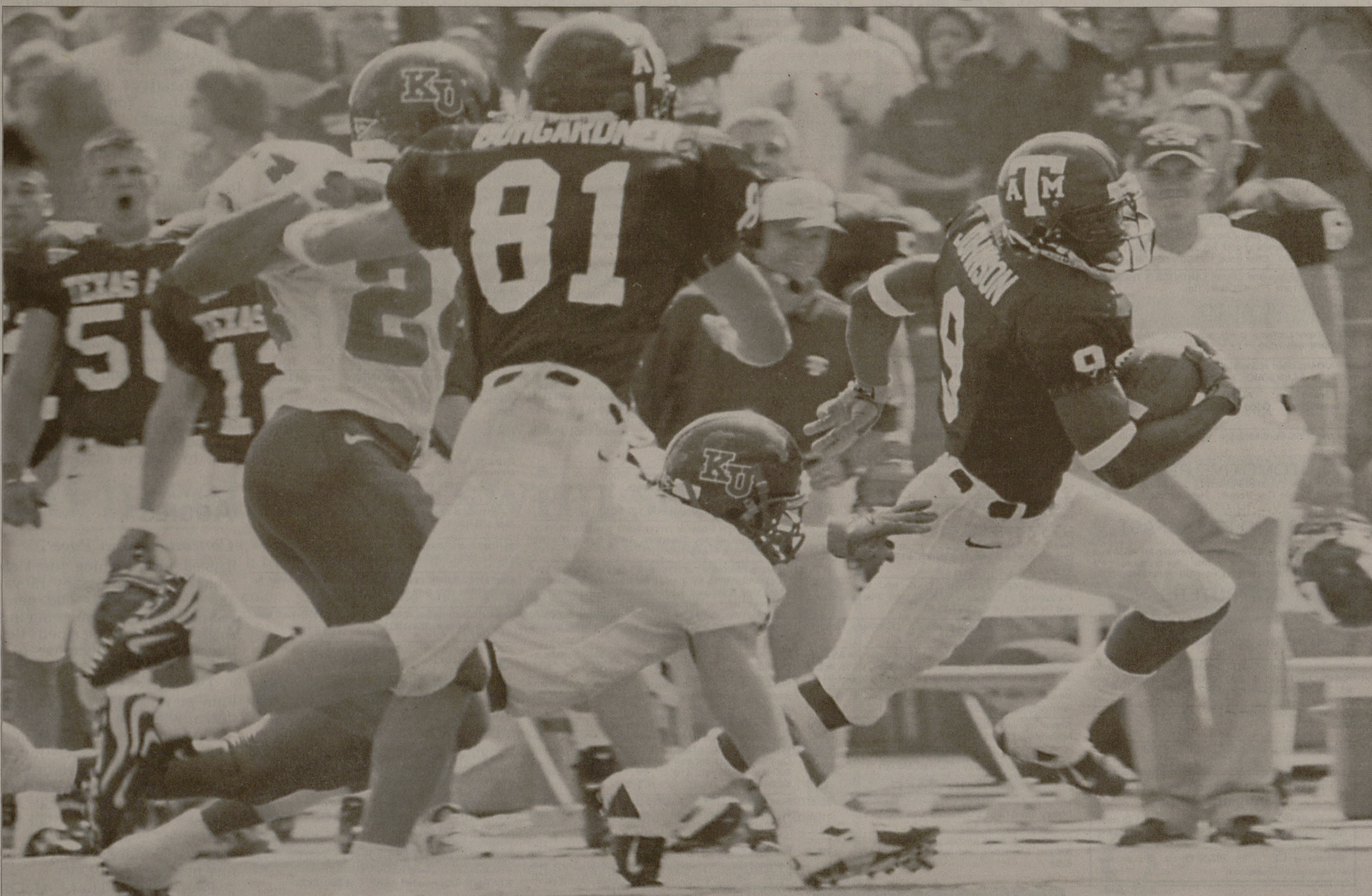


Pass Happy



GUY ROGERS/THE BATTALION

A&M sophomore wide receiver **Bethel Johnson** eludes University of Kansas defenders in Saturday's 34-17 win over the Jayhawks at Kyle Field. **Johnson** finished with 62 yards receiving.

Aggies turn to aerial attack to down Jayhawks, 34-17

BY REECE FLOOD
The Battalion

In what was supposed to be a chance to establish a strong running game, the Texas A&M Football Team turned to the air in its 34-17 victory over the University of Kansas Saturday at Kyle Field.

On A&M's first offensive play of the game, senior quarterback Randy McCown faked a handoff to senior running back Eric Bernard and launched a 44-yard pass to senior receiver Chris Cole, moving the Aggies to the Kansas 36-yard line.

McCown had three passes longer than 40 yards, including a touchdown pass to junior receiver Chris Taylor for 78 yards.

A&M coach R.C. Slocum said he was pleased with his quarterback's ability to throw the ball deep.

"One of the things that I am pleased with is that I think we are getting better in being able to make some of those plays," he said. "I'm pleased that we are making some progress in showing that we have some balance, which has been an objective of ours."

McCown completed 21-of-30 passes for 362 yards — the third-highest individual passing-yardage total in A&M history. He also had the second-most yards of total offense in school history with 380 yards.

McCown said he owes his success to his fellow teammates.

"It's a blessing that the [offensive line] did a great job and to have receivers like I do," he said. "They did a great job of making me

look good."

McCown finished the game with two touchdown passes, one interception and a 15-yard rushing touchdown.

Despite the impressive numbers from McCown, A&M struggled early in the game.

The Aggies' first scoring opportunity was thwarted when a 34-yard field goal attempt was blocked by Kansas' Justin Sands.

Kansas monopolized the football in the first quarter by limiting the Aggies to only eight offensive snaps.

The Jayhawks held two long drives and had possession of the ball for nearly 12 of the first 15 minutes but were unable to get any points on the board, and the first quarter ended with both teams scoreless.

Less than a minute into the second quarter, Joe Garcia kicked a 36-yard field goal for the Jayhawks, giving them a 3-0 lead.

On A&M's next drive, McCown fumbled on an option play, and Kansas' Nate Dwyer recovered the ball at the A&M 46-yard line. Seven plays later, Moran Norris rushed for a one-yard touchdown run to increased the Kansas lead to ten points.

Although the Aggies were behind 10-0, junior offensive lineman Chris Valletta said the team was not overly concerned.

"We learned a lesson in Texas Tech to stay calm," he said. "We knew the things that were going wrong and we knew exactly how to make up for it, so we didn't panic."

A&M cut the lead to 10-3 on a 40-yard field goal by junior kicker Terence Kitchens with 5:04 on the clock.



GUY ROGERS/THE BATTALION

Junior wide receiver **Chris Taylor** heads for the end zone on his 78-yard touchdown reception in the third quarter of Saturday's game.

The Aggies managed to hold the Kansas offense and got the ball back, but with less than two minutes left in the half, A&M was backed up on its own 17 and ready to punt.

Senior punter **Shane Lechler** sent off a 17-yard punt, but a Kansas defender was ready to punt.

SEE AGGIES ON PAGE 8.

Ags need to regroup for future opponents

One mind, one heartbeat. According to junior offensive lineman Chris Valletta, it is the motto of the Texas A&M Football Team. Lately, however, the mind and the heartbeat haven't



DOUG SHILLING

looked like they're on the same page. Despite posting their second straight win since losing to Texas Tech, a 34-17 win over the Kansas Jayhawks Saturday, the Aggies looked sluggish for the second straight week.

A sluggish performance might get the job done against teams like Baylor and Kansas, but the Aggies are moving to the point in their schedule where a sluggish performance could spell doom for them. Three of their next five games are on the road and the opponents are winning nearly 70 percent of the games they play.

While Kansas was supposed to be a game in which the Aggies worked out their kinks before this stretch of

games, it just posed more questions. Despite the 522 yards of total offense, the running attack still remains suspect.

The Aggies had 160 yards rushing on 38 carries Saturday, an average of 4.2 per carry. For the season, A&M is averaging 168 yards a game, with an un-Aggie like 3.9 yards per carry.

Sophomore running back Ja'Mar Toombs said he is not pleased with how the running game is performing at this stage in the season.

"I'm not satisfied at all," Toombs said. "I know how hard our line works and how hard our running backs work. They (offensive line) did a great job, so I would put most of the blame on us as a running back crew. If we can only run for 100 yards with the blocking we have, there's something wrong with us."

Another area that raised a flag in Saturday's game was the way the Wrecking Crew came out flat against the Jayhawks.

Although it regrouped to only give up 249 yards of total offense, the Crew

was dominated in the first quarter by the Kansas offense.

Kansas held the ball for nearly 12 minutes of the first quarter and moved the ball almost at will. If not for a missed field goal, the Aggies would have been down going into the second quarter.

A start like that in the next five games for the Aggies would mean a hole they more than likely could not dig out of.

A&M coach R.C. Slocum said the defense must step up and work on its fundamentals to improve.

"There are little things here and there, plays on defense that I wish we had made," Slocum said. "Little things I see from a defensive standpoint. Coverage, pass rush, just a bunch of things that you have in every ball game. I do think we're about to get into a part of our schedule that will be more challenging, so I think we'll have to step up as a team."

For the Aggies to be successful over

SEE REGROUP ON PAGE 8.

"I feel good any time we can win."

—R.C. Slocum on coming out of the game with a win

"From here on out, we have dogfights for the rest of the season. It's a great challenge and we're looking forward to it."

—Chris Valletta on A&M's remaining schedule

The receivers made me look good and once again the offensive line gave me enough time to make the plays."

—Randy McCown setting his career high in passing

If you get knocked down back there, I expect to get that call everytime."

—Shane Lechler on the roughing the kicker call

I don't know, they were just kicking us around I guess."

—R.C. Slocum on the team's performance in the first quarter

The Battalion Top 25 Poll

Team	Record
1. Florida State	(7-0)
2. Penn State	(7-0)
3. Virginia Tech	(6-0)
4. Nebraska	(6-0)
5. Florida	(6-1)
6. Tennessee	(4-1)
7. Kansas State	(6-0)
8. Georgia Tech	(5-1)
9. Alabama	(5-1)
10. Michigan	(5-1)
11. Michigan State	(6-1)
12. Texas A&M	(5-1)
13. Mississippi State	(6-0)
14. Marshall	(6-0)
15. Purdue	(5-2)
16. Georgia	(5-1)
17. Texas	(5-2)
18. Wisconsin	(5-2)
19. East Carolina	(5-1)
20. Ohio State	(4-3)
21. BYU	(4-1)
22. So. Mississippi	(4-2)
23. Minnesota	(5-1)
24. Notre Dame	(4-3)
25. Kentucky	(5-2)

Associated Press Top 25 Poll

Team	Record
1. Florida State	(7-0)
2. Penn State	(7-0)
3. Nebraska	(6-0)
4. Virginia Tech	(6-0)
5. Tennessee	(4-1)
6. Florida	(6-1)
7. Kansas State	(6-0)
8. Georgia Tech	(5-1)
9. Michigan	(5-1)
10. Alabama	(5-1)
11. Michigan State	(6-1)
12. Mississippi State	(6-0)
13. Texas A&M	(5-1)
14. Georgia	(5-1)
15. Marshall	(6-0)
16. Purdue	(5-2)
17. Wisconsin	(5-2)
18. Texas	(5-2)
19. BYU	(5-1)
20. East Carolina	(5-1)
21. So. Mississippi	(4-2)
22. Ohio State	(4-3)
23. Miami Fla	(2-3)
24. Minnesota	(5-1)
25. Mississippi	(5-2)

Big 12 Standings

	North				
	W	L	PF	PA	
Kansas St.	6	0	240	61	
Nebraska	6	0	234	58	
Colorado	3	3	208	194	
Iowa St.	4	2	140	122	
Missouri	3	3	176	189	
Kansas	2	5	167	247	
South	Texas A&M	5	1	220	87
	Texas	5	2	262	137
	Texas Tech	3	3	138	139
	Oklahoma	3	2	190	103
	Oklahoma St.	3	2	136	104
	Oklahoma St.	1	5	99	215
	Baylor	1	5	99	215



GUY ROGERS/THE BATTALION

A&M senior quarterback **Randy McCown** celebrates after scoring a touchdown late in the first half on Saturday.