

# SPORTS

THE BATTALION

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## Future Aggie QB falls short in 7-on-7 finals

By Jacquelyn Spruce  
THE BATTALION

Odessa Permian High School defeated Burnet High School 41-27 in Saturday's 7-on-7 State Championship game at Kyle Field, but that didn't discourage Texas A&M's future quarterback, Stephen McGee.

McGee, Burnet's senior quarterback, who has verbally committed to A&M, said that despite coming up short in Saturday's game, he expects to come back to Kyle Field as an Aggie and expects the results to be different.

Originally recruited by former A&M coach R.C. Slocum, McGee said he is excited to have a chance to play under new head coach Dennis Franchione.

"There's a lot to look forward to," McGee said. "I'm extremely excited about the opportunities here at A&M, and I think coach Fran and his staff are just going to do an incredible job."

McGee went 17-of-23 with four touchdowns for Burnet, giving Burnet a 20-19 lead at halftime. But Permian struck back in the second half, scoring on every possession to win the game.

Permian's 7-on-7 head coach Jerry Hix said the team had a mission: to win the championship game for their teammate, Trey Howell, who was injured in a roll-over car accident two weeks prior.

"They wanted (to win) and it was just a team effort," Hix said. "This was a mission for Trey without a doubt."

The 17-year-old defensive back has been in a coma since the accident, but, according to doctors, seems to be recovering. After the game, some of Howell's teammates went to see him in the hospital to share the good news of their first 7-on-7 championship.

Tim Cassidy, associate athletics director, said the use of Kyle Field to play the games was a great opportunity for everyone.

"A lot of these kids have never been here before," Cassidy said. "Some of these kids, it really gives them a chance to see our facilities."

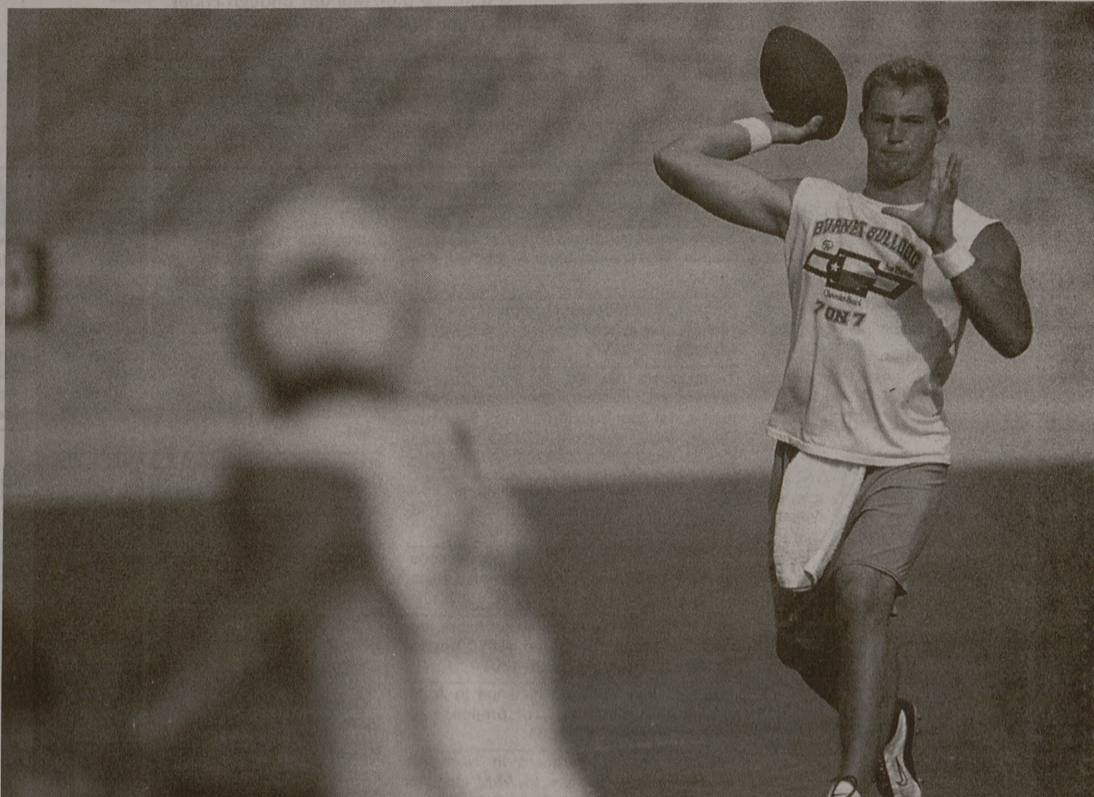
Not only does the 7-on-7 game allow future Aggies to see the facilities, but it develops better players, Cassidy said.

As for 18-year-old McGee, he said he's excited about his decision to play for A&M.

"I never really considered A&M until last year. Then, (the A&M coaches) got big on me after that and kind of set my career off here at 7-on-7," he said. "I think everyone here is headed in the right direction and hopefully toward the National Championship here in a couple of years."

McGee said he respects the decision of a new coach and thinks Franchione will do an incredible job.

"He's proven and he's going to win," McGee said. "I think everybody here in this program is excited."



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Burnet High School quarterback Steven McGee throws a pass during Saturday's 7-on-7 State Championship game at Kyle Field. McGee has verbally committed to play for the Aggies following high school.

## Curtis wins Champion Golfer of the Year in miracle weekend

By Doug Ferguson  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

SANDWICH, England — Hardly anyone knew Ben Curtis before the British Open.

He was a PGA Tour rookie who had never cracked the top 10. He was No. 396 in the world ranking and a 500-1 longshot with the British bookies. The first reaction from the local caddie hired on the spot to guide Curtis around Royal St. George's was, "Ben who?"

Strangely, the answer now is British Open champion.

Not on the most unpredictable links in golf. Not after one of the wackiest weeks in the game's oldest championship. Not even with Tiger Woods and an All-Star cast in position to restore order.

"Many people are probably saying, 'Well, he doesn't really belong there,'" Curtis said. "But I know I do, so that's all that matters."

He earned his spot in golfing lore by closing with a 2-under 69, leaving him the only player to break par at 283.

He got plenty of help from Thomas Bjorn, who took three shots to escape a pot bunker, dropped four shots on the final four holes and finished as the hard-luck runner-up with Vijay Singh.

"Major championships are sometimes won out of the blue," Bjorn said. "This is one 'won out of the blue' for sure."

The Open took a zany turn right from the start when Woods, the world's most watched player, lost his opening tee shot in the rough.

It ended with a player hardly anyone knew holding the claret jug.

Bjorn still had a chance to force a playoff with a birdie chip from just short of the 18th green. When the ball turned away, caddie Andy Sutton turned to Curtis on the practice range and said, "Ben, you're the Open champion."

The words might not have sounded so strange had he been talking to Hogan.

Then again, he was the perfect winner to cap the craziness that didn't end until

Curtis' name was engraved on the jug.

The final surprise was the biggest of them all.

Curtis is believed to be the first player since Francis Ouimet at the 1913 U.S. Open to win a major championship in his first try.

"I came in here this week just trying to play the best I could, hopefully make the cut and compete on the weekend," he said. "Obviously, I did that and went out there and probably played the best weekend of my life."

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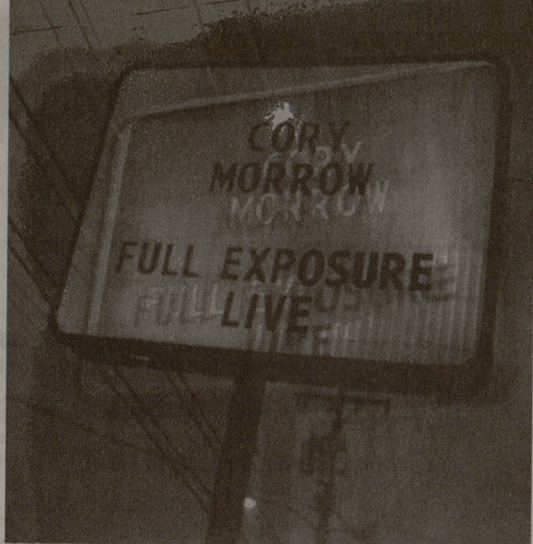
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