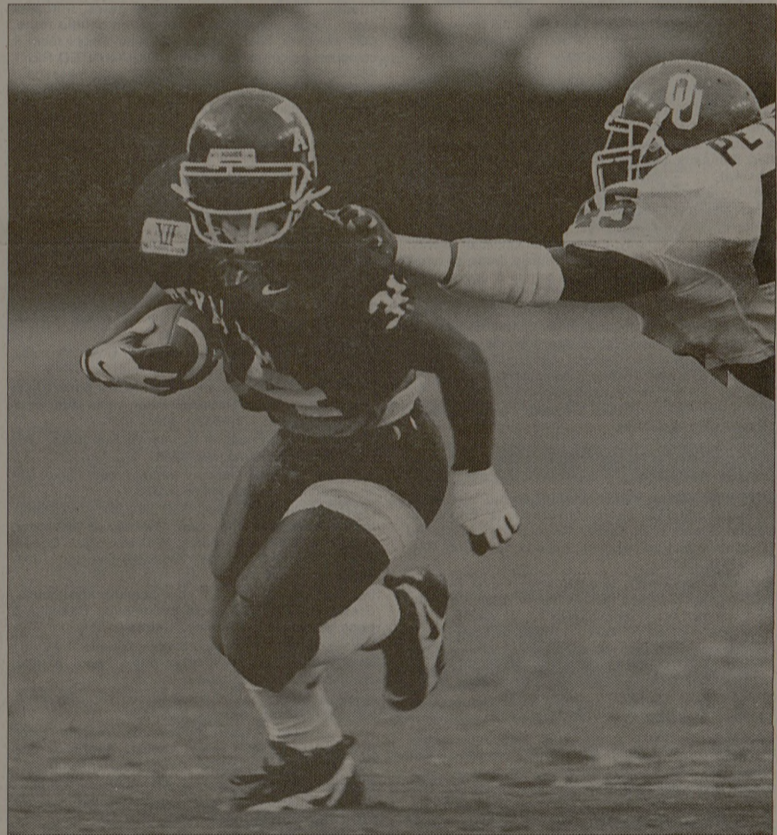
"In the second half, we came out, fired up and ready to play, and we knew we had to cut those mistakes."

Oklahoma could only muster one first down in the final 30 minutes after recording 13 in the first half as the A&M offense stepped up for 20 second-half points.

"By the second half, we had a feel for the game," senior outside linebacker Keith Mitchell said. "We put a couple of blitzes together and really went after them."

Sophomore tight end Daniel Campbell said the Aggies' familiarity with comebacks helped them out again Saturday.

"It was a little frustrating to come out that first quarter and pound the ball like we hadn't done in a while, and in the second quarter have a little difficulty," Campbell said. "But we'd been in that situation before and we knew we could come back and win the ball game, and that's what we did."



Stew Milne, THE BATTALION

A&M tailback **Dante Hall** slips past the reach of Oklahoma linebacker **Tyrell Peters** Saturday. Hall rushed for 47 yards on nine carries.



Stew Milne, THE BATTALION

A&M linebacker **Larry Walker II** takes down Oklahoma fullback **Wayne Chandler** in the first quarter Saturday at Kyle Field.

Big 12 South down to wire

(AP) — It was supposed to come down to the post-Thanksgiving Day duel between Texas A&M and Texas. And it still might.

Texas claimed a share of first place in the Big 12 South on Saturday with a 38-17 victory over Kansas. Meanwhile, Texas A&M stayed in the hunt by beating Oklahoma 33-16, knocking the Sooners out of contention.

The Aggies' fate is out of their hands next Saturday, though. A&M needs an Oklahoma upset over Texas Tech to create a true title game on Nov. 29 in Austin against Texas.

A Tech victory leaves the Aggies out in the Big 12 cold and keeps the Red Raiders alive. If Tech wins, the cruel reality for the Aggies would be that the Red Raiders — the team that would have eliminated them — would advance if A&M defeats hated rival Texas.

The Longhorns remain in the driver's seat through this idle week: A win and they're in.

"We took the hard road, but we're here," Texas guard Dan Neil said.

Baylor's bowl hopes evaporated when Missouri outlasted the Bears 49-42 in three overtimes. Baylor (4-6, 1-6) collapsed in league play after starting 3-0 against weak interconference competition.

The Longhorns (6-4, 5-2) ensured a bowl appearance with their win over fading Kansas, but

their minds were on winning the South, which they can do without help from anyone else.

As the weather turned nasty in the second half, so did the Longhorns.

"Our defense took total control," said Texas coach John Mackovic of his team's final two quarters of shutout ball. "We probably wore them down."

The Longhorns still showed their predictable vulnerability against the run, allowing Kansas star June Henley 209 yards and two touchdowns. Usually, though, they bent without breaking.

Down in College Station, Texas A&M coach R.C. Slocum used as inspiration some quotes from earlier in the week by Sooners coach John Blake, who seemed to indicate A&M had superior talent, even though their records were similar.

The Aggies (6-5, 4-3), who struggled to a 3-5 to start the season, need a victory against Texas to earn a bowl berth regardless of what happens in the Texas Tech-Oklahoma game.

The Red Raiders routed Southwestern Louisiana and their 92nd-ranked defense against the run, using Tech's last home game this season to showcase Hanspard, who became the greatest rusher in school history.

Soccer: Season ends with whimper in NCAAs

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Senior forward Kristen Koop said Suddes' second goal gave the Toreros the momentum they needed to carry them into the second half.

"They got on us quick in the second half, and were able to use the momentum to their advantage," Koop said. "We have come back from being two goals down before, but they took the game right there. With sudden death in the NCAA, there are no gimmies."

Before the Aggies had time to regroup in the second half, USD senior midfielder Amy Goaziou scored off a corner kick at the 56:09 mark which sparked a three-goal scoring run for the Toreros.

The other two scores came within four minutes of the first goal in the second half courtesy of San Diego senior midfielder Michele Kennedy.

The first goal came off a shot into the right side of the Aggie goal that bounced off the foot of

A&M junior midfielder Sonia Ibanez, and the other, which marked USD's fifth and final goal, came at the 60:22 mark.

Guerrieri said that controlling and passing the ball was limited by San Diego's defense.

"They were able to close our passing lanes, which made our defenders hold on to the ball too long," Guerrieri said. "This gave them a chance to use their ball-controlling abilities to score."

In the last 30 minutes of play, the Aggies scrambled to keep the ball, but were not able to make good on a shot until Koop slid the ball past San Diego senior goalkeeper Allison Worden with five minutes left in the game to pull the Aggies within three.

Senior midfielder Allison Buckley recorded A&M's last goal with less than three minutes left in the game to end the scoring.

Buckley said after the two-goal rally, the Aggies still felt they could win the game.

played well. Even with 10 minutes left and the two-goal comeback, we still thought we could win."

Despite the hype of the NCAA Championships, the loss marked the end of collegiate soccer competition for the seniors on the team.

Guerrieri broke down after the match and said he was not disappointed for anything except for the seniors. "Our seniors will leave a legacy of not quitting and giving 100 percent," Guerrieri said. "The legacy they will leave is how they finished. There is no question that they gave nothing less than 100 percent."

"For Allison (Buckley) to get the last goal made an exclamation of that. That is the way she has been her whole life."

Overall, Blalack said the Aggies wanted to win and gave it their all until the very end.

"The way it went was hard, but San Diego was on today," Blalack said. "It's sad for our seniors, who were an unbelievable group of players on and off the field. You can't put it into words just how much they will be missed."



Stew Milne, THE BATTALION

A&M senior forward **Kristen Koop** is taken down in the penalty box Sunday afternoon while she was on a break away.