gets more scholarships

hagan follows ‘dean of coaches’

by tommy hearron

thresher sports editor

bo hagan, jess neely’s newly appointed successor as rice’s head football coach, is a man who should make subtle, but noticeable, changes in the appearance of intercollegiate athletics at rice.

a dynamic, energetic person who still embodies the integrity long associated with jess neely, hagan, a favorite of the players, should mix knowledge of the game, ability to communicate with his players, and dignity into a winning combination.

having come to rice ten years ago from smu, the popular backfield coach had formerly served under bobby dodd at georgia tech, in the company of ray graves and frank broyles, both of whom have since become head coaches.

ending speculation that rice might be planning to de-emphasize football, hagan announced the university had consented to an increase both in the coaching staff and in the number of athletic scholarships offered.

concerning assistant coaches, hagan said he had not yet decided who he would like to bring in nor who among the present staff he would ask to remain. he emphasized, however, that those currently on the staff would receive first consideration.

concerning scholarships, coach hagan declined to specify the exact number he would like to give each year, but noted that the state schools in the conference were currently giving the legal maximum of fifty.

rice would give, he said, a number “such as to compare with the other private schools in the conference.”

when asked about his philosophy of football, coach hagan answered that offense and defense are stereotyped in college football and offer few opportunities for variation. he prefers the “i” formation, however, with a passing attack to complement the running game. “you can’t win without throwing!”

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Hagan sees no recruiting problems

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he said.

Optimistic about the team’s future, he said he felt Rice could compete with anyone in the Southwest Conference. He was pleased with the quality of players he is inheriting, but was somewhat concerned about the perennial problem of a lack of depth.

Although the other conference schools have been actively recruiting since the beginning of the week, Coach Hagan did not feel this would handicap Rice’s efforts.

“I thing any further delay would complicated recruiting,” he said, “but as of now it isn’t too late.” He will shortly be leaving to join the rest of the staff in recruiting in the area within fifty miles of Houston, where he plans to concentrate his talent search.

He gracefully skirted the question of integrated athletics, but did say he would continue recruiting athletes who could meet Rice’s academic requirements, a policy Coach Neely has followed for several years.

Coach Neely, who was also present at the announcement, praised Hagan for his interest in his players and said he was very pleased with the appointment. “I don’t think the players know about this (Hagan’s appointment) yet, but I feel they’ll be delighted,” Coach Neely said.

The appointment came as the Board of Governors at its regular monthly meeting approved Hagan’s recommendation by a faculty committee headed by Dr. Alan J. Chapman. The committee made its selection after interviewing “a very large number” of applicants.

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