

The History of Texas Football

by Bill Little (with special thanks to Lou Maysel, author of "Here Comes the Texas Longhorns," Vols. I & II)

It was a manly sport, this football, and for almost 25 years, those "Yanks" at the likes of Harvard, Rutgers, Princeton and Yale had played the game with fervor that captured the headlines in the newspapers and magazines of the time.

The University of Texas was a small college in Austin that was 10 years old in 1893 and was going about the business of trying to establish itself as a "University of the First Class," the way the founders of the Republic (and later, state) had envisioned it 50 years before.

Through the mist, picture, if you will, the way it was that November night when 15 or so "wanna be"

football players, and a couple hundred fans, gathered at the train station in Austin to ride to Dallas.

It was nearly midnight when the train of the International and Great Northern Railroad—its great engine straining to go—finally heard the conductor shout, "All aboard!"

And more than 100 seasons later, the ride is still a grand one, as each season hundreds of thousands of fans get excited when the conductor of the day gives the implied command, "All aboard!"

Thanksgiving morning, 1893, dawned a new day for that college in Austin, for those young men were destined for Fairgrounds Park in Dallas, where they would play the vaunted Dallas Foot Ball Club, the self-proclaimed "Champions of Texas."

Unbeaten for several years, and unscored on for a time as well, the Dallas club heard a team had been formed at the state university down in Austin, and the bruisers from Dallas issued a challenge for the upstarts to "come on up." The game was set for Thanksgiving Day in the hopes that it would draw a crowd in Dallas, which was then a bustling city of nearly 40,000.

To understand the game, you must first understand the rules, and it helps to know that the game folks saw that day was considerably different than the game we know today.

The first college game between Rutgers and Princeton had been played in 1869, and 50 students participated in what amounted to a group of guys pulling off their coats to engage in a primitive game of soccer.



The University of Texas fielded its first team in 1893.

By 1893, 88 colleges had football teams, and the game had been scaled down to where 11 players were fielded on each side of the ball. The playing field was 110 yards long.

Writer-historian Lou Maysel, in his book, "Here Comes the Texas Longhorns," further explained the game of the day.

"...(The) Goal Posts (were) at each end and there was no end-zone area. The ball was put in play from scrimmage by the center shoveling the ball back to his quarterback, who always handed it off to another player. Only lateral passes were legal, which made the game primarily one of fron-

By the turn of the century, football was still a crude, rough game of bullish runs up the middle, but it had caught on at the Austin campus.

tal power runs. End runs were occasionally tried, but defensive ends always played extremely wide to avoid being out-flanked.

"The necessity of making only five yards on three consecutive downs to get a new set of downs also dictated straight-ahead football. Teams could station any number of players on the line and tight mass formations were used. Players behind the line could start forward before the center shoveled the ball back and momentum plays employing this practice were the vogue then. Often, team-

mates would push or pull the ball carrier for additional gain while the defensive team tried to wrestle him down or carry him backward. Kicking was an integral part of the game then as it is now, but the scoring was different from today's system. A field goal was worth five points while a touchdown produced only four points. A successful goal-after-touchdown (free kick) counted two points, as did a safety."

The Texas team arrived in Dallas at 8:30 a.m. and quickly showed the Dallas ruffians they meant business, too.

"When we got there," recalled guard Billy Richardson, "we all bought big cigars and strutted down Main Street."

The day quickly took on the bantering that would later

become famous in Dallas as the Texas-OU weekend. Fans of the Texas team began their won yell, which went like this:

"Hullabaloo, hullabaloo,
'Ray, 'ray, 'ray,
Hoo-ray, hoo-ray,
Varsity, varsity, U.T.A."

Maysel in his book recalls that a young newsboy listened to the yell and then responded in a loud voice:

"Hullabaloo, hoo-ray, hoo-ray,
Austin ain't in it today, today."

But he would be proved wrong. "Varsity," as the team was known, took the field with determination on that mild November day.

"When the teams came out for the game, a spectator who had never seen football before was first taken by the players' bushy hair, which gave them their only cranial protection," wrote Maysel. "Uniforms consisted of lightly-padded breeches and homemade canvas vests tightly laced over long-sleeved jerseys. Heavy stockings and shoes, some with homemade leather cleats nailed on, completed the battle gear of that day."

Wrote the *Dallas News* that day, "To a man who had never heard of Walter Camp and doesn't know a half-back from a tackle, the professional game of football looks very much like an Indian wrestling match with a lot of running thrown in."

Texas jumped out to an early lead in the game, attended by 2,000 fans, but at halftime the Varsity lead was only 12-10.

The History of Texas Football

So intense was the competition that one of the two referees quit at halftime because he was tired of the players' constant arguing with him. After a bicycle race at intermission, the Texas team extended its lead early in the second half, and held on to win 18-16.

The upset victory so stunned Dallas that end Tom Monagan, who played the game with a broken finger suffered

early in the fray, said afterwards, "Our name is pants and our glory has departed."

"With that," wrote Maysel, "he pulled on his overcoat, jerked his cap down over his eyes, wiped some blood off his face and started for home."

That first team went on to win three more games, shutting out all its opponents while waving their colors of old gold and white to victories over San Antonio (twice) and Dallas (again).

In fact, Texas went on to shut out its first six opponents in 1894 as well, but finally met the big time when Missouri blanked the Varsity, 28-0, in

the final game of that year.

By the turn of the century, football was still a crude, rough game of bullish runs up the middle, but it had caught on at the Austin campus. A muddle over school colors was settled when, on May 10, 1900, the Board of Regents officially declared them to be orange and white. The first band was organized in 1900 as well. The

initial instruments were purchased from a local pawn shop, and the brass horns had to be taken to a tin shop for soldering before they could be used.

In 1903, a *Daily Texan* writer, D.A. Frank, first labeled the team, "The Longhorns," and the name eventually stuck after constant usage.

Football reached the presidential level in 1905, as it addressed its first crisis on the national scene. Rough play, coupled with a lack of helmets and adequate protection for the body had produced so many deaths and injuries, that President Theodore Roosevelt summoned representatives of Harvard, Princeton and Yale to the White House for a conference.

In short, Roosevelt—who had formed the "Rough Riders" as a military unit in San Antonio years before—emphatically told college football to tone down its savage nature. The move was adopted nationwide, and it led to the adoption of the forward pass—the most revolutionary change the game has ever seen.

The rules were different and the ball was fatter, but the pass would open the game. It would also create the first Texas super back—a multi-sport star named Clyde Littlefield. By 1912, today's conventional scoring of six points for a touchdown and four

On May 10, 1900, the Board of Regents officially declared the UT colors to be orange and white. The first band was organized in 1900 as well.

In 1903, a Daily Texan writer, D.A. Frank, first labeled the team, "The Longhorns," and the name eventually stuck.



Notre Dame and Texas players, including Fighting Irish captain Knute Rockne (far right in black shirt), watch Notre Dame quarterback Gus Dorais' kick clear the crossbar in a Nov. 27, 1913 matchup between two of college football's most storied programs.

The History of Texas Football

downs for a first (as well as a 100-yard field) were in place.

Perhaps the most controversial part of Texas football in those early years came in 1911, when after a rough game with Texas A&M, the UT Athletics Council voted to suspend competition between the two schools. The ban held until 1915, when the Southwest Athletic Conference was established.

Much of the credit for the early success of Texas went to David Allerdice, who coached the team from 1911 through 1915, before resigning after compiling a glittering 33-7 record. Allerdice confided to friends during the 1915 season that he was quitting because of the super critical nature of the Texas fans.

It was a time, however, when life's fragile nature also was much more in evidence than it is today. An influenza epidemic killed 200 people in Austin in 1918, including one Longhorn player. Meanwhile, Louis Jordan, named one of the greatest football players in the nation, was one of the first to die in World War I.

In 1915, Theo Belmont, the University's first athletics director, was instrumental in the formation of the Southwest Intercollegiate Athletic Conference, which would later become known as the Southwest Conference. Texas, Texas A&M, Baylor, Southwestern, Arkansas, Oklahoma and Oklahoma A&M were the charter members. Rice joined the league provisionally and dropped out for the next two seasons after 1915.

By 1915, The University had 3,434 students, and Allerdice, in his fifth season, had become a master teacher of the forward pass.

With Gus "Pig" Dittmar anchoring the line, Littlefield passed and ran his way to stardom. In a 92-0 victory over Daniel Baker (a game that was shortened by 10 minutes because of the lopsided score) Littlefield ran for three touchdowns and passed for four others—making him responsible for seven touchdowns. One set of figures said Texas amassed 709 yards of total offense, which would have been a school record if it could have been substantiated.

The Longhorns' first SWC victory came over Rice, as Texas posted a 59-0 win. In a 14-13 loss to Oklahoma, both teams accounted for 71 passes, prompting Allerdice to note "it was the most thrilling exhibition of forward passing ever seen in the West."

One of Texas football's first "Great Games," as

selected by the Blue Ribbon Committee, came as the climax to the 1920 season, when Texas and Texas A&M met as two juggernauts on Thanksgiving Day.

Coaching the Longhorns was Berry M. Whitaker (for whom the intramural practice fields used by the Longhorns were named), who had reluctantly taken the job that season. D.X. Bible, who would later enter the College Football Hall of Fame as a great mentor both at Texas and Texas A&M, was in charge of the Aggies.

Texas was undefeated and had outscored opponents 275-10. Texas A&M was unbeaten and

play. Dennis saved the play with a spectacular leaping catch in front of the goal posts and came down on the four, just clearing the first down marker. Domingues, the people's choice, rammed the ball behind the blocking of Swede Swenson, George Hill and Dennis on the next play, and Dennis kicked the point."

Texas had won (7-3). The Aggies' unbeaten string had ended at 25 games, and Whitaker got a huge salary increase from \$3,000 to \$3,750.

Another of the initial "Great Moments" in Texas football as selected by the Blue Ribbon Centennial committee came in 1923, when Texas

played a powerful Vanderbilt team in Dallas at the State Fair. The game was one of Texas' finest performances, and the highlight was an incredible run by Oscar Eckhardt, who danced along the sidelines for 20 yards and a touchdown in a 16-0 victory.

"The Longhorns had a full head of steam and late in the game they worked the ball back to the Vandy 20 to set the stage for Eckhardt's most memorable run," wrote Maysel. "The ball was snapped only a yard or two from the sideline and Vandy was looking for Texas to run the ball out of bounds in order to get the ball placed at the near hash mark. The Longhorns followed

the conventional strategy, but Eckhardt wasn't satisfied with a yard or two. He plowed down the sideline, never more than yard or so from it, and flattened tacklers like dominoes until two of them knocked him down at the eight."

But the play would not end there. "Eckhardt, knocked to earth, rose like a phoenix and blazed down the line until he crossed the thin white marker," wrote the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* at the time. "In all, he drove 20 yards through the gold and black to put his name in the Texas Varsity hall of fame."

E.C. "Doc" Stewart, the coach of the team, and Eckhardt were the toast of the state after the game, and they continued their great success. Not only did Stewart's Longhorns finish 8-0-1 in football, his basketball team posted a remarkable 23-0 season record. In fact, the 1923-24 school year was unparalleled in its success. The only loss in football, basketball or baseball was a 2-1 baseball defeat to Baylor. The collective record for the season was 60-1-1.

Several days before the 1923 Thanksgiving Day game with Texas A&M, Belmont took idle talk about a concrete stadium and turned the UT stu-



Memorial Stadium was dedicated on Thanksgiving Day 1924 with a 7-0 Longhorn win over Texas A&M.

unscored upon. A state-record crowd of close to 20,000 filled the cracking stands at Clark Field and overflowed to a standing-room-only gathering that meant a game-day revenue of \$32,036.

Bible, who was a leading disciple of field-position football, relied on a strong defense and great punting.

Texas A&M scored first, kicking a field goal in the second quarter, and it appeared that Bible and his philosophy would win the day.

But Texas mounted one of those late drives for which Longhorn teams would become famous for, driving down to the Aggie 11 and facing a fourth and seven late in the game. Tom Dennis, who would later become one of the state's great high school coaches, was a punter and tackle on the team. Francis Domingues was a crowd favorite, and Bill Barry was a little-used halfback.

Down to its last chance, the Texas team broke its huddle with Barry surprisingly on the field in place of Joe Ellis.

"The snap went to Domingues, who handed to Barry on a reverse," wrote Lou Maysel. "Barry stopped, wheeled and hurled a high throwback pass to Dennis, who was an eligible receiver on the

The History of Texas Football

dent body into a cheering section for it. By early 1924, plans were underway, and a fund-raising campaign was started. The stadium was completed in record time and dedicated on Thanksgiving Day, when the Longhorns beat the Aggies, 7-0.

But Doc Stewart, the man whose coaching had helped build the stadium, would actually see little time in it. By 1927, Stewart was in conflict with Belmont and eventually was ousted in favor of the Longhorns' favorite son, assistant coach and former star Clyde Littlefield.

In his four years at Texas, Littlefield was a three-sport star, earning letters in football, basketball and track.

But the autumn of 1929 would change a lot of things. Just as World War I had changed the lives of the Varsity warriors of the Teens, Black Tuesday would alter the course of games such as football and the way Americans lived.

The Fall of 1929 would mean a lot more than just football.

For three seasons, Clyde Littlefield had kept the Texas football ship afloat, but when the team of 1929 struggled to a 2-2-2 Southwest Conference record, and every starter except Dexter Shelley was gone for the 1930 season, the boat appeared to be listless.

But in the autumn of 1930, youth would change that. The world was in an economic depression, but The University of Texas was about to enter an age of legends.

C.J. "Shorty" Alderson would be the first to notice. Everyone knew that Billy Disch had helped the football program by coaxing a 190-pound youngster from Sealy named Ernie Koy to Texas, and it didn't take long for Koy to prove himself a star.

But to the end, Littlefield would remember the first day of practice in 1930 (as he recounted to historian Lou Maysel) when Alderson came rushing over to the stadium from the freshman practice field, so excited the little man could hardly speak.

"Clyde," he said, "I've found the darndest football player you ever saw. He tore up a couple of dummies and hurt a couple of men. He says his name is Harrison Stafford."

Koy, Stafford, Shelley, Grover "Ox" Emerson, Bull Elkins, Ox Blanton and Lester Peterson all would make All-Southwest Conference that season. A scoreless tie with Centenary and a 6-0 loss to Baylor would be the only blots on an otherwise perfect season, which would include an astounding seven shutouts.

Stafford, Koy and Shelley were followed by two more of the best known Texas players when Charley Coates, a center, and Bohn Hilliard, another back, came on the scene in 1932. But Littlefield's time as the football coach was soon to end. His

historic run as one of the nation's greatest track coaches was about to begin. And in 1934, Texas took a brand-new direction with its program.

Jack Chevigny, who had been a protege and star for the late Knute Rockne at Notre Dame, brought a flashy style and a lot of showmanship to the coaching job when he was hired from St. Edward's in 1934. In the spring, he pronounced on the occasion of hiring, "I shall do my best to make the flag of Texas fly high among those of the schools in the nation."

Nine months later, he would lead his team into South Bend for a 7-6 victory over Notre Dame. The

game — the first-ever season-opening loss for the Irish in South Bend — was a benchmark for Texas football on a national level.

Hilliard and Coates were huge factors in the victory, as was Jack Gray, who would become a close associate of Texas athletics for the rest of his life.

Years later, after Chevigny's short tenure (he left after the 1936 season) had ended, Gray

would staunchly defend his friend as a man ahead of his time.

The 1934 season also brought a special moment to football, when the Humble Oil Company set up a network of three stations — KPRC in Houston, WOAI in San Antonio and WFAA in Dallas — to broadcast the Texas-Rice game on the radio. It was the beginning of the unique sponsorship by the oil company (which would later become Exxon) of Southwest Conference football on radio.

The beginning was brilliant for Chevigny, but the tide quickly turned. After a 7-2-1 inaugural season, his teams fell to 4-6 in 1935, and finally after a 2-6-1 mark in 1936, Chevigny resigned.

Texas was in search of a new football coach.

This time, they did not "go bear hunting with a stick." They loaded up a howitzer and fired the biggest shot college football in the state had ever heard. They went out and hired Dana X. Bible, who merely had posted a 72-19-9 record at Texas A&M before moving to Nebraska, where all he had done was win six league championships and compile a 50-15-7 record in eight years.

To lure Bible, they named him football coach and athletics director and paid him \$15,000, which was only about twice the salary of president H.Y.

Benedict and three times that of the highest paid professor.

When Bible arrived on the UT campus, the face of Texas athletics changed forever. He brought not only winning football, but a dedication to the student-athlete and the concept of how athletics and education had to co-mingle. Low on talent when he arrived on campus, his first teams struggled. But when Jack Crain scored late in the Arkansas game for a 14-13 upset victory, that gave the 1939 team the first winning Texas season since Chevigny's first year. Business was about to pick up for Texas football.

Malcolm Kutner and Stan Mauldin were the most honored players of the time, but Bible's 1939 team would produce a sophomore class that as seniors would form the best Texas team of its era. In 1940, that unit would stun Texas A&M, preventing the Aggies' bid for a National Championship. Noble Doss would make an unbelievable catch to set up the game's only touchdown as the Longhorns preserved a record of never losing in Memorial Stadium to Texas A&M.

Then, in 1941, the team would be recognized on the cover of *Life* magazine before a tie and a loss denied the Longhorns their dream of a National Championship.

With Kutner, Doss, Crain and Pete Layden leading a host of men who would become some of the most respected Longhorn athletes in history, the 1941 team finished the year by crushing Oregon, 71-7, after Texas had been snubbed by the Rose Bowl. The day after the game — December 7, 1941 — the world would change forever as the Japa-



Noble Doss makes "the impossible catch" to set up the only score in Texas' 7-0 win over Texas A&M in 1940. The Longhorn victory dashed A&M's hopes for a National Championship.

The History of Texas Football

In 1944, a young man who had come to Texas to play baseball was persuaded to come out for football. He was a pitcher, so it followed he probably could throw a football as well. His name was Bobby Layne.

nese bombed Pearl Harbor. Football, and college life, would never be the same.

The war years would produce one of the Longhorns' greatest receivers in Hub Bechtol and one of their real treasures—a manager who also kicked extra points named Billy “Rooster” Andrews.

In 1944, a young man who had come to Texas to play baseball was persuaded to come out for football. He was a pitcher, so it followed he probably could throw a football as well.

His name was Bobby Layne.

Layne would become known as the “rounder” who was the greatest competitor of his time, or maybe anybody's time. He would go on to star in the National Football League as one of the all-time greats of the game. He would become the first Longhorn inducted into the College Football Hall of Fame. He would lead Texas through the final football season of World War II and then shine like the sun through the post-war haze.

Layne would also see Bible's final season of 1946 and then join his friend, Blair Cherry, for his first run as head coach in 1947.

Cherry produced some outstanding teams in his four years and tutored several more of the Longhorns who became some of the nation's outstanding players at their positions. Perhaps the toughest man was Bud McFadin, a lineman who became legendary as perhaps the toughest man of his time, both as a collegian and a pro.

In 1950, Cherry's Longhorns produced perhaps their greatest victory in a 23-20 upset of top-ranked SMU. The Horns would roll unbeaten through SWC play to a Cotton Bowl berth. But the critical fans who had years before chased Dave Allerdice from the game saw the same thing happen again. This time it was Cherry who had been sent funeral wreaths after his team lost to Oklahoma, 14-13 in 1950, failing to beat the Sooners for the third straight time.

Soon after, Cherry quit.

Upon Cherry's departure, Ed Price, a kind man who was a former Longhorn player and coach under Bible, would become head coach. Price would reach a high water mark with the 1952 season, when his Longhorns would win the conference

and the Cotton Bowl. The entire starting backfield would be selected All-Southwest Conference, and lineman Harley Sewell would earn All-America honors.



Darrell Royal is carried off the field after leading the Longhorns to a 15-14 upset of No. 2 Oklahoma in 1958. The win was Royal's first of eight in a row over his alma mater.

“[Darrell Royal] didn't look too much older than the rest of us. But when he spoke, you listened. He had that kind of command. There was no foolishness. He came on strong as a leader of young men. You had a feeling that things were going to change.” — Bobby Lackey

But Price would fall victim to the changing football times and heavy losses to Oklahoma and TCU. A 1-9 season in 1956 would bring his resignation. It was time for Texas to search for a head coach again.

The greatest names in the coaching game at the time were mentioned. It was rumored that Texas would build another war chest and spend big dollars to restore the game in Austin.

But this time, they went for a young man who had coached at such out-of-the-way places as Mississippi State, Edmonton, Canada, and Washington.

But he had a style to him and somehow when you looked in his eyes, you saw something very special.

He was only 33, and he hailed from Hollis, Okla..

His name was Darrell Royal.

Bobby Lackey remembers that first meeting of the 1957 Texas Longhorns team with their new coach, Darrell Royal well.

“He didn't look too much older than the rest of us,” recalled Lackey. “But when he spoke, you listened. He had that kind of command. There was no foolishness. He came on strong as a leader of young men. You had a feeling that things were going to change.”

D.X. Bible had pulled a coup. With all of the college football world talking about veteran coaches such as Frank Leahy at Notre Dame, Bobby Dodd of Georgia Tech, Murray Warmath at Minnesota and Tommy Prothro of Oregon State, Bible had gone out and hired an Oklahoman who was coming off a 5-5 season at Washington.

Royal's only claims to the job were a day-dream, a fist full of determination, a quick wit and a lot of people who were willing to step to the line for him.

Royal was 32 and had put back-to-back 6-4 seasons together at Mississippi State before the break-even year with the Huskies.

One night in December of 1956, Royal and his wife, Edith, lay in bed in Seattle when the phone rang and an operator said, “Long distance calling.”

The History of Texas Football

Then a strong voice spoke, "This is D.X. Bible of The University of Texas."

Royal put his hand over the phone, looked at his wife and said, "This is it, Edith. It's The University of Texas calling."

Wherever Bible had turned in his search for a coach to take Texas back, he found glowing recommendations for Royal.

When Royal got his chance for an interview, he went to see the movie, "Giant," the night before his trip. Once in Austin, he impressed the athletics council and was offered the job.

The rest, as they say, is history.

The new-age football that Royal brought included an outstanding staff, a thoroughness in organization and a huge dose of charm.

"He was as bright as a new penny," recalled one Texas sportswriter.

"Royal has a movie idol's looks, and he also talks with a ready tongue, takes questioning with a hurdler's grace and yet manages a touch of humility that even Arthur Godfrey would like," wrote another.

Quickly, Royal also set about proving one other thing; with all those positive qualities, he could also win.

Coming off a 1-9 season in 1956, Texas was transformed by Royal into the surprise team in the country. His Longhorns rolled to a 6-3-1 record, and though it was an ill-fated 39-7 loss to No. 7 Mississippi in the Sugar Bowl. In the process, Royal's crew, which included a good mixture of seniors such as captains Walter Fondren and Louis Del Homme and some sterling sophomores such as Lackey, Rene Ramirez, George Blanch, Don Allen and Mike Dowdle, laid an impressive foundation.

While the loss in the Sugar Bowl to Mississippi closed the year on a sour note, it couldn't diminish the euphoria left from a season that included a tough battle with Oklahoma (though a 21-7 loss) and a 9-7 upset of Texas A&M in College Station, in a game where Bear Bryant's Aggies were eight-point favorites.

The season of 1958 brought one of the outstanding moments in Royal's career, when the Longhorns snapped an Oklahoma string that included nine victories in the last 10 games.

"Texas has to develop a football tradition," Royal had said before the game. "It had one once but lost it."

The Longhorns used the passing of Vince Matthews as a surprise, but in the end it was Lackey, with a jump pass to Bobby Bryant, who secured the winning touchdown in a 15-14 come-from-behind win.

But while the 1958 team edged closer to the excellence Texas sought, it would be the 1959 team that would put it over the edge.

Armed with a stable of seniors and a class of super sophomores, Royal's Longhorns stampeded to a No. 2 national ranking before being upset by TCU, 14-9, in a game played in the ice and snow on a frigid November day in Austin. Still, Texas clinched a tie for the Southwest Conference title, putting the Longhorns in the Cotton Bowl for the first time in six years. Even a 23-14 loss to National Champion Syracuse didn't dull the luster.

Texas was about to enter the decade of the '60s, an era that it would dominate in college football.

Those who saw them play would make a strong case that the Longhorns of 1961 were the best of the best.

Armed with a new offense that flipped the line blocking to simplify the attack, as well as three complete units of power, the Longhorns of 1961 finally achieved the No. 1 ranking sought for so many years.

In fact, led by quarterback Mike Cotten; senior running backs James Saxton and Jack Collins; and linemen such as Don Talbert, David Kristynik, Ed Padgett and Bobby Moses, the Horns of '61 so completely dominated opponents that a three-touchdown win over Oklahoma (28-7) was the closest margin

of victory until a stunning 6-0 upset by TCU marred an otherwise perfect season.

With Saxton finishing third in the Heisman Trophy voting and Talbert earning All-America honors, Texas climaxed that season with a 12-7 win over No. 5 Ole Miss in the Cotton Bowl.

In 1962, Texas flirted with perfection again, but this time it was a 14-14 tie with Rice that blemished the regular season. The sea-

son would bring another No. 1 ranking prior to the tie, and it would produce one of the storied games in Texas history, a 7-3 triumph over No. 7 Arkansas. The game included a goal-line stand that featured a fumble-causing tackle by Pat Culpepper and Johnny Treadwell late in the fourth quarter, as well as Tommy Ford's three-yard touchdown run with only 36 seconds left in the game. The play was the biggest of the season for Treadwell, who would go on to earn All-America honors. Names such as Ernie Koy, the son of the star of the '30s, Ray Poage, Johnny Genung, Duke Carlisle and Scott Appleton were etched in the record book. With an all-star cast and a now strong winning tradition, Royal was ready for 1963.

The annual Texas-OU showdown in Dallas was the biggest, but it was a weekend of irony. Texas was No. 2 in the nation, Oklahoma was No. 1. But in a game that would help control Texas' destiny, SMU knocked off Navy and Heisman Trophy winner Roger Staubach in the Cotton Bowl on Friday night before Texas met the Sooners on Saturday.

It was an execution of precision. With Carlisle operating the Royal offense to perfection, Texas



Darrell Royal poses with center David McWilliams and quarterback Duke Carlisle prior to the 1964 Cotton Bowl. The Longhorns went on to defeat No. 2 Navy in Dallas to preserve an 11-0 record and cement UT's first National Championship.

The History of Texas Football

pounded the Sooners 28-7. A sportswriter from St. Louis perhaps told the story best when he wrote in his lead, "Who's No. 1? It is Texas, pardner, and smile when you say that."

Texas then began the improbable gauntlet of carrying the mantle of the nation's No. 1 team for six long weeks. It made it through tough wins over Arkansas (17-13), Rice (10-6), SMU (17-12), Baylor (7-0), TCU (17-0) and finally Texas A&M (15-13).

The Baylor game, matching the unbeaten Horns against a Baylor team led by Don Trull and Lawrence Elkins had been the best showdown in years in the SWC, with a Duke Carlisle interception of a sure touchdown pass saving Longhorn victory.

Just as it appeared Texas was on the verge of its first-ever National Championship, Texas A&M jumped to a 13-3 lead in the season finale. Carlisle and a reserve quarterback Tommy Wade led a comeback, which included some great fortune. Still leading 13-9 in the closing minutes, Texas A&M intercepted a Texas pass, but fumbled on the return when they tried to lateral the ball. Then as Texas zeroed in on the goal line, another Aggie tipped a Texas pass and gained control only after he had fallen out of the end zone, missing what would have been a game-saving interception.

Finally, Carlisle plunged over from the one-yard line, and Texas prevailed 15-13. The National Championship was accomplished. The polls crowned the Longhorns as champions at the end of the regular season, which was solidified with a 28-6 triumph over No. 2 Navy in the Cotton Bowl in the final game of the season.

Wayne Hardin, coach of the Naval Academy, had lobbied for a post-bowl game decision.

Before the Cotton Bowl, Hardin told a national TV commentator in a statement broadcast across the nation as well as to the crowd in the stands, "When the challenger meets the champion and the challenger wins, there is a new champion."

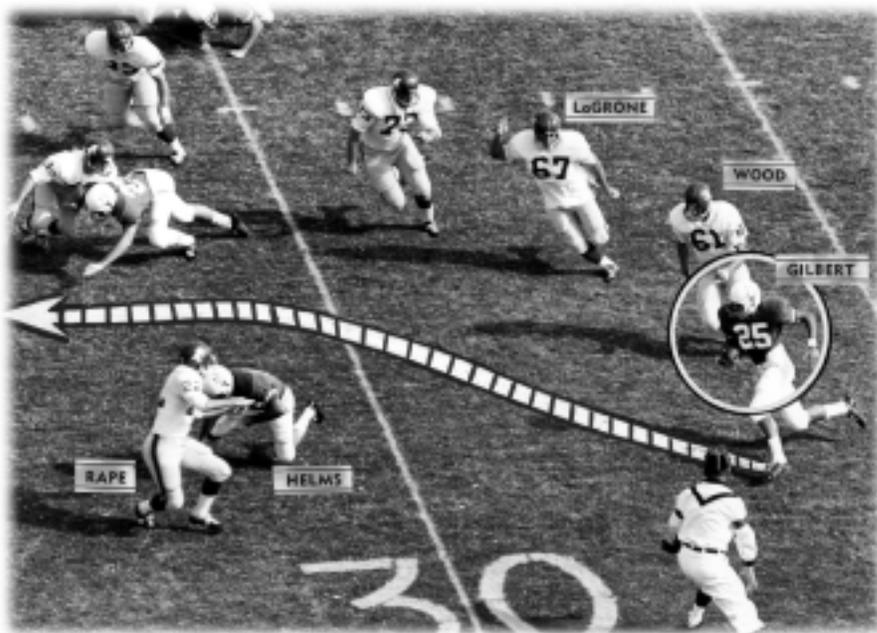
To which Royal answered a crisp, "We're ready."

Ford and Appleton each earned All-America honors and they were joined by a young sophomore named Tommy Nobis on the All-Southwest Conference team.

But the heroes were legion. When their tenure on the Forty Acres was finished, the seniors of 1963 had posted an incredible three-year record of 30-2-1.

The tragic death in Dallas of President John F. Kennedy less than a week before the Texas-Texas A&M game would forever mark a time and date of the 1963 season. But, for men like captains Appleton, Ford and David McWilliams and their fellow Longhorns, their legacy would be the first national title for Texas.

It seemed that 1964 might produce another, but a 14-13 loss to No. 8 Arkansas short-circuited the bid. The season would end, however, with a



Chris Gilbert shows the explosiveness of the Texas offense on his way to a 74-yard touchdown run vs. SMU in 1966.

dramatic Orange Bowl victory over Joe Namath and No. 1 Alabama. The '64 team posted five players on the All-SWC squad in Nobis, Olen Underwood, Knox Nunnally, Harold Philipp and Joe Dixon.

Nobis, who would go down as one of the greatest linebackers to play the college game, and Phil Harris were two of the Horns off the 1963 team who assumed senior leadership in 1965, and again it would be No. 3 Arkansas which would derail Texas. Down 20-0 in Fayetteville, UT came back to an improbable 24-20 lead, only to have the Razorbacks win "Shoot Out One," 27-24.

It was one of the many battles between Royal and his good friend, Arkansas coach Frank Broyles. From that point, the 1965 season turned south. Texas lost to Rice, SMU and TCU, finishing 6-4.

It had been a short trip from the parlor to the outhouse. Texas had suddenly fallen, and it would take a while to get back up.

The season of 1966 brought the emergence of a pair of sterling sophomores in running back Chris Gilbert and quarterback Bill Bradley. So super, in fact, was Bradley as a freshman that a local sportswriter nicknamed him "Super Bill."

But the vast supply of talent that Royal and his staff had stockpiled had dwindled, and injuries revealed weaknesses. Despite a Bluebonnet Bowl victory, the team still owned a 6-4 mark on the regular schedule.

A win in 1967 over an Orange Bowl-bound Oklahoma team was the high point of that season. And while Longhorn fans were beginning to grumble, the Texas coaching staff was watching

with interest as Bill Ellington's freshman team rolled over its opponents with ease.

The varsity struggled, and opponents began to believe that once again, they could finally beat Texas.

When the season ended, there was no bowl game for the Longhorns. Instead, the coaching staff regrouped and studied films of the freshmen.

It was a highly-talented group. So talented, in fact, that observers have ranked it above any freshman class before or since.

They called it "The Worster Crowd," and its destiny was about to begin.

The aroma of pipe smoke filled the small office on the second floor of the Gregory Gym annex. Spring training 1968 had produced a spirited battle for the starting fullback job in the Texas offense. Everybody knew that future College Football Hall of Famer Chris Gilbert would be the tailback—he had gained 1,000 yards in each of the previous two seasons. But junior Ted Koy, who had seen action at fullback the year before, was getting pressure from heralded sophomore Steve Worster, who had become the crowd favorite on the freshman team in 1967.

It was a summer afternoon when a new staff member walked into backfield coach Emory Bellard's office.

"Okay, coach," he said. "Which one are you going to play, Koy or Worster?"

Bellard took another puff on his pipe, smiled a wicked smile and said, "What if we play them both?"

With that, he picked up the yellow pad and put

The History of Texas Football

four dots in the shape of the letter Y. "Have you ever seen anything like this?" he asked.

"It looks like a Y," said the young staffer.

Bellard took his pen and pointed to the bottom dot and moved through the diagram.

"Bradley, Worster, Koy, Gilbert," he said.

Frustrated with three straight regular seasons with 6-4 records, Royal had commissioned Bellard to work with the backfield.

The former San Angelo High School coach had wanted to see Texas run the veer formation with the triple option, made famous at Cincinnati by Homer Rice.

Royal wanted two added attractions: he wanted a split receiver, and he wanted a lead blocker.

And so with Willie Zapalac, the offensive genius, Royal and Bellard set about the business of creating a new attack.

The offense sputtered, but with Gilbert as a star, the Longhorns managed a 20-20 tie with No. 11 Houston in the season opener. Late that night, as sportswriters gathered with Royal for a post-game critique in room 2001 of the Villa Capri Hotel, one writer asked Royal what he called his new offense.

"It looks like a Y," one said.

Mickey Herskowitz, the award-winning writer for the *Houston Post*, was crouched near the door.

"It looks like a pulley-bone," he said.

"Okay," Royal replied, "The wishbone."

The new offense took some fine tuning, and midway through the Texas Tech game in Lubbock, with the Horns trailing 28-6, Royal inserted James Street as the quarterback and moved Bill Bradley to wide receiver. Bradley later went to

Texas' creation of the wishbone attack took place prior to the 1968 season. The new offense took some fine tuning as the Longhorns opened the year with a 20-20 tie vs. No. 11 Houston and a 31-22 loss at Texas Tech. But, once it hit stride, Texas began pounding opponents. The Longhorns won their next 30 games and claimed back-to-back National Championships in 1969 and 1970. From 1968-73, the wishbone attacked UT to six straight SWC Championships and six consecutive Cotton Bowls.

defensive back, where he would go on to a great professional career.

Street became the Texas quarterback who never lost as a starter. For the remaining nine games of 1968, all Texas did was get better. And better.

With Worster pounding in the middle and Koy and Gilbert handling the wide game, Street hooked up with wide receiver Cotton Speyrer and tight end Darryl Comer to destroy the opposition. The Horns averaged 447.6 yards of total offense, including 331.5 yards per game on the ground. They finished the season by crushing No. 8 Tennessee, 36-13, in the Cotton Bowl.

That year brought an end to the careers of several key Longhorns, including All-American defensive tackle Lloyd Wainscott, All-American linebacker Corby Robertson and the amazing Gilbert, who became the first runner in NCAA history

to rush for 1,000 yards in three straight seasons.

But as valuable as Gilbert was, his loss was minimal. The 1968 freshman team produced a rare out-of-state recruit named Jim Bertelsen.

With a counter option added to the wishbone to make it even more effective, Street, Worster, Koy and Bertelsen began building the most feared attack in the decade of the '60s.

Texas pounded its opponents into submission in 1969, leading the nation in rushing (363.0 rpg) and scoring (33.8 ppg). In the SMU game, the Horns rushed for 611 yards—with all four starting backs rushing for more than 100 yards. The offensive line was led by All-American tackles Bob McKay and Bobby Wuensch.

The 1969 season marked the 100th year of college football, and ABC television executive Beano Cook arranged for Texas and Arkansas to play the final game of the regular season, moving their usual October date to the first weekend in December.

For a long while, it looked as though the game would be a meeting of also-rans. Ohio State was dominating the Big Ten, and the chances of the game being anything other than the season finale were pretty remote.

But as the Longhorns took a Saturday off to prepare for their upcoming game on Thanksgiving Day with Texas A&M, Michigan and its upstart coach—a relatively new guy named Bo Schembechler—upset the Buckeyes.

Texas vaulted to No. 1 in the polls, Arkansas moved to No. 2. The stage was set. Even the day took on an eerie feeling. The night before, a steady, cold rain fell in Fayetteville. An icy fog hovered over Razorback Stadium as the crowd awaited the arrival of President Nixon, who would award a plaque symbolic of the National Championship to the winner.

In the 100th year of college football, it truly was the "Game of the Century."

The Longhorns overcame turnovers and a 14-0 Arkansas lead to post a 15-14 victory. Street



In one of the most dramatic plays in Texas history, QB Eddie Phillips and WR Cotton Speyrer (pictured) combined on a 45-yard catch-and-run with 12 seconds remaining that helped the No. 2 Horns pull out a 20-17 win over No. 13 UCLA. The victory extended Texas' consecutive victory string to an SWC record 23 straight.

The History of Texas Football

scrambled for one touchdown, got a two-point conversion and then hit Randy Perschel on a dramatic fourth-and-three play late in the game. Donnie Wigginton, the third-string quarterback who was the holder, made a big save on a high snap, and Happy Feller kicked the extra point that made the final score. It took an interception by Tom Campbell to seal the win.

The dramatic game had absolutely captured the interest of the nation.

Less than a week later, when safety Freddie Steinmark underwent surgery for the removal of his leg because of bone cancer, UCLA administrators watching the Horns play basketball in Los Angeles actually wept.

With the National Championship won, Texas went about the business of hosting No. 9 Notre Dame in the Cotton Bowl. The Irish were making their first bowl appearance in 44 years, going all the way back to the days of the "Four Horsemen."

Again, it took some dramatics. Street, Koy, Speyrer and halfback Billy Dale were keys in a final Longhorn drive that secured a 21-17 victory.

In the locker room, Royal gave Steinmark the game ball. The little safety would become a national symbol of courage, as he battled cancer for a year-and-a-half before dying in June 1971.

Worster, Speyrer and tackles Bob McKay and Bobby Wuensch made All-American. They were joined on the All-SWC team by tackle Leo Brooks, linebacker Glen Halsell, defensive end Bill Atessis and Street.

The Longhorns winning streak stood at 20 games, and it appeared that the wishbone was unstoppable. Finally, in the third game of 1970, the string had apparently run out. No. 13 UCLA had conceived a unique defense which stymied the Horns, and it looked like the winning streak was over as the Bruins held a 17-13 lead, and Texas was 45 yards from the goal with only 25 seconds left.

But Eddie Phillips hit Speyrer at the 25-yard line, and his spin move shook the UCLA defender. When he crossed the goal, only 12 seconds remained.

Texas claimed the UPI championship trophy after crushing No. 4 Arkansas, 42-7, in the final game of the year. The Horns again were dominant, leading the nation in rushing (374.5 ypg) and scoring (41.2 ppg).

But in a rematch with Notre Dame in the Cotton Bowl, turnovers plagued the Horns, and the No. 6 Irish, led by Joe Theismann, ended a school-record winning streak at 30 games with a 24-11 upset.

But Texas had recorded its third straight SWC title. "The Worster Crowd"—those freshmen of 1967—left the campus with a record of 30-2-1.

Wuensch, Worster, Speyrer and Atessis made All-American. On the All-SWC team, Texas placed six players.

The 1971 Longhorn team showed a special kind of grit, suffering lopsided losses to No. 8 Oklahoma and No. 16 Arkansas at mid-season, before coming back to win the SWC title outright and earning another trip to the Cotton Bowl.

The season marked the final year for Bertelsen, who earned All-SWC honors, and it was an All-American year for tackle Jerry Sisemore, who was establishing himself as one of the premier offensive linemen in Texas history.

The season of 1972 brought a 10-1 record, with the only loss to No. 2 Oklahoma. Sisemore was the dominant figure on the team, and Lowry would quarterback Texas to a Cotton Bowl win over Bear Bryant and No. 4 Alabama. Yet it was the presence of Roosevelt Leaks at fullback that changed the face of Texas athletics.

The 1969 Longhorn team had one dubious distinction—it was the last all-white National Champion. Long prohibited and discouraged from recruiting African-American athletes, Texas was working hard to change its image when Royal began the 1972 season. Julius Whittier, the first African-American letterman at Texas, had graduated following the 1971 season.

Texas needed to show the world that things were different, and Royal got a real star in a fullback near Brenham named Roosevelt Leaks.

Leaks became the first Texas back since Chris Gilbert to rush for more than 1,000 yards, and he led eight Longhorns on the All-SWC team.

When Texas beat No. 4 Alabama, 17-13, in the Cotton Bowl, the Horns finished third nationally.

With Leaks as the marquee performer, the 1972 Texas team earned a preseason No. 1 national ranking, but fumbled it away in the first game, losing to Miami in the Orange Bowl, 20-15.

Leaks rushed for 1,415 yards and 14 touchdowns. He gained 342 yards rushing in the SMU



Julius Whittier helps spring Roosevelt Leaks for a gain vs. TCU in 1972.

The History of Texas Football

game and finished third in the Heisman Trophy voting.

He would have likely won it in 1974, but a serious knee injury suffered in spring training drained him of any chance of the award.

The 1973 Horns also claimed the SWC title, the sixth straight for Royal. The team of the '60s was well on its way to dominating the '70s. While Leaks was not a major factor in 1974, Royal was forced to turn to a freshman to lead the offense.

The young man had come to the Texas campus out of the Tyler rose fields. He was driven, and when you asked him why, he simply replied, "I want to build my momma a house so that she doesn't have to look at the stars at night through the holes in the roof."

His name was Earl Campbell.

Campbell teamed with quarterback Marty Akins and defensive tackle Doug English to lead the Longhorns to a Gator Bowl bid in '74, and in '75, Akins and Campbell combined to lead Texas to a SWC tri-Championship and a Bluebonnet Bowl win over No. 10 Colorado (38-21).

But 1976 did not bode well.

Texas finished the year 5-5-1, with a 6-6 tie with Oklahoma in a game filled with emotion and conflict between Royal and Oklahoma coach Barry Switzer, who had spied on Texas practices.

The Longhorns and Arkansas had again moved their game to the end of the year, and while the 1969 game carried immense significance because a national title hung in the balance, this one turned out to be just as important.

Following the Longhorns' 29-12 victory over Arkansas, Royal and Razorback coach Frank Broyles both announced their retirement. For Royal, it marked the end of a 20-year career that had been unmatched in SWC history. He left with three National Championships, 11 SWC titles and 167 victories (109 in league play).

When Royal and his great friend and defensive coordinator Mike Campbell left the athletics offices in December of 1976, it marked a changing of the guard.

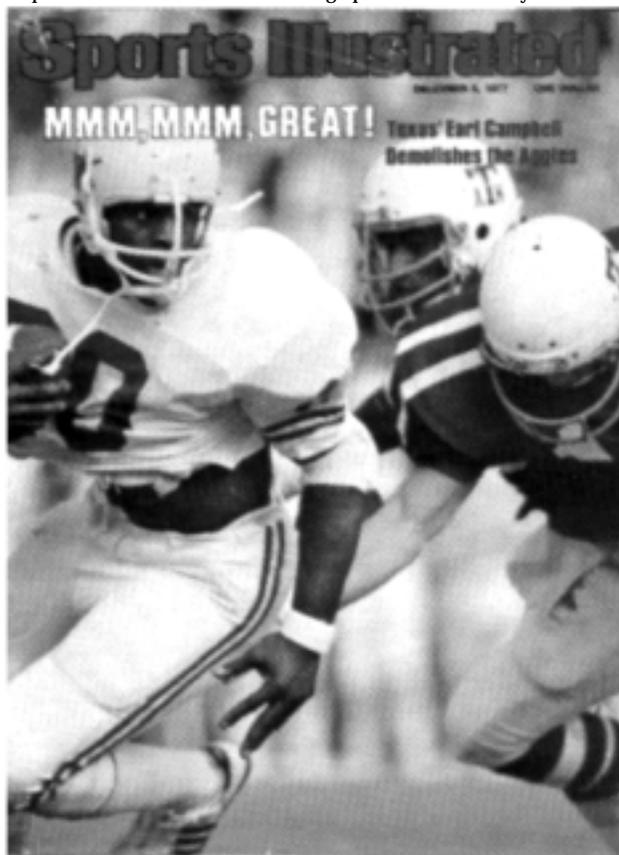
But it did not mean that Texas football was heading in a totally new direction.

Fred Akers, who had been an assistant at Texas from 1966-74, was hired to replace Royal. Akers brought many of the members of his staff from Wyoming, where he had served as head coach for two years. Among them was Leon Fuller, the defensive coordinator. He retained two of Royal's assistants, David McWilliams and—the man who

brought in Earl Campbell—recruiting coordinator Ken Dabbs.

Akers hit the UT campus with polish. He took the Longhorns out of the wishbone and put Campbell as the deep back in the I-formation. Fuller took charge of the defense, much as Mike Campbell had done for Royal, and the Horns were off and running.

The season of success was a storybook year as well. It included a 13-6 victory over No. 2 Oklahoma, when third-string quarterback Randy



Earl Campbell's 222 rushing yards and four touchdowns in a 57-28 win over No. 12 Texas A&M in 1977 earned him a spot on the cover of Sports Illustrated.

McEachern was thrust into the game because of injuries to Mark McBath and Jon Aune. There was a 13-9 win over Orange Bowl Champion No. 8 Arkansas and Lou Holtz in Fayetteville.

In fact, Akers' first team took a meteoric rise to the top of the national polls, and when the Steers crushed No. 12 Texas A&M, 57-28, Texas finished the regular season with an 11-0 mark.

Along the way, Campbell's storied background touched America. To go with it, he was very, very good and had a spectacular year. The numbers were staggering. He rushed for 1,744 yards and scored 19 touchdowns.

A consensus first-team All-American, he won UT's first Heisman Trophy.

His supporting cast included Brad Shearer, who won the Outland Trophy as the nation's top lineman, and Russell Erxleben, who was an All-American as a punter and kicker.

But Akers' career at Texas would be star-crossed. Just when it appeared that he would complete his first season with a stunning national title, the Horns fell to No. 5 Notre Dame in the Cotton Bowl, 38-10.

Earl Campbell earned his degree, and went on to become one of the greats in pro football.

Fred Akers' second season at Texas was a one-hop screen pass away from a second trip to the Cotton Bowl. A 10-7 loss to No. 8 Houston put the Cougars in Dallas, but not before one of the biggest "almosts" of an Akers career that would be full of them.

With the largest crowd in the history of Memorial Stadium watching, Akers called the perfect play. Near midfield and heading south, the Longhorns sent Johnny "Lam" Jones—merely the fastest player in football at the time—on a fake reverse toward the east side. The Cougars reacted. Every white-clad man on the field was on a dead run to the east side of the field.

Randy McEachern, the Longhorn quarterback who had been the Cinderella story of 1977, pulled up and looked west, where freshman A.J. Jones waited with a convoy of blockers. It was a short pass—no more than five or 10 yards—and it was a yard shorter than it needed to be. The ball bounced harmlessly on the turf. Houston went to the Cotton Bowl, and Akers' Longhorns salvaged a 9-3 season with an impressive pounding of No. 13 Maryland in the Sun Bowl.

But while the national title would evade the Longhorns of the late 1970s and early '80s, the period would produce some of the school's truly outstanding athletes who would go on to impressive professional careers.

The All-Americans of 1978 included Erxleben, the punter/kicker who was named to the team for the third straight year, as well as three players—defensive back Johnnie Johnson, defensive tackle Steve McMichael and wide receiver Lam Jones—who would make the team again in 1979.

While Akers' offense struggled with injuries in 1979, the defense, under the direction of Fuller, led the nation. But a season of promise ended in frustration. The Longhorns went to College Station to play the Texas A&M Aggies with a Sugar Bowl bid in their pocket. But without its starting

The History of Texas Football



Fred Akers sits atop the shoulders of a happy group of Longhorns following UT's 33-7 win over No. 6 Arkansas in 1982.

running backs and struggling freshman quarterback, the Horns lost to the Aggies, 13-7. With a 17-14 loss to No. 10 Arkansas and a 14-7 defeat in the Sun Bowl to No. 13 Washington, the Horns ended the season with a 9-3 mark.

For the 1980 season, ABC television decided that the teams that had dominated the last 20 years of college football should be the ones to open the decade of the '80s. Texas and Arkansas, the showpieces of the Southwest, moved their game to September 1, for the first-ever prime time weekend telecast on Labor Day night.

Texas, with Donnie Little engineering the offense, took an impressive 23-17 victory and was off and running again. The mark of Akers' teams was a sweep of September, and this was no exception.

When the Horns defeated No. 12 Oklahoma, 20-13, Texas rose to No. 2 in the nation. But again, injuries would take their toll. The Longhorns had an open date before playing SMU but couldn't get back up. The Mustangs, in the beginning of the glory run which would eventually earn them severe NCAA sanctions, knocked off Texas. The Horns stumbled to a 7-5 record, losing five of the next seven games, including a Bluebonnet Bowl game to No. 13 North Carolina—which was led by a linebacker named Lawrence Taylor

But where 1980 was frustrating, 1981 would be gratifying.

The Horns jumped to a No. 1 ranking with four opening wins, including a 14-7 victory over a building program at No. 14 Miami (Fla.)—which had quarterback Jim Kelly—and a 34-14 thrashing of No. 10 Oklahoma. But in the rain in Fayetteville, Arkansas derailed the Horns, 42-11. Texas beat No. 8 SMU, 9-7, in a showdown in Dallas, but wound up finishing second in the SWC to the Mustangs because of a 14-14 tie with Houston. The Houston game, however, produced another Cinderella story at quarterback for Texas.

the Longhorns all the way to No. 2 in the final national poll.

Again, the Texas defense under Fuller would earn national recognition. The three-year period from 1979-81 would produce such All-SWC selections as McMichael, Johnnie Johnson, Kenneth Sims, Lawrence Sampleton, Wes Hubert, Les Studdard, Joe Shearin, Mike Baab, Bruce Stoltz, Doug Shankle, Ricky Churchman, Derrick Hatchett and All-American offensive lineman Terry Tausch.

Just as a freak bounce turned the season of 1978, so tough luck would turn 1982 as well. For all the maligning Akers' offenses would take, this one was exceptional. With Brewer engineering and throwing a then-record 12 touchdown passes, Darryl Clark rushing for 1,000 yards and Herkie Walls providing excitement and explosiveness as wide receiver, the offense was rolling. It beat Houston, 50-0, and Texas A&M, 53-16.

But against No. 4 SMU, a Mustang pass bounced off the shoulder of Texas defender Jitter Fields and into the hands of a waiting Mustang for a long touchdown and a Pony victory that put SMU in Dallas and Texas in the Sun Bowl. The final ironic blow came as Texas, which was ranked No. 8, worked out the morning it was to leave for El Paso and Brewer suffered a frac-

tured thumb and missed the 26-10 loss to North Carolina in the snow. Starter Rick McIvor, the strong-armed West Texan, suffered an injury late in the first half of the game with the Cougars. Trailing 14-0 at halftime, Akers turned to a walk-on junior named Robert Brewer. Brewer brought Texas to the tie, and then led the Longhorns to a 14-12 Cotton Bowl victory over No. 3 Alabama—a win that vaulted

tured thumb and missed the 26-10 loss to North Carolina in the snow.

It was a solid nucleus, however, that returned in 1983, and when a young freshman running back named Edwin Simmons emerged in the early season, dreams of the national title were back.

With Simmons rushing for 100 yards, Texas beat No. 8 Oklahoma, 28-16, and moved to No. 2 in the nation. Simmons, however, was injured in the next game against Arkansas, and a promising career turned into a campaign of futility.

The season, however, continued successfully. So outstanding was the talent that four Longhorns made the AP first-team All-American team, including guard Doug Dawson, defensive backs Jerry Gray and Mossy Cade and linebacker Jeff Leiding. It was the first time that four people from the same team had made the AP team since the Army team of the 1940s.

But as good as Texas was, it continued to chase Nebraska. The mighty Cornhuskers were No. 1, the Horns were No. 2, and the hottest topic of the day was discussion of a playoff between the two after the bowls.

Texas' outstanding defense, this time under the direction of McWilliams, had the Horns in position to win the Cotton Bowl game over No. 7 Georgia. Holding a 9-3 lead late in the game, Texas appeared to have it won, when a fumbled punt set up Georgia deep in Texas territory, and a late touchdown produced a 10-9 Bulldog upset for UT's only defeat of the year.

Ironically, Nebraska fell that night in Miami, and had the Longhorns won, the national title would have been theirs.



The 1990 "Shock the Nation" tour began with a 17-13 road win at No. 21 Penn State.

The History of Texas Football

So talented was the 1983 team that nine players—the All-Americans Gray, Cade, Dawson and Leiding, as well as defensive back Fred Acorn, center Mike Ruether, defensive end Eric Holle, defensive tackle Tony Degrate and kicker Jeff Ward—were chosen All-SWC. Seventeen players were drafted, and two others signed as free agents.

Even with the vast loss of talent to graduation, 1984 began marvelously. Texas took advantage of an impressive victory over Penn State in the Meadowlands to vault to the No. 1 ranking again, and even after a tie with No. 2 Oklahoma (15-15), the Horns had moved back to No. 2 before a loss to Houston.

The Cotton Bowl was still a likely destination, but Texas fell to Baylor in Waco and Texas A&M in the final regular season game. Akers' Horns took an ill-fated trip to the first-ever Freedom Bowl and were crushed by Iowa, 55-17. The end for Akers came two seasons later, but it was the close of the 1984 season that determined his fate. Following the 5-6 season in 1986—Texas' first losing season since 1956—Akers was dismissed.

This time, Texas turned again to a favorite son. McWilliams, who had had a distinguished career as a UT assistant before leaving for a season as head coach at Texas Tech, was summoned home.

He came, in the words of a poster of his team dressed in long rider coats, "to restore order in the Southwest."

And he almost did it.

Buoyed by a last second win over No. 15 Arkansas, 16-14, when quarterback Bret Stafford hit Tony Jones with a dramatic touch-down pass, the Longhorns surprised everyone by playing for the SWC title at College Station against the Aggies. But No. 15 A&M prevailed, 21-14. Riding the brilliance of running back Eric Metcalf, Texas finished the season with an impressive win over a Pittsburgh in the Bluebonnet Bowl. The McWilliams era was off to a good start.

In 1988, however, the Horns stumbled to a 4-7 record, and despite some midseason heroics in 1989 which included wins over No. 15 Oklahoma (28-24) and undefeated No. 7 Arkansas (24-20), that season ended at 5-6.

McWilliams pondered the fate of his 1990 team, and came up with a slogan of "Whatever It Takes."

Shortly after the Longhorns surprised No. 21 Penn State (17-13) in State College, one of the Texas players walked into the locker room and shouted, "We're gonna shock the nation."

The "Shock The Nation Tour" was underway.

A last-minute win over No. 4 Oklahoma (14-13) continued it, and when Texas swept through the SWC unbeaten with only a close 29-22 loss to No. 1 Colorado blemishing the slate, the Horns climbed all the way to No. 3 in the country.

McWilliams was a nominee for national coach of the year, and Texas was in the running with Colorado, Georgia Tech and Miami for the MacArthur Bowl Trophy.

Stanley Richard would earn All-America honors and Johnny Walker, Stan Thomas, Michael Pollack, Shane Dronett, James Patton, Brian Jones, Lance Gunn and Alex Waits would all be chosen to the All-SWC team. Peter Gardere was the quarterback who led them, and seniors such as Keith and Kerry Cash, Stephen Clark and Chris Samuels were leaders.

But as the carousel circled before the Cotton Bowl, Texas would miss the ring again. This time, it would be No. 4 Miami that would deliver the knockout punch in a 46-3 defeat.

As 1991 drew to a close, the Longhorns—frustrated with injuries and without a kicking game—fell to a 5-6 season, the third losing year in the last four.

McWilliams resigned, and in December, Texas, for the third time in the past 55 years, looked in a totally new direction.

Just as D.X. Bible in the 1930s and Darrell Royal in the 1950s brought a freshness to the Texas program, so John Mackovic was hired to do it in 1992.

Mackovic quickly put in place a respected staff and a high-powered 1990s offense. A

college athletics.

But the challenge Mackovic faced turned out to be far more complex than just putting in a high-powered offense. Akers' push for a new dressing room, weight room and training room had come to fruition with the opening of the Neuhaus-Royal complex at the south end of the stadium in 1986, but that was the only facilities change in the 20 years since the west side deck had been completed in 1972.

Mackovic was told the entire operation of the football program needed a complete overhaul, and he went about changing everything from pictures to policies.

"We had let our house get old and decayed," said one longtime observer. "None of us wanted to hear that. We believed that Texas would always be on top, and we were satisfied with that. He told us we would have to change to get back to the top."

And change, as Mackovic so often said, "has no constituency."

The 100th year of Texas football, 1992, opened the Mackovic era. The season reflected a five-game winning streak that included an impressive win over No. 16

Oklahoma, but a late season loss to TCU—the

first to the Frogs since 1967—left the Longhorn faithful grumbling at the end of a 6-5 year.

The promised offensive explosion was building in 1993. The fruits of early recruiting success reflected record seasons for quarterback Shea Morenz and receivers Mike Adams and Lovell Pinkney. In a dramatic turn to an otherwise lackluster season,

Tony Brackens' All-America season played a key role in Texas claiming the final SWC title in 1995.

former assistant with Tom Landry for the Dallas Cowboys and a head coach of the Kansas City Chiefs, he combined the style of the professional game with the heart of

The History of Texas Football



James Brown's fourth-and-inches pass to Derek Lewis (#82) with 2:40 left in the game ensured a 37-27 Texas victory over No. 3 Nebraska in the 1996 Big 12 title game. The win made the Longhorns the league's first champion.

Mackovic's Horns came within one play of stealing the Southwest Conference title from No. 8 Texas A&M on a frigid night at Kyle Field.

Above all, 1994 would prove that Mackovic's ride on the carousel of dreams would be much more like another carnival ride—the roller coaster. Morenz entered the season as the cover boy of *Texas Football* magazine, but a knee injury in the fourth game of the season for all practical purposes ended his run of success as a Longhorn quarterback.

But born of necessity and created by urgency, there entered a figure who would dominate the position as no one had done since the glory days of James Street. To start the fifth game of the season against No. 16 Oklahoma, Mackovic tabbed a redshirt freshman named James Brown.

Brown captured the game and fans. On Thanksgiving morning in Waco, all the frustration of a season dominated by controversy was erased as Brown led an offensive masterpiece that found the record-setting Longhorns crushing the Bears, 63-35. The victory took Texas on to a Sun Bowl win that marked only the second bowl appearance in seven years. In a strange turn of events, with Texas A&M ineligible for the title, Texas shared the Southwest Conference crown with five other schools.

By 1995, it appeared the program was on solid ground. Brown continued to set passing records, Adams achieved more receiving marks and two

running backs rushed for over 2,000 yards between them.

The superlatives of the season were many. The Horns captured one of the most dramatic victories in school history against No. 14 Virginia, when Phil Dawson's last second 50-yard kick into the wind brought a 17-16 Longhorn win. It was only the second time on record that Texas had won on the final play of the game.

Even more satisfying, however, would be Brown's gutsy performance on a sprained ankle against No. 16 Texas A&M. The 16-6 victory over the Aggies—the first in 12 years at Kyle Field for the Longhorns—earned Texas an unbeaten championship season on the final day of Southwest Conference history. That was the satisfying part. The most significant part was the coming of age of a freshman running back with a winning smile, dreadlocks in his hair, a huge heart and an unbelievable gift to run.

His name was Ricky Williams. That day in College Station, in the twilight of a storied conference, he rushed for 163 yards on 24 carries against one of the nation's best defenses. With speed and power, he left his calling card for all of college football to see.

Texas opened the 1996 season ranked among the Top 10 (No. 8) for the first time since 1984. If nothing more, that year served as a message that if you hang in there, something good is going to happen. Amidst high hopes, Texas had seen its

season struggle to a 7-4 mark, with three of the four losses literally coming on the final play of the game. The frustration had begun in the third game of the year.

Notre Dame's first trip to Austin in over 40 years had been awaited with much anticipation, and officials made the day extra special by announcing that Texas Memorial Stadium would be renamed Darrell K Royal-Texas Memorial Stadium to honor the legendary Longhorn coach. At the same time, vast new plans for renovation were underway, with the installation of grass to replace the artificial surface which had been in the stadium since 1969.

Led by Williams, No. 6 Texas had overcome an Irish lead in the second half, but No. 9 Notre Dame scored a late touchdown and stabbed a knife in the heart of Longhorn hopes with a final play-field goal to leave with a 27-24 victory. A revenge loss to No. 19 Virginia, a defeat in overtime to Oklahoma and a dropped pass inside the 10-yard line that would have set up an almost certain victory over No. 8 Colorado resulted in four defeats.

Still, with a five-game win streak including a 51-15 pounding of archrival Texas A&M, Texas earned the right to represent the six South Division schools against No. 3 Nebraska in the first-ever Big 12 Championship game in St. Louis.

James Brown, whose heroics as a Longhorn quarterback by this time had earned him the right to swagger, bravely faced the media at a Monday

The History of Texas Football



Mack Brown, shown here with Longhorn legend Darrell Royal, became the 28th head coach in Texas football history on December 4, 1997.

press conference before the game. Noting that Nebraska had been installed as a prohibitive three-touchdown favorite, a media representative asked Brown how he would approach the game.

"We might win by three touchdowns," Brown shrugged.

Blasphemy, thought the Cornhuskers and the national press.

But with perhaps the best big-game game plan ever, Mackovic dissected the vaunted Nebraska defense like a skilled surgeon. Texas scored on the opening drive and late in the game held on to a three-point lead facing fourth down and inches deep in its own territory with just over two minutes left in the game.

Mackovic and Brown conferred at the Texas bench.

"Steeler roll left" was an option pass where the quarterback rolled to his left and chose to pass or run.

"Look to run," Mackovic told Brown.

Nebraska stacked the middle, anticipating a run from Priest Holmes, who had a banner day on the ground. Brown rolled left, then pulled up. A Nebraska defender stood in the way of his cut. But behind him—in fact, behind everybody—was tight end Derek Lewis.

Brown tossed the ball and Lewis caught it and headed for the end zone. An ensuing touchdown gave the Longhorns a shocking 37-27 victory, an Alliance Bowl bid opposite No. 7 Penn State in the Fiesta Bowl and the first Big 12 title ever.

It was a moment seldom equaled in the annals of sport.

One of the most watched TV games in history, the play became John Mackovic's benchmark. Ushers at the David Letterman show in New York high-fived him. An adoring public welcomed him back to Austin.

But within a year, his "defining moment" would be his epitaph. On a bright fall day less than a year later, Texas entered a game in Austin against UCLA with National Championship hopes, and left with a 66-3 loss from which the Longhorns, and Mackovic, could never recover.

Despite a record-setting season by Ricky Williams — who won the Doak Walker Award as the nation's top running back and earned consensus

first-team All-American honors in an otherwise dismal 4-7 UT year — when the season ended, the Mackovic era was over.

The search for a successor took less than a week. The deep roots of the Texas tradition proved to be a drawing card in the remarkable hiring of a Tennessean whose down-home wit and charm reminded a lot of Longhorn faithful of the legendary Royal.

Mack Brown, who ironically had coached North Carolina in a 1994 Sun Bowl game against the Longhorns, proved to be everything Texas was looking for as he left a Tar Heel program that had been in the nation's Top 10 for two straight seasons. He reached out to alumni, Texas high school coaches and former players. He embraced Royal and his former assistants, who for the first time in 21 years were welcome and re-involved in the program.

Where Mackovic had tried to build a new tradition, Brown reached deep into the roots of Texas to align his program with the success of the past. The love affair with the Texas fans was instant. He spoke to more than 60 different groups, bringing the message of "Come early ... be loud ... stay late ... wear orange with pride."

With completion of a new stadium deck on the east side, a new football support building including offices, dressing rooms, an expanded weight room and medical facilities, Texas moved



Ricky Williams rushed to the NCAA record in dramatic fashion, scoring on a 60-yard run vs. No. 6 Texas A&M in 1998.

The History of Texas Football

to the front of the class in operations. But that was only a part of the reconstruction going on with the Longhorn football program.

Brown quickly put together a talented, veteran staff which represented 189 years of coaching experience. And he went about healing the bruises of everybody. He brought a gospel of the positive, and restored the team's faith in itself and instilled a renewed loyalty from the fans.

It turned out to be a year of magic moments. Overcoming a scary 1-2 start that included losses to two top five teams on the road, Brown's Longhorns became the cardiac kids. The last five regular season games — which included four wins — were all decided in the final two minutes of play.

The season would have many heroes. It would include a return to hard-nosed Texas defense, best exemplified by linebacker Dusty Renfro, the team's Defensive MVP.

Offensively, the headliners would be three players with different stories, who came together for remarkable success. First, of course, was Williams. The 1997 Doak Walker Award winner returned for his senior season, turning down an opportunity to enter the NFL draft early. During the year, Williams would set 46 Texas school records and 21 NCAA marks. He would become the nation's all-time career rusher, scorer and all-purpose yards gainer.

He became the school's second Heisman Trophy winner, won the Doak Walker Award for the second straight year and took home every national MVP trophy for which he was eligible.

Joining him in the spotlight was wide receiver Wane McGarity, who provided a tremendous deep threat and set school receiving records. McGarity was on the receiving end from a freshman quarterback named Major Applewhite, who rose to stardom after an injury in the second game of the year felled the senior starter Richard Walton.

The season included a huge victory at No. 7 Nebraska, where the Longhorns snapped the Cornhuskers' 47-game home winning streak. The unranked Texas vs. No. 6 Texas A&M game in Austin, where Williams' 60-yard touchdown run broke the all-time NCAA career rushing record, was one of the true classics of a classic series. It featured a dramatic Aggie comeback, silenced in the final seconds by Kris Stockton's game-winning field goal that netted the 26-24 Longhorn victory.

Texas advanced to represent the Big 12 Conference in the Southwestern Bell Cotton Bowl, and Brown finished his first season at Texas with a win over No. 25 Mississippi State to close the season at

In 2000, Brown once again led the Longhorns to a nine-win season, marking the first time since 1981-83 that UT accomplished that feat in three straight seasons. Texas claimed victory in its final six regular season games and lost in a shootout with No. 8 Oregon in the Holiday Bowl to finish the year with a 9-3 record and a No. 12 final national ranking. The ranking matched the Horns highest final ranking in nearly two decades.

Brown's third UT squad was led by a pair of consensus first-team All-Americans DT Hampton and OT Leonard Davis as well as first-team All-Big 12 RB Hodges Mitchell and CB Quentin Jammer. Hampton, Texas' team MVP who became the first tackle in UT history to lead the team in tackles in consecutive seasons, and Davis, also an

Outland Trophy finalist, became the first Longhorn consensus first-team All-American duo since Tony Degrate and Jerry Gray in 1984. Mitchell established himself as just the fourth player in UT history to post back-to-back 1,000-yard rushing seasons and finished his career ranked sixth on the UT all-time rushing list (2,664 yards).

Texas was one of only three schools that ranked among the nation's top 20 in total offense and total defense in 2000. The Horns ranked 14th nationally in total offense (439.0 yards per game) and posted a school-record 293.5 passing yards per game. Meanwhile, the defense continued its dramatic transformation into one of the nation's premier units. The Horns led the NCAA in pass efficiency defense (84.3 rating) and ranked seventh nationally in total defense (278.3 yards per game).

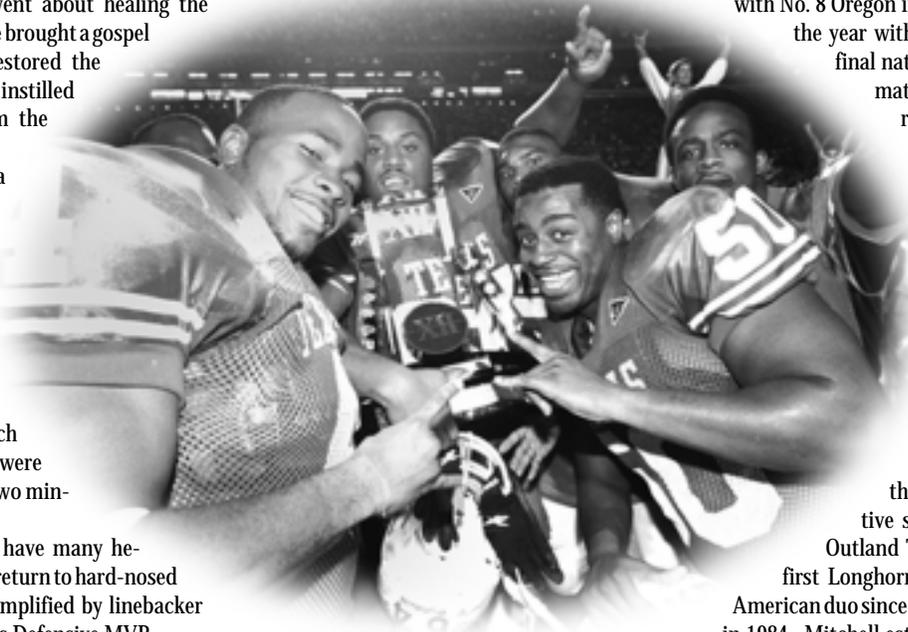
In three seasons, after years of rollercoaster rides and almosts, Brown appears to have the pieces in place to finally rebuild the dynasty.

A man whom people say was "born to coach, somewhere with his love of tradition and his clear down-home values," Brown has the ghosts of Texas smiling through "The Eyes of Texas."

It all began on a misty night in November of 1893, and now the program is operating in its third different century.

The characters who have ridden on the merry-go-round are many, and each in his own way has carved a little piece of history. There have been heartaches and heart throbs. There have been catches and near misses.

But all in all, it continues to be a grand ride.



Texas claimed the Big 12 South Championship and earned a spot in the league title game en route to a nine-victory season in 1999.

9-3. It was the first New Year's Day bowl win for Texas since the 1982 Cotton Bowl. It helped Texas finish the year ranked 15th and with wins in eight of its final nine games.

Brown followed up that spectacular start by leading the Longhorns to the Big 12 South Division Championship in 1999, a second straight nine-win season (first time since 1982-83), another Southwestern Bell Cotton Bowl berth and a second straight Top 25 finish.

While Applewhite set single-season school records for passing yards (3,357) and TD passes (21) and Kwame Cavil eclipsed the UT and Big 12 marks for receptions (100) and receiving yards (1,188), the Longhorns rolled to a 9-5 mark. With all of the offensive success, it was the dramatic turnaround in the defensive effort that played a key role in the Longhorns upsetting No. 3 Nebraska in Austin and winning nine of the seasons first 11 games.

Led by first-team All-American tackle Casey Hampton, team MVP end Aaron Humphrey and first-team All-Big 12 tackle Shaun Rogers, Texas ranked sixth nationally in total defense (286.7 ypg.). That was a dramatic turnaround for a defense that ranked 85th in the country (399.2 ypg.) in 1997. Texas ranked 12th (101.6 ypg.) against the run and 17th (105.7 efficiency rating) versus the pass in 1999 as well.