The team looked good for two quarters against SMU. Fans had visions of a 5-5 season until the bubble abruptly burst in the second half. SMU gained almost at will and controlled the ball for all but 15 plays while scoring 17 points.

After the game more than one student said he knew Rice could lose the game, if the team really tried. Or as one student put it, "The Owls grasped defeat out of the jaws of victory."

This is a warranted, but all too brutal, criticism. On the lighter side of things, the Owls' defense for the first time seemed capable of containing the opposition. The offense scored their customary two touchdowns, and it seems that when the defense holds our opponents to less than 14 points, the Owls will win again.

Is there any case for optimism this Saturday in Austin, or do we believe the odds makers who have installed Texas as the 25 point favorite? Historically Rice always gives Texas a good fight, but this year it could be different. Texas has the best SWC offense and Rice the worst defense. Everyone that has asked about the game prediction just guffaws at a hint that Rice might win. One person believes Texas will score 64 points on us. Another sold both his guests tickets at vastly reduced rates after the SMU game. Someone else suggested that Teasips aren't as dumb as they look when they schedule Rice for their Homecoming game.

But is it possible for a Rice team that has allowed 100 points to be scored against it in three games to beat Texas? Like most Rice teams it is hard to say. All of them have had the talent to defeat anyone, but it has always been a question of which games they wanted to win. In past years they have always wanted to beat Texas.

The logical pick this week would be the Sips, but when has this column been logical. Since the game with Texas my freshman year, I have always had a dislike for the Teasips, their "we're number one" chant (which—thank-you, Arkansas—they can't use this year), and the Tower that turns sickening orange if they win.

Three years ago the Owls brought an 0-3-1 record into a game against undefeated Texas. The final score was 14-14 and the only blemish on the Texas record that year. The student rallying cry that year was "pray for a miracle."

Consequently, praying for a miracle, I am going to stick with the Owls and a score of something like 14-13.