

Alamo Heritage Bowl

Defensive line play is critical for A&T

By Chronicle Staff

The Alamo Heritage Bowl will feature its share of top-flight stars when North Carolina A&T squares off against Alabama State two Saturdays from now at Joe Robbie Stadium in Miami.

But in spite of the stars presence, this game will come down to how well the Aggies defensive line performs against the Hornets offensive line.

Center Patrick Johnson, guard William Kyle and tackle Roman

Nelson are the primary bulldozers that enabled Alabama State's offense to average 41.2 ppg and 427.6 total ypg.

When you consider that those three have an average weight of almost 282 pounds per man, you

understand why ASU gets things done on the line of scrimmage.

The key barometer for A&T in this game is the defensive line. When the Aggies have lost, it's because the front line didn't win the battle. That was the case vs. Winston-Salem State (a 13-10 loss) and vs. Delaware State (31-26 loss).

Down linemen Kevin Little, Knox Thompson and Reggie White form the core of a defense that topped the MEAC charts in quarterback sacks (47) and interceptions (22) during the regular season.

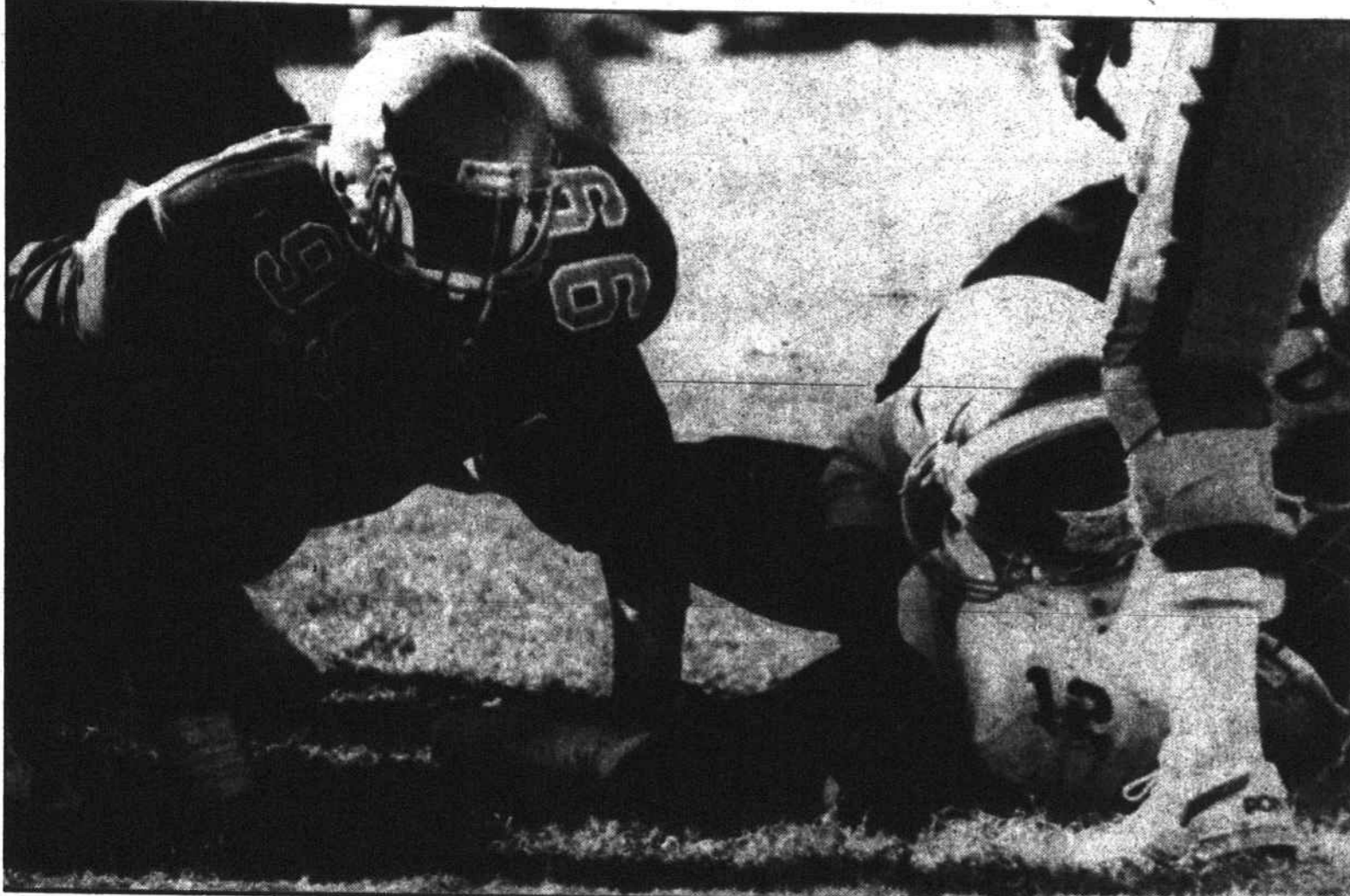
A&T's bruising trio accounted for 70 percent of the team's sack total. Quickness is a forte for the guys up front. But they have sufficient size to battle against other bulksters, averaging roughly 272 pounds per man.

When those three are in their collective groove, few teams can keep them from being disruptive forces.

If A&T is to reign as the first-ever Alamo Heritage Bowl champion, it will be because its defensive line won the war in the trenches.

Photo by Chronicle Staff

Knox Thompson (99 at far left) and his A&T line mates will be very busy in Miami.



PUTTING THE PEDAL TO THE METAL CAN HAVE A WHOLE NEW MEANING.

The shock, the anguish, the damage — the results of a crash far outweigh the time you save by driving fast. It's a fact that your chances of hitting someone or something increase as you exceed the speed limit. A crash like this can happen in a heartbeat. And when it does, it will change your life forever.

SPEEDING GETS YOU NOWHERE. FAST.

U.S. Department of Transportation

Oilers finally win a division title

By MICHAEL A. LUTZ
Associated Press Sports Writer

HOUSTON — The Houston Oilers did the same things they did two weeks ago in a loss to the Pittsburgh Steelers.

Sunday, they just did it better.

Houston rallied behind a rejuvenated running game and two touchdowns by Allen Pinkett for a satisfying 31-6 victory over the Steelers that gave the Oilers their first AFC Central Division championship.

"It's been a long time coming," Oilers center Bruce Matthews said. "I think about the guys who have come and gone and helped make this team what it is. I feel for those guys. It's hard to imagine we got to this point."

The Oilers (10-4) had failed two straight weeks to wrap up the title in losses to the Steelers (26-14) and Philadelphia (13-6).

They weren't going to be denied a third time Sunday.

Pinkett rushed 98 yards on 16 carries and had touchdown runs of seven and 11 yards. The improved running, opened the Oilers passing lanes and allowed Warren Moon to complete 23 of 36 passes for 254 yards and a 16-yard touchdown pass to Haywood

Jeffries.

"All the maybes and what ifs are behind us now, it's here," Matthews said. "And it's very gratifying."

The Oilers defense contributed to the victory with seven sacks and a 70-yard fumble return by linebacker Al Smith for a touchdown.

"I played half-mad," said Ray Childress, who had two sacks. "I've been here for 10 years and this is my happiest moment. I felt we had to play half mad, violent. We've been too gentle."

Moon threw a career high five interceptions in the 26-14 loss to the Steelers but he had only one on Sunday.

"We didn't do a whole lot different, and they didn't do a lot different," Moon said, comparing the two games. "We just didn't turn the ball over and we ran the ball better because we ran it more today."

"We played a cat and mouse game with their defense because they were really coming at us."

The Oilers manhandled the Steelers from the start, taking a 10-3 halftime lead on Pinkett's seven-yard run and a 24-yard field goal by Al Del Greco.

Pittsburgh (5-9) got its only

points on a 54-yard field goal by Gary Anderson as the halftime buzzer sounded and a 36-yard Anderson kick with 13 minutes expired in the third quarter.

The Oilers went up 17-3 with 6:21 expired in the third quarter on Moon's pass to Jeffries, who leaped high in the end zone for the score. Pinkett scored on an 11-yard run 35 seconds into the fourth quarter.

The Steelers drove to the Houston eight yard line where Lamar Lathon forced quarterback Neil O'Donnell's fumble. Smith scooped it up and ran 70 yards for the final Oiler touchdown.

The celebration started before the end of the game with Houston Coach Jack Pardee being doused twice with kegs of water. Ernest Givins did an end zone dance and defensive end Sean Jones remained on the field long after his teammates had gone into the locker room.

"We've been so close for so many years and this is such a special moment," Pardee said. "I've been here 10 years and five of those were littered with coaching changes. This is a relief as much as anything."

Pittsburgh coach Chuck Noll saw little difference in the two games except the outcome.

Irving sets Cowboys' all-time receiving record

IRVING, Texas (AP) — Wide receiver Michael Irvin set an all-time Dallas record Sunday for catches in a season, grabbing 5 for 101 in the Cowboys' 23-14 victory over New Orleans. Irvin's 78 receptions this year erased Herschel Walker's team record of 76 in 1986.

With 1,262 receiving yards, Irvin also surpassed the team season record of 1,232 yards set by Bob Hayes in 1966. He also tied Hayes' record of six 100-yard receiving games in a single season. And he tied Lance Rentzel's team record of three 100-plus games in a row.

... Eric Martin, the Saints' all-time leading receiver, extended to 71 the number of straight games in which he has caught a pass. He caught 6

for 66 yards and a touchdown against the Cowboys.

... Saints cornerback Toi Cook was sidelined Sunday with a fractured left forearm. The extent of the injury was not immediately known.

... Ken Willis, with a 50-yarder, became the only Cowboy ever to kick three field goals of 50 or more yards in one season. His three Sunday hiked his total for the year to 23, tying him for second most field goals in a season. Rafael Septien set the record of 27 in 1981

... New Orleans remains one of 10 NFL teams still looking to win a game at Texas Stadium. Sunday's loss was the Saints' seventh straight in Texas Stadium and ninth in a row in Dallas. Overall, Dallas holds a 13-3 edge in the series.

Willie Guess
Salesleader of the
Flow Chevrolet Team!



My pledge to you:

- To help you find the right car or truck at the price you want.
- To help you arrange the financing and monthly payment schedule you need.
- To make buying a car or truck fun.
- To be here if you ever need any help.

Willie J. Guess

P.S. Bring this ad with you and we'll give you a full tank of gas and oil change at no additional charge if you buy a car or truck from me.

Flow Chevrolet • Geo
1400 South Stratford Rd. • Winston-Salem
760-7000

CHRISTMAS
Joy

May the meaning of the holiday be deeper, its friendship stronger, its hope brighter as it comes to you during the new year.



Warm Wishes for the Season from



FIRST FEDERAL SAVINGS BANK

Main Office: 230 North Cherry Street;
Branch Offices: 490 Hanes Mall/3443 Robin Hood Road/
130 S. Stratford Road/2815 Reynolda Road/3001 Woughtown Street;
Mocksville Office: 142 Gaither Street; Clemmons Office: 2561 Lewisville-Clemmons Road
Stanleyville Office: 6000 University Parkway
919-723-3604