"Red" Bales Wingmen Are Rice Grid Legend

By RONNIE KLINE

Since the inception of its football program, Rice University has been blessed with nine men who, in one particular year, were named on at least two All-American football selections. Notably, three of these played the same position — end. Interestingly enough, all three wore jersey number eighty-four, almost a Rice legend in itself.

Froggie Williams, Bill Howton, and Buddy Dial all made headlines for Rice while under the excellent tutorage of Allen M. "Red" Bale. After assuming the position of assistant coach at Rice in 1947, Bale gained recognition by his ability to develop many youngsters of lesser natural ability into superior college ends. The products of Bale’s coaching wizardry have perhaps engendered the most memorable of all Rice gridiron thrills.

WHAT OWL fan can forget Williams’ last second field goal (1949) that nipped the Longhorns; Hart’s sensational one-handed grab (1953) that killed Texas’ hopes with but fifty-one seconds remaining; or simply the way Dial caught them: “high in the air, on his knees, or leaping out of the end zone.” Certainly, the accomplishments of Balaught wingmen speak loudly in "Red’s" praise.

Not only is Bale acclaimed for his coaching, but also for his scouting ability. Says head coach Jess Neely, "I consider "Red" an awfully fine scout, and he has done an outstanding job with our ends."

A NATIVE of Dallas, Coach Bale began a highly successful career as a lineman at Forest High School. Although he played all line positions at one time or another, he settled on Guard for his college tenure. In 1934 and 1935, Bale was an all Southwest Conference guard for the Owls, and was a member of Rice’s first conference championship team (1934).

Upon graduation, "Red" assumed a coaching position at Baytown High School until 1942, when he entered the service. While an Air Force officer, he helped coach a powerful Randolph Field eleven, which attained the stature of a National Championship.

"RED" RETURNED to Baytown in 1947 to become head coach there. With tongue in cheek, the coach says, "I didn’t lose a game at Baytown." (The Owls hired him before he had a chance to field a team.)

Evaluating Bale’s fourteen years here, we note that few schools in the country have had finer end play than Rice. "Red" Bale is the man responsible for their success.