



PHOTOS BY PHIL HUBER—BLACK STAR

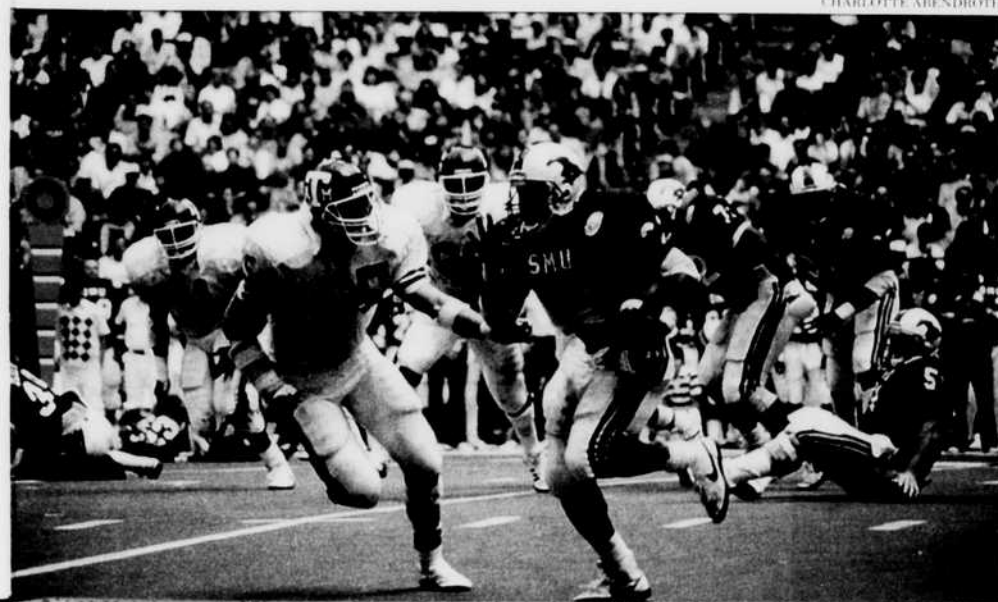
mighty people in town, some of whom sit on the school's governing boards. SMU is in their backyard. They send their sons and daughters there, and some are not loathe to flaunt their wealth—as at one football game with the despised University of Texas where SMU fans unfurled a banner that read, "Our maids went to UT."

Dallas historian and author A. C. Greene describes these SMU alums as "bootstrap entrepreneurs. Most are self-made. Very few inherited their money or their power, and in Texas that still counts for more than anything else. Highland Park and University Park are small towns, and they are big shots. They are used to absolutely having

their own way, and they have run SMU pretty much the same way they control their neighborhoods." These men can usually buy anything they want, even high-school football players. SMU theology professor Leroy Howe says there is a sense "that the rules that apply everywhere else just don't apply here... an illusion that you can get whatever you want."

Many of these big shots took special pride in SMU's gridiron successes over the years. As a small, private university in an athletic conference ruled by large, public schools, SMU still managed to produce such stars over the years as halfback Doak Walker, who won the Heisman Trophy, and quar-

CHARLOTTE ABENDROTH



'Let people know we're a real school!'
Students at Southern Methodist protest the worst football scandal in college sports, with a 'teach-in' in front of the administration building



terback Don Meredith, who went on to great success in the pros and as a broadcaster. But after seven conference titles, from 1923 to 1948, and one national championship, in 1935, the program slid into mediocrity for the next three decades.

Winning again: SMU captured a conference title in 1966 and had winning seasons from 1972 to 1974. Then, in the '80s, the Mustangs became a national powerhouse. From 1981 to 1984, SMU lost only five times in 47 regular-season games, and claimed or shared the Southwest Conference title three times. But along with this success came allegations of wrongdoing. In 1974 the school was put on a two-year probation because athletic officials were reselling complimentary tickets, and it was extended in 1976. Then in 1981, citing 29 separate violations, the NCAA hit SMU where it really hurt: imposing a two-year probation, plus a ban on TV games that kept the Mustangs out of the Cotton Bowl. In 1985, citing 36 violations, including an alum's \$5,000 payment to a prospect, the NCAA slapped on still another probation—this time three years—and a TV and bowl-game ban.

Each time SMU went on probation administrators protested about the NCAA's "selective enforcement," but pledged to improve anyway. Yet the violations continued, and the faculty and students raised little fuss. But this time, the charges were

Running wild: Mustangs vs. Texas A&M