



TAILGATING WITH THE SPIRIT

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THE SPIRIT NEWSLETTER

“Week 1 – A Fresh Start”

OVERVIEW



the bandwagon ready to make a run at the Big 12 South championship. This is what makes college football so great every season is a new beginning.

It's been a little more than seven months since the Texas A&M University football team played their last game of the 2008 season, wrapping up a forgettable season going just 4-8. The 2008 season was the first season under new Head Coach Mike Sherman and staff and any of the hype around his hire pretty much lost its fizz by season's end, with a lot of A&M faithful already questioning the hire. Of course time heals broken hearts and a lot of those faithful aggie fans are back on

THE MATCH-UP

New Mexico @ Texas A&M

Date: 09/5/2009

Time: 6:00 pm

Game Day Morsels:

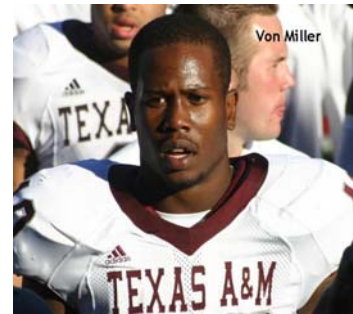
- New Mexico: Coach Mike Locksley starts his first year as the New Mexico Lobos head coach as he tries to turn around a program that went 4-8 in the Mountain West Conference. The offense lost running back Rodney Ferguson, who tallied 1,105 yards and 13 touchdowns, but the ground game should still be strong thanks to a bevy of talented offensive linemen. Tackle Sylvester Hatten and guard Matt Streid are gone, but Bryon Bell had a promising freshman campaign and can only get better and center Erik Cook is an experienced senior who will be the leader of the unit. Now New Mexico just has to find a capable runner to get through the gaps created by the line. James Wright rushed for 348 yards as a freshman and could be the player who can actually fill the gap left behind by Ferguson. If the ground game, which ranked 16th in the nation last year, can stay near that mark, the Lobos offense will be in good shape. The defense could be in worse shape. Linebacker Clint McPeck is a great player who deserves more credit than he gets, but the defense as a whole only returns three starters. Luckily, two of those players, Ian Clark and Frankie Solomon are in the secondary and that should help out a team that gave up over 213 yards per game in the air, but the front line needs to be completely replaced.



- Texas A&M: Head Coach Mike Sherman will lead his team out this Saturday with a lot of skeptic Aggie fans yearning to see improvement. Offensively the Aggies will take the field under the leadership of QB Jerrod Johnson. Johnson is coming off a record breaking season and has reportedly added some mass and worked on moving through his progressions quicker. Johnson could build off of last season and have sensational season, especially with the added weapons he has at receiver. The WR position could be the strongest group A&M has going into the 2009 season with Jeff Fuller



headlining the group. Fuller is a man child and has the talent to be an All Big 12 player (not to mention playing on Sundays in a couple years). The ground could take-off this season also with Cyrus Gray having a year under his belt and the addition of Christine Michael a true freshman that is getting everyone excited. Of course the skill positions won't succeed without a serviceable offensive line and that is the biggest question mark the Aggies have; especially the Left Tackle position. Defensively, the Aggies may be young and under sized, but they will bring speed and aggressiveness. One of Sherman's main concerns after reviewing film of the 2008 season was the lack of pressure that was put on the opposing quarterbacks. The Aggies will try to resolve this issue by creating a new position within their defensive alignment they call the Jack Position. This new position caters to all the strengths of Von Miller and his play during the off-season has been nothing but positive, so expect big things from Miller in 2009. Also, one of the biggest surprises on the defensive side of the ball is the play of Kyle Mangan. He's been described as an old school linebacker that makes all the right reads.



- The Game: The Aggies will control this game from the get go. Expect some sloppy play with some busted plays/assignments due to the amount of youngsters on the field, but expect the Aggies to come out fast and aggressive trying to prove something to themselves and the fans. Expect WR Jeff Fuller to have a monster game; there's not many teams that will be able to contain him if the Aggies O-Line can give Johnson sometime in the pocket. The defense will struggle at times against the running game of the New Mexico Lobos, but costly mistakes by the Lobos will prove too much to overcome.

Prediction: New Mexico-17 A&M- 35

TRIVIA

What NFL team does former QB Stephen McGee and TE Martellus Bennett play for?

SCHEDULE

Estimated Arrival Time: 8:00 am 9/5/09

Food Served: 2:30 pm 9/5/09

Estimated Departure Time: 12:00 am 9/6/09

MENU

- Rock the Lobos Ribs



- Howling Hot Potato Salad



- BTHO New Mexico Bread



LOCATION

The Spirit will be in the horseshoe in front of Kleberg every game-day Saturday morning.

