Nothing For Farmers

By STUART GLASS
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To the at least mild astonishment of some 45,000 fans, coaches, and players, the Rice Owls looked very much not unlike a football team in their 19-8 vanquishing of Texas A&M last Saturday. The victory proved at least two things: the value of a healthy starting quarterback, and the value of blocking.

Walter McReynolds was as good as ever, hitting nine of 16 passes and contributing a 21-yard run which kept the drive for the clinching touchdown going. And the blocking of the line was excellent, as testified by the fact that most of the time Gene Fleming, Chuck Latourette, and Don Elsik had at least a three yard gain before they ran into anybody.

Also encouraging was the emergence of Dale Callihan as an offensive end. Callihan was tabbed as the best pass-catcher on the team in spring training, but was used mostly on defense all year long. Against the Aggies he caught three times as many passes as he had in the seven preceding games, namely three, for 33 yards and a touchdown. The score was a magnificent one to watch. Callihan grabbed the ball on the 20, and tromped straight down the sideline as no less than three Aggies bounced off him along the way. The last man attempted to shove him out of bounds at the five, but succeeded only in sending him sprawling into the end zone.

McReynolds also pitched to Fleming 16 yards for a tally, as Rice took a 13-0 lead at halftime. But A&M rammed 80 yards late in the third quarter and scored the first touchdown against the Owls in Rice Stadium this season. Holding only a 13-8 edge, McReynolds directed the team 67 yards, including his 21-yard scamper after failing to find an open pass receiver, and sent Latourette around left end nine yards on the first play of the fourth quarter for the final score.

Since the defense allowed the farmers nothing in particular other than their scoring march, Rice looks like it could end up winning more than they lose. All that's left is to defeat TCU Saturday, and Baylor the next week. At this point, a 5-4-1 record doesn't look too bad.