

# Utes get it together, beat UTEP

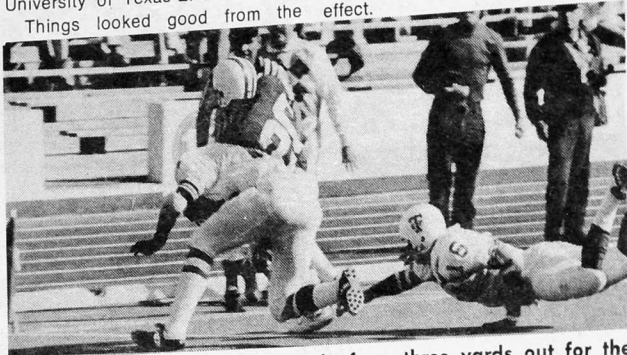
by GARY LESSER  
Chronicle Staff

The University of Utah football team has finally put it all together, and if the pieces don't fall part by next Saturday, they could well be in line for a shot at the Western Athletic Conference title. The Utes proved they are a power to be reckoned with after a convincing win Saturday over a highly touted aerial show from near Juarez, the University of Texas-El Paso 39-20.

Things looked good from the

tempts. Fleming was also devastating on kickoffs, as he repeatedly drove the UTEP kick-runners deep into their endzone, forcing either a short runback, or none at all.

Still in the opening stanza, Gilreath became one of the world's highest scoring linemen by tackling Keithley in the end zone to make it 11-0. This prompted UTEP coach Bobby Dobbs to huddle on the sidelines with his offensive linemen and say, "Hey guys, what's happening out there?" or some words to that effect.



**Utah's Gene Belczyk (20) runs in from three yards out for the Utes' final touchdown. Belczyk had a great day running—21 carries for 116 yards.**

start for the Utes, as they won the coin toss for the first time in four games. Following a mad scramble for the ball on a Utah punt, and 22 yards worth of fumbling early in the first quarter, UTEP's talented quarterback Gary Keithley stood as far back in his end zone as he could while awaiting the snap for his own punt. The newly refurbished Robert L. Rice stadium then saw its first two points, as a furious rush by amazing Alan Gilreath smothered Keithley's attempt and the ball rolled out of the end zone for a safety.

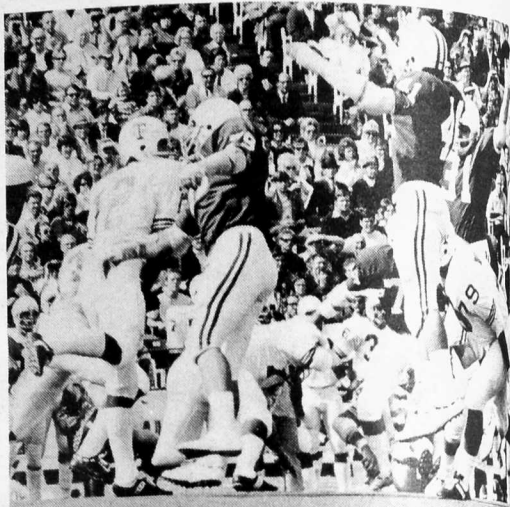
The game was billed as a duel between the WAC's top two quarterbacks, Keithley and Don "Brownie" Van Galder. Seems that Keithley won the battle of the stats, but a well-rounded attack by the Utes ultimately produced the victory. For the first time this year, even the defense was superb. The pass rush was so heavy at times on Keithley that sportswriters in the press box were prompted to say, "It looked like the whole student body got him that time."

Midway through the first quarter, Utah's Ike Spencer scored the first touchdown on the new Astro-Turf, making the score 9-0 with a Fleming Jensen conversion, the first of his five successful at-

tempts. Gene Belczyk, the tough little runner who runs so slow but gets the job done, picked up 116 hard earned yards in 21 carries and one touchdown. Gene, however, was only slightly ahead of teammate Ike Spencer in the ground gaining stats. Ike picked up 83 yards in 12 rushes, including a 27-yarder.

And is there any way to say enough about the fantastic moves of speedy Steve Odom? With Keithley again back to punt (he always seemed to be involved in the big plays), Odom waited on his own 20-yard line. The booming spiral sent Steve back to the 14 where he fumbled and chased the ball back to his five. The rest is history. He dazzled the 20,860 fans by streaking down the West sideline, then faking the UTEP safety man out of his shoes and almost walking in from the 30, for a record setting 95-yard punt return. It was a new Utah and WAC record, the old Utah record being 93 yards by Frankie Nelson in 1949 vs. Denver.

Soon after, Van Galder passed to Willie Armstead for 38 yards and another score to make it 25-0, and that was how it looked as the players went in for the halftime pep talk. Willie later caught another TD bomb, this one for 41 yards.



**UTEP's Gary Keithley is harassed by the Utah defense while attempting to pass. He had trouble all day, and was eventually rushed by Ron Rydalcch (79), Alan Gilreath (41) and Ed C...**

At halftime stadium dedication ceremonies, Institutional Council Chairman Ed Clyde put himself in line for the first annual "Foot-in-mouth" award as he introduced the University president by saying, "Thank you President Fletcher." Well, it turns out that President Fletcher has been gone for a while, but his replacement, Presi-

generous thanks to Joyce Rice."

Mr. Rice, who received the game ball, responded by saying, "I believe with the construction of these facilities along with the Sports and Special Education Center, we'll have facilities soon that I'm proud to have to bear my name." Then, during ovation, the new University pep band played "Utah man, sir." And it was worth the price of a Ute-Tahnas presented sexy selves. To come from frat rats and chauvinists, they gave the spongy new choreographed tin snoring to every beat of Stoll's band.

Third quarter action was dull, and even UTEP's defense was a welcome diversion from the monotony of those first two quarters.

Jeilo-eating champion Rick Edge ended the quarter by intercepting a pass and returning it 20 yards. "We got a near the end of the game," coach Bill Meek after the game.

Meek said the key to the victory was an early start. "We got the pressure quick and kept it on 'em into making mistakes," coach said his squeaky game with a fired up defense were real anxious. That's because it's been playing for a home game three weeks on the road.

But, the coach said looking back, the defense now is ahead to meet the game in Tempe, Ariz.



**Willie Armstead is congratulated by teammate Gene Belczyk after Willie (45) caught one of his two touchdown passes.**

dent Alfred Emery said, "This is the first step in a major renovation of our stadium. On behalf of the University, I'd like to express our