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unction Boys return to Kyle Field 50 years later

By Jordan Meserole THE BATTALION

or a few moments before half-Saturday at Kyle Field, footwasn't important, at least for men. When the 65,000 fans he stands roared at a great desive play by the Aggies on the d, the men didn't even seem take notice — they had more ortant matters at hand.

After a good number of dshakes and hugs, the men k their places on the sidees. They were comfortable confident, and not a look fear was any shown. As the ned Junction Boys stepped nto Kyle Field together once ain, they did so in unison as men, as friends and most portantly, as teammates.

"It was quite exhilarating and ite moving," said Bill Schroer about being on Kyle Field ain. "Of course the stands

re a little smaller back then, but there still a great sense of being when you're

The men on the field Saturday were memrs of the famed Junction Boys, celebrating eir 50th anniversary of the first practices Junction, Texas. The team was recently ade popular by a book by Jim Dent and made-for-television movie by ESPN. The bry of the team is focused around legendcoach Paul "Bear" Bryant who arrived in llege Station in 1954. He took his squad 115 players to Junction to prepare for the ason and, after a grueling 10 days, came ack with only 35. Those 35 who remained the team became known as the Junction oys for their physical toughness to endure e 100-degree, nearly daylong practices on

ss than favorable playing surfaces. "One of the greatest things I learned in inction was perseverance," said Lawrence linkler, who was a lineman in his Aggie laying days. "Coach Bryant showed us that



SHARON AESCHBACH . THE BATTALION Twenty-seven members of the Junction Boys team from 1954 celebrated their 50th reunion Saturday.

The former Aggie football players were honored on Kyle Field at halftime sometimes suffering can give you strength

and hope. We all learned a lot under him. As the crowd cheered on its feet for the men, smiles flashed across their faces, and energy seemed to pulse through their bodies. They were back home in the house they helped build and make so famous.

Don Watson, a former running back for the team, said the stadium and the game had changed a lot since their playing days but noted that one thing would never be absent from Kyle Field.

'Games these days have a little more dogand-pony feel to them. Too much time is wasted - let's just line up and play," Watson said. "But A&M will always have great crowds, and the Spirit will always be there.

The 2002 television movie was received by audiences and critics with mixed feelings, earning above average reviews from most. The true Junction Boys weren't as impressed as many others were with the

"There were some things that weren't historically accurate," Schroeder said. "But I do understand that when you're trying to condense an experience like Junction into a have to juice some things up for the public."

Watson echoed Schroeder's feelings in a stronger response.

"They blew some things way out of proportion that made some people, especially Coach Bryant, look bad," Watson said. "That movie was sensational, all for the public.

As the men walked off the field in unison and headed back toward the exit, the crowd gave them a last cheer. And as they disappeared into the tunnel, their moment on Kyle Field was officially over, along with their reunion. But their story isn't over and never will be. It will be one that lives on in the echoes of Kyle Field, in the hearts of Aggie faithfuls and in the whispers of the winds in Junction, Texas.

For information, call 845-0569

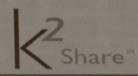
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