“Gray Eagle” Only Coach To Serve With Six Title Teams

By RONNIE KLINE

One of the finest athletes ever produced in the State of Texas, Cecil Grigg, has served more years for the Rice University Owls than any other member of the coaching staff. The “Gray Eagle,” who coaches because of the youthful attributes of the profession, has been at Rice since 1934, when he became a coaching aide.

GRIGG, WHO NOW has slowed his pace only slightly, works with the Rice “lightweight” team, a new challenge which yields him a great degree of pleasure. The only man to serve with all six Owl Southwest Conference title teams, “Cece” still advises the varsity defensive backs and punters.

Investigating Coach Grigg’s past, we discover a colorful and exciting career, both as athlete and coach. While attending Austin College in Sherman during World War I, he was a superior athlete. Football, baseball, and track star. His final year in college was spent at Dallas University, from which he graduated in 1917.

GRIGG STARRED SEVERAL years with the legendary Canton Bulldogs, then the scourge of professional football. Serving in the same backfield with Jim Thorpe, whom Grantland Rice termed “the greatest athlete that ever lived,” Coach Grigg led the Bulldogs to three national titles in a row.

In 1927, the year the “Babe” hit his much-discussed sixty, Grigg played for the New York Giants until a knee injury ended his playing career. He later served as a baseball umpire in the Southern Association. After spending five years with the coaching staff at Austin College, he landed with Rice, where he has remained a fixture ever since.

AS A BACKFIELD COACH with the Owls, Grigg has helped develop many fine runners, passers, and kickers. Among the group of All-Americans coached by Grigg are John McCauley (1935), Kosse Johnson (1953), Dickey Moegle (1954), and Bill Wallace (1934), whom Grigg terms the best. Says the coach, “He could run and run hard, and fast. He could pass good enough, and he was a terrific defense man. He liked the game of football.”

Like Bill Wallace, the pupil, Cecil Grigg, the teacher, likes the game of football. As the Gray Eagle, himself, put it, “I love the work. It keeps you young.”