



# When the Aggies Rustled Bo

By Mel Newman and Seth Fisher

Coach had his price. Michigan beat it.

**W**hen Bo Schembechler was offered the job of his life, things happened real fast, he recalled in *Bo's Lasting Lessons*, his autobiography with John U. Bacon. Bo came up to meet with the athletic director, his associate, and the school president. Two days after that first meeting, the AD called to offer Bo the job. Bo's response: "Good."

Michigan AD Don Canham asked what Bo would be making at Miami, and added \$1,000 a year to that. "Canham knew that he was offering something special, and so did I," said Bo. "I took it happily."

Bo knew the value of Michigan, but he had never actually tried to put that into a dollar

amount. Even when, after 12 years of coaching the Wolverines, a close friend asked that very question, and Bo's financial advisor helped him come up with a ridiculous answer, the idea of anyone buying Bo out of Ann Arbor was laughable. That is until the snowy afternoon of January 15, 1982, when the old coach sat in the basement rec room of his modest home at 870 Arlington Blvd., pondering an absurd offer that put Michigan's future in serious jeopardy.

## SCOUTING

Bo's 96-16-3 record during the 1970s was the best among all Division I coaches. His teams won or shared seven conference championships during the decade. In 1980 the Wolver-

ines again won the title. Bo had lost the first seven bowl games he coached at Michigan, but the '80 team broke the postseason curse that had plagued him ever since his heart attack the night before the 1970 Rose Bowl, beating Don James's Washington Huskies in the 1981 edition, 23-6. The following fall's team would debut at #1 in the nation.

Gil Brandt, the legendary Dallas Cowboys director of player personnel, was good friends with Bo, and summarized the unique personality of Michigan's head coach:

"I've known him ever since he was at Miami with Coach Hayes, and there wasn't anybody as captivating as Bo Schembechler." Brandt told *HTTV* in an interview for this piece. "I've never been around another person like him. Loyalty off the charts. Ability—he was



Mary Schroeder/Detroit Free Press, courtesy of Hank Newman (standing at the far left)



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Glenn “Shemy” Schembechler, his youngest son. Shemy said that Brandt played a key role in setting the stage for what would be an all-out effort to win over his father.

“Gil worked behind the scenes without letting you know what he was up to,” says Shemy. Shemy also recalled weekend trips to Brandt’s Montana refuge, where, surrounded by Texas people, the Schembechlers were treated to western-style adventures. Bo particularly enjoyed spending time with Tom Landry, one of his favorite football guys.

### A BLUE CHIP RECRUIT

The powers taking over Texas A&M, however, were still moving into position by the fall of 1981. A&M’s athletic director had resigned in September. President Frank E. Vandiver was technically in charge of hiring one, but he hadn’t even been in the job long enough to know he was a figurehead. Vandiver, and indeed the other regents, spent most of the fall believing they would retain then-head coach Tom Wilson for at least another season. Wilson had been promoted from offensive coordinator in mid-1978, and barely hit .500 in his 40 games hence. However 1981 was arguably his best season, and he had one year left on his contract.

But power had already shifted out of the president’s office, and that shift had a name: Harvey Roberts “Bum” Bright. Bum was a character

right out of a ’70s drama. After graduating Texas A&M in 1943 and serving in the U.S. Army, Bright returned to Texas in 1946 and began investing in oil and natural gas leases. Over the coming years he added financial institutions and real estate to his portfolio. He was a millionaire by the time he reached the age of 31. After the Aggies upset the University of Texas in 1967, he paid for a million matchboxes to be inscribed with the message “Tee Hee Hee: Texas A&M 10, Texas 7” and distributed throughout the state. More notoriously, Bright took out a conspicuous political attack ad against JFK in a major Dallas newspaper on the day of the president’s assassination.

Lately, Bright had been appointed to the A&M Board of Regents by the Governor, and almost immediately voted that body’s chair. His mission was clear: use the state’s newfound oil wealth to make its agricultural school into a premier academic institution. Starting with the football team, of course.

Coach Wilson’s relationship with the regents, particularly Bright’s faction, had turned toxic in his final months. That came to a head at halftime against Texas, when Wilson threatened not to take the team back on the field if Bright didn’t get onboard with an extension. In a 1988 article titled “We Believe in You, Coach” in the periodical *Texas Monthly*, author Dan Balz wrote “It seems obvious now that at that point Tom Wilson had no real

## BO'S A&M OFFER



Don Canham and his football coach butted heads plenty, but never over Bo's vastly under-market salary.

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chance of keeping his job, but for more than seven weeks no one bothered to tell him.”

The regents' search committee, according to Balz's article, was headed by John Blocker, a Houston oil tycoon. It included Royce Wisenbaker, an engineering consultant and an outspoken critic of A&M mediocrity; and Bill McKenzie, a big-time attorney and former Republican party chairman for Dallas County.

The search itself fell to McKenzie, and one of his first calls was to his friend Gil Brandt. The two had been close since the fledgling Cowboys and McKenzie's young law practice had shared an office space in the 1960s (Brandt was also friends with Bum Bright).

Brandt warned the committee members they couldn't "go elephant hunting with a pop gun," meaning be ready to spend well more than you imagined. Even so, the money wasn't an object. Said Blocker in *Texas Monthly*: "Bear Bryant may have been the only one we thought we couldn't get."

"I spoke to the people up at A&M and they were looking to hire a coach," said Brandt. "And I made two recommendations, of which Coach Schembechler was one." (Don James was the other.) Brandt recalled that Bo was immediately receptive:

"I went up to Michigan the week before the Ohio State game—I forget who they were playing—and had dinner at Arlington over

where he lived with Millie, and he said he did have an interest in the job. But he didn't want to be bothered until after the Ohio State game.

"So after the Ohio State game, the next week, I called him. And I said, Texas A&M has authorized me to talk to you about this.' I said to him, 'Bo, what would it take you to become the Texas A&M coach and athletic director?' "He said, I'll call you back.' He had this financial advisor, Joe Hayden, in Cincinnati. 'I'm going to talk to Joe and I'll call you back.'

"When he called me back he said: 'You know, in order for me to change jobs this is what I want.'"

### THE OFFER

Bo then proceeded to lay out his idea of a ridiculous offer, which actual value remains the subject of debate. It was many times more than his \$60,000 salary at Michigan, with enough perks to make the offer as hard to turn down as it is to nail down its full value. In his eponymous autobiography with Mitch Albom, Bo provided a canonical dollar value of 10 years, with a base salary of \$250,000 and a total value of about \$3 million. It also provided that Bo would become the athletic director, and have the option to retire into that position in five years.



Legendary Cowboys GM Gil Brandt befriended Bo at Miami and invited the Schembechlers to his Montana ranch, where Bo became particularly close with Tom Landry.

Courtesy of the archival collections at the Texas Sports Hall of Fame

The Balz article provided additional details from the Texas side: "He also asked the university to find sponsors for the radio and television shows he would do at A&M and to obtain ten-year contracts from them. According to Bright, he talked of putting on a 'stem-winding television program' and supplementing the revenues from it by running lists of supporters who had given \$2000 at the end of each show."

Shemy hinted it could have reached \$1 million per year when all was said and done. "I know this," said Brandt. "The A&M job was like the difference between Michigan and Hillsdale in money and everything. There was so much money to be had it was unbelievable. It was a different life.

"It was all the things he wasn't getting at Michigan," Brandt continued. "Bo came up to meet with the athletic director, his associate, and the school president. Two days after that first meeting, if he were to have a party at his house after a game there was no expense money for him—it was out of his own pocket. And all those things were addressed in this A&M thing. He would have an expense account that took care of those things, and so forth. And he was going to be able to fly first class."

Brandt's secretary just took it all down, while Brandt waited for the preposterous list to conclude to make his play.

"Now let me ask you a question: If Texas A&M would say yes to this..."

"Deal" [Bo laughed]. "They're not gonna do that."

"Glenn E. from Barberton, is it a deal?"

"Yeah yeah it's a deal."

Thirty minutes later Brandt called him back:

"Congratulations, Coach Schembechler."

"On what?"

"You're the new head coach and athletic director at Texas A&M."



## UNOFFICIAL VISITS

The sides agreed to pin the offer until after the Bluebonnet Bowl at the Astrodome on December 31, ostensibly because Michigan's opponent, #19 UCLA, had "stolen" Fred Brockington—a two-time all-state receiver from Detroit Redford, and Bo wanted vengeance.

Bo's #16 Wolverines did just that, in a romp. Anthony Carter put Michigan up 10 in the first quarter with a 50-yard pass from Steve Smith, and Michigan capped the game with three touchdowns (and a failed 2-point conversion) in the fourth quarter to win 33-14. After waiting 12 seasons to win a bowl, Bo now had won two in a calendar year.

The A&M people weren't going to wait any longer than that. According to Bo's autobiography, while the Wolverines were in Houston preparing for the Bluebonnet Bowl, Bo received another call from Brandt, who invited him to fly with Millie to Dallas after that game and attend, as guests, the Cowboys' playoff game the following day (a 38-0 pasting of Tampa Bay). Brandt assured him that someone would pick them up at the airport. Bo accepted the invitation.

The morning after coaching his team to victory, Bo left with Millie for the airport. However, their flight was delayed for an extended period by densely foggy weather. By the time it finally landed in Dallas the Cowboys' game had reached halftime. And a surprise was waiting for the Schembechlers: the "someone" who met their plane was Bum Bright himself.

Bo was startled and concerned: He didn't want anybody to see them together and possibly conclude a job offer was involved. However, he felt there was no choice except to go along with Bright to dinner, then to Bright's mansion.

When the two men finally sat down, Bright went directly to the financial stipulations of his offer. The following account of their conversation is an excerpt from Schembechler's autobiography:

*He began talking dollars. A ten-year deal worth somewhere around \$2.25 million. Now if that doesn't make your eyes spring out of your head,*



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*After 12 seasons at Michigan Bo was considered among the best of his profession.*

*you must be dead. I was making \$60,000 at Michigan with no contract.*

*"Where will all that money come from?" I asked. I knew the university didn't have that kind of funding.*

*"Don't you worry about that," Bright said — which immediately made me worry. I knew where it would come from: alumni. People like Bright. People who felt they could buy anything. You have those kind of people paying your salary and you are indebted to them every minute you're on the job.*

Bo also had some concerns about whether the athletic department he would take over would operate under NCAA rules and his own code of ethics, or were they hiring a sheriff with a shiny badge just to keep up the appearance of law in the Wild West. Schembechler said he wanted to speak to the A&M president.

## THAT STUFF GOES ON

Everyone knew how the Southwest Conference did things in that era, and everyone should have known Bo was the last man who'd participate in it. For his part, Gil Brandt thought Bo was so good it wouldn't be a problem.

"I thought it was a great job. There were so many great players in Texas. I thought he was the kind of guy that could handle the job.

"Let me tell ya; they [Michigan's coaches]

did the best job at coaching and developing in the world. They just—you know, Gary Moeller and the little line coach (Jerry Hanlon). Those guys did such a great job of coaching and everything that—

"You know what, they would have beat them in recruiting too!"

At Bright's behest, Vandiver flew to Dallas the next morning and met with the Michigan coach, who voiced his concerns about cheating, and declared his zero-tolerance policy.

Bo had his assurance from the president that the university wanted a clean program and he'd have the authority to make and keep it that way. "You know Texas A&M always had a lot of people that wanted to be involved in the program," said Brandt. "And Bo was gonna tell 'em 'You might want to be involved in the program but not around here.' He was a very strong individual with strong beliefs, and honesty was at the forefront."

Which is why it's surprising that there's some contention. Did Bo say "Let me think about it," or "Yes.?"

"I took care of Shemy while they met," said Brandt. "And Shemy and I were partners around town—you know he was about 12 at the time. So I wasn't in the room. But what happens is—and this is where the stories differ—Bo said he never accepted the job. And I chided him several times for [this in] his book: 'You know Bo, I must have bad memory. I must be suffering from amnesia or something, because that's not how I remembered it.'"

"Anyway, what happened then is he said 'I gotta go back and tell Canham that I'm leaving.'"

## THE DEAD PERIOD

For his part, Vandiver had not known until the meeting with Bo that the regents had so much as a list of candidates. Certainly he had no idea they were already moving forward on an unprecedented deal. A feud developed, based on the president's strong disapproval of the way Bright and the regents were handling the process (Vandiver would ultimately threaten to submit his resignation over it).

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Even some of the regents were not on board with all of the deal's proposals, specifically balking at the radio and TV programs; apparently they didn't get *Michigan Replay*.

Meanwhile, the Schembechlers left Dallas for the East-West Shrine Bowl in San Francisco. But before going home, Millie, Bo and Shemy took an unannounced side trip to College Station for a private look-around. They kept a low profile, didn't get out of the car, and ate at a McDonalds out of town.

When they got back to Michigan Bo did indeed talk to his current boss about the A&M offer. Here's Schembechler's account, from the autobiography, of what transpired:

*"I laid everything out to Don Canham, my AD. It was a lot of money, that was for sure. And I began to wonder whether I should take it. My family would be set for life. We would never have to worry — no matter what happened to me or my heart. At the beginning, Canham and Michigan didn't seem too concerned. They didn't jump to raise my salary or anything like that. That bothered me.*

*"I don't know, Mil," I said to my wife one night. 'Maybe I'm more appreciated elsewhere than I am here.'"*

After he had spoken to his staff, all of whom could have joined him in College Station according to the proposed contract, Canham and UM president Harold Shapiro finally showed up at Bo's house and offered him a \$25,000-a-year increase.

"What he's done for that school, they ought to change it to Schembechler University at Michigan or something like that," Brandt fumed. Nearly 35 years later he's still clearly bothered that Michigan couldn't do better for his friend. "Because the facilities were terrible, and he brought all those facilities up to date, and you know, built Schembechler Hall. And you know, all the things that they never had before, that are now really state of the art.

"You know, up until the end, nobody knew anything about it," said Brandt. "And the reason nobody knew anything about it was because it was really he and I doing it, and so there wasn't

anything in the paper. Or he leaked to get any more money at Michigan or anything like that."

That afternoon, January 14, Bo called his friend in Texas.

"Well I'm downstairs at this house on Arlington—you know they had that basement that was furnished—I'm downstairs with all my coaches and we're talking about this thing.' And he said 'I'll let you know about it tomorrow.' And I said 'Alright.'"

Then it leaked.

On the afternoon of January 14, two Texas newspapers made the contract public, based on a pair of A&M sources. Rumors swept through Ann Arbor until drive time, when Frank Beckmann reported the *Houston Post's* story on WJR, along with details: \$2.5 million, 10-years for Bo to become Texas A&M's athletic director and head coach. Beckmann added that he'd heard about the offer "some time ago" but had been sworn to secrecy.

Quoted in the *Detroit Free Press* the next day, Michigan assistant athletic director Will Perry said that he had heard a similar rumor [at the Bluebonnet Bowl] but discounted it at the time: "It's possible but Bo has been offered jobs before, and he's turned them down." Co-defensive coordinator Bill McCartney told the *Freep's* Joe Lapointe that offers like this—collegiate and pro—come up every year, but just don't get to the media.

But this one had legs. Jim Brandstatter, quoted in the *Ann Arbor News*, confirmed Bo was "seriously" considering the offer, and put the chances at 50-50. Beckmann had omitted the *Houston Post* article's assertion that "Schembechler was 75 percent sure he would accept the multi-million dollar deal."

That night Bum Bright confirmed to reporters that A&M had indeed made an offer, though he did not make it sound like a fait accompli: "He was given an offer to come and be A&M's athletic director. That's the job that's offered right now, and he is considering it. I can only say that Texas A&M would be pleased and honored to have a man the cali-

ber of Bo Schembechler come to A&M. We are interested in him, but we do not know the level of his interest in us.”

But over in the Central Time Zone, trusting assurances from Vandiver, extant Texas A&M head coach Tom Wilson was on a recruiting trip in Austin when his phone rang with the news. He heard he was out only after he got back to College Station around 1 a.m.

## CRYSTAL BALLS

Virtually everyone with any kind of connection to Michigan football awoke stunned. Overnight the Michigan newspapers had caught up with the story and were printing the astronomical figure of \$250,000 per year. If the reports were accurate that deal would have been, at the time, the richest-ever in the annals of college athletics.

For the rest of the vigil the only substantive information to come out was that Bo had met with Canham in the morning, that Bo was discussing it with his coaches, and that there would be a press conference at noon, which was then changed to 2 p.m., which then flew by.

On campus, according to the *Michigan Daily*, the masses huddled around radios in Angell hallways, and raced home after classes to check the TV. Darkness fell. Seeing the lights on inside the athletic building on State Street, students walking to the hockey game stopped to chant “Don’t Go, Bo!”

“I feel like I’m sitting in the family lounge at the hospital waiting for a post-surgery report,” said Anne Yagle, speaking to one of your authors (Mel) on that day in 1982.

Anne, who passed away in 2009, was a former nurse at UM Hospital, and friends with Millie Schembechler. But even Millie had nothing. “There’s nothing to tell,” said Yagle shortly after speaking to her friend. “I think pretty soon somebody might try to tap Bo’s phone.”

With nothing leaking out, and everything at stake, many who knew the location (never a secret) of the Schembechler home in Ann Arbor began to congregate there. Members of the football staff, athletic department officials,



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*Bo demanded everything in writing from Texas A&M, but got his pizza store promise on a cocktail napkin.*

former players, media, or personal friends crowded into Millie’s kitchen, or if they didn’t rate (e.g. the media), on Millie and Bo’s lawn.

Hank Newman was inside. “I was at my office when my wife called to tell me about the broadcast bulletin,” Hank recalls. “I figured it had to be nothing but a ridiculous rumor. The idea of Bo leaving Michigan seemed impossible.

Hank drove directly from his office in Detroit to Bo’s house. When he arrived a group of people were involved in various conversations on the snow-covered front lawn. Inside the house, Bo still hadn’t reached a verdict. Hank approached veteran Schembechler assistant coach Milan Vooletich, who was likely to have a finger on the pulse of the situation.

“I figured Milan could tell me whether Bo was actually thinking about taking the Texas A&M offer. When he said there was no doubt Bo was giving it serious consideration I was shocked.”

Millie stepped out of the front door for a moment, noticed Hank, and invited him to come out of the snow. Inside was another group of nervous visitors, some of whom were engaged in quiet discussions and others who were silently contemplating in the living and dining rooms. Bo was now with his two older sons in his basement study (Shemy was watching TV).

“I firmly believe that his biggest consideration by far was protecting Millie and the kids,” said Hank. “People were hearing that there were major contract incentives dealing with his

health insurance—his heart problems made getting good coverage hard to come by—and the children’s future college expenses.”

The noon and 2 p.m. deadlines had already passed as Bo deliberated downstairs with his assistants. Bo later recalled those proceedings to John U. Bacon for their book *Bo’s Lasting Lessons*:

*I went around the room, asking all of them what they thought I should do. The vote was about even. It was a lot of money, after all, Texas A&M was a serious program in a big-time league, and as one of them said, “No one would ever blame you for doing this.”*

*And that’s when I cut off the discussion. “That’s easy for you to say. But you don’t have to stand up in front of those players—players you’ve known since high school, whose homes you’ve been in and whose parents you’ve met—and look them in the eye and tell them you’re leaving.”*

*And that’s what settled it—loyalty.*

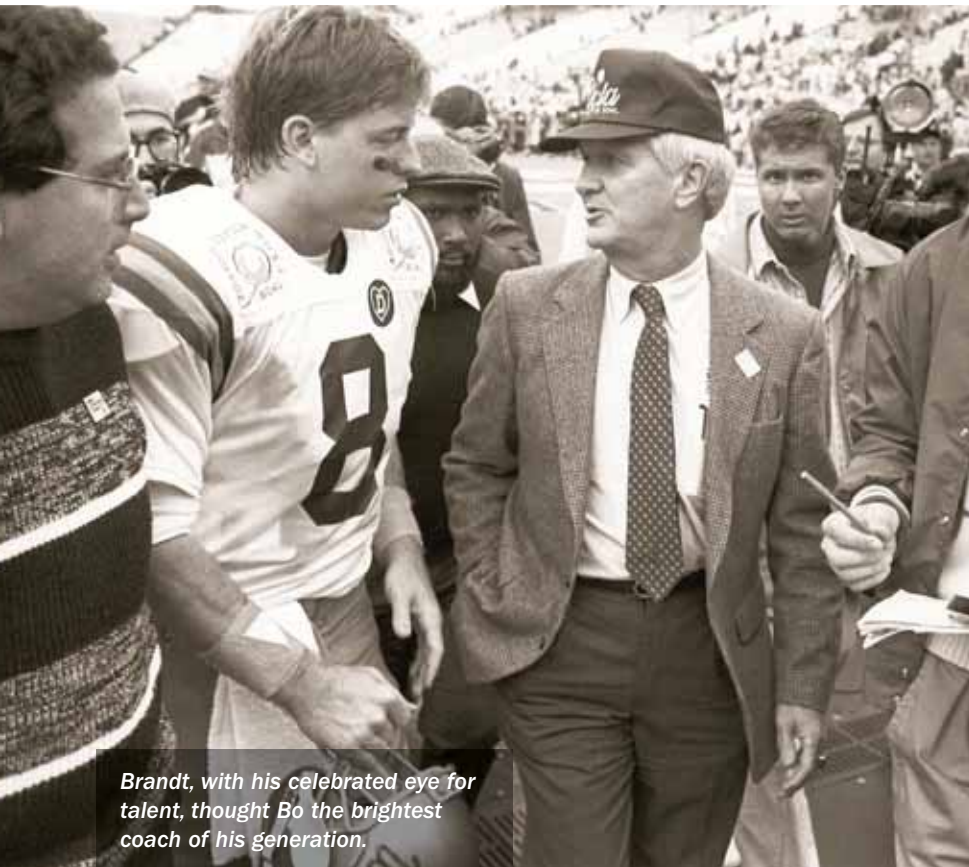
## SIGNING DAY

In an interview with Joe Falls later that January, Bo would recount that he’d called his mother to tell her she’d get to sit by the pool in luxury, but Mrs. Schembechler of Barberton couldn’t think of abandoning her friends and her life for the Sun Belt.

Bo said that made him think about Michigan, and Detroit, the high schools closing up across the state. He thought about how good he had it here, and how much he loved not just his football program but the state, and how much



## BO'S A&M OFFER



*Brandt, with his celebrated eye for talent, thought Bo the brightest coach of his generation.*

Courtesy of the archival collections at the Texas Sports Hall of Fame

he was a part of it. He imagined himself then on a Texas ranch, lounging with a cigar under a shade tree: “Bo Schembechler, The Big Deal.” Then he called Gil.

“He calls ... and he says ‘I can’t do it,’” Gil paraphrased. “‘I cannot do it. Canham told me I’m Michigan, and I’m this, and I’m that, and I’m this and I’m that.’”

Bo wasn’t saying no, but he wasn’t 75 percent anymore.

At about 8 p.m., rumors began to circulate around the house that Schembechler was leaning toward remaining in Ann Arbor. Then he could be heard having a phone discussion.

“As I remember it,” Newman recounts, “Bo called Canham and said something like ‘I don’t need a raise like that (offered by Texas A&M) but I want my assistants to be taken care of.’ Certainly a lot more was discussed that we weren’t privy to, but right then we had at least *some* evidence that Bo’s preference was to stay home.”

What Newman and the others didn’t hear, or have even a hint about at that moment, was the crucial conversation with Millie that Bo recounted in his autobiography:

*“Millie,” I said, downstairs, “what do you think?”*

*“What’s in your heart, Bo?” she said.*

*“God, Mil, that’s a lot of money. We’d be set for life.”*

*She was crying. I started crying. I thought about the kids I had just recruited, how I promised them that if they worked hard, by senior year, they could be starters. I looked around my basement, at the projectors and the clipboards and the football memorabilia.*

*“Millie,” I said, shaking my head, “I just can’t leave Michigan.”*

### A LETTER OF INTENT

Next Bo climbed the stairs to answer the press conference of his friends and family.

“He must have been satisfied on his priori-

ties, because he came up to where we were waiting with a big smile on his face and said he would still be the coach at Michigan,” Newman remembers. “We all took a long deep breath. I felt wonderful. It was a tremendous relief. There were a lot of big smiles in the house; that’s for sure.”

“So he turned down this absolutely off the charts deal,” recalled a still astonished Brandt. “With 10 years of security. To stay at Michigan. And then what really gets me is that the pizza guy came in.”

Domino’s Pizza owner, avid Michigan supporter, and huge Bo fan Tom Monaghan was among those waiting upstairs with Millie. In the autobiography Bo remembers coming upstairs to find Monaghan ready to match the A&M boosters with pizza money.

From the house to the car, Tom offered promises, and Bo tried to convince the businessman really: Michigan already won, and the money didn’t matter. Somewhere in that engagement Bo acquired a Domino’s franchise on a paper napkin.

Finally, at about 8:30 p.m., said Newman, “Bo and some others, including me, left for the Athletic Administration Building on State Street where the media was waiting for his announcement.”

When he got there, Bo left nobody hanging:

“I debated it, as you know, longer than I thought I would. And I came to the conclusion that there are things that are more important than money. And one of them is Michigan. And with that in mind, I’m staying where I belong:

“Right here.”

### SIGNING OF THE STARS

The news was announced inside Yost Ice Arena to raucous cheers, even for that building.

“So that summer after he didn’t take the job, our families—and Shemy—went on a backpacking trip into Montana,” Brandt remembered. “And you know Bo was off the charts. And he brought his baseball glove—he’s a base-

ball player and fan at heart. So now he's telling me about this pizza store and I say 'You've got that all in writing, from Monaghan?'

"And he says 'I've got it on a cocktail napkin.'

"And I said 'Goddammit. You know, Goddammit Bo, I'm a friend. And I thought I've been a friend for a long time. And you made *me* put everything in writing!' And with Monaghan he got it on a cocktail napkin!"

Bo did however get a pay bump, and an extra month's salary for his assistants for whenever they coached in a bowl, since they had to recruit and coach for a month. The incentive remained standard in assistants' contracts at Michigan long enough that Rich Rodriguez's staff in 2008 was the first not to collect on it.

Texas A&M moved on immediately, offering a weakened version of Bo's deal, including the athletic directorship, to Pitt coach Jackie Sherrill, who, said Brandt, probably heard about the opening when he and Bo were coaching that East-West game together a few weeks earlier. In eight semi-successful years Sherrill would be labeled a "walking recruiting violation," as A&M was slammed twice by NCAA sanctions. The second one coincided with a cash scandal at Houston that left just Arkansas, Rice, and Baylor among SWC schools untouched by probation. With schools on probation prohibited from appearing on live television the whole conference went into sharp decline, and the SWC ultimately broke up in 1996.

That doesn't necessarily mean it would have been a disaster for Bo. Said his friend Gil Brandt, "I think his career would have been whatever he wanted it to be. I don't think he ever wanted to be a pro coach. I think he loved the college life and being around kids, and getting the challenge of recruiting, and so forth. And I sound like a broken record, but to me this guy was off the charts. I mean Bo was number 1 and everybody else was a distant second."

A week after the drama, Lynn Henning and Joe Falls of the *Detroit News* went over what-if's with the principles. Canham admitted if Bo left, the job would have gone to co-defensive



*The Schembechlers in 1985. Front row: Matt, Bo, Millie and Geoff. Back row: Chip and Shemy.*

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coordinator Bill McCartney (West Virginia head coach and former Bo assistant Don Nehlen would not have been in consideration). Presumably the rest of the staff, including Hanlon, Moeller, and even young defensive backs coach Lloyd Carr, would have gone to Texas.

McCartney, presented 34 years later with the hypothetical scenario by Dr. Sap, first chuckled but quickly became serious. "I would have stayed (at Michigan) if I was offered the job," he said. "If not (offered to be Michigan's next Head Football Coach), I would have went to Texas. I was indebted to Bo. I got into college coaching because of Bo."

As Gil predicted, Bo would have to go to court a decade later for his pizza store. When Monaghan fired Bo from an ill-fated term as president of the Detroit Tigers, Bo sued the pizza guy for a handful of undelivered financial incentives. Domino's lawyers argued the franchise belonged to the company and Bo had only been promised the

profits so long as he coached Michigan. The case was ultimately settled.

Michigan would have a few sluggish years, but would go 5-3 against Ohio State, win three more Big Ten Championships and another Rose Bowl, and finish one year ranked #2 overall before Bo retired into the Athletic Director role he assumed in 1988. Also in '88 Bo scrounged up enough loose change from alumni and friends to build the \$12 million Center of Champions, the first step in modernizing the athletic facilities in Ann Arbor. Michigan appropriately renamed that building Schembechler Hall in 1991.

Three weeks after turning down all that Texas oil money, a slightly better paid Bo and his slightly better paid staff accepted 24 letters of intent from unpaid players they'd recruited to the University of Michigan, including Tony Gant, Mark Hammerstein, Thomas Wilcher, Jerry Quaerna, and a hotshot, loudmouth, undersized Cali QB named Jim Harbaugh.

**About the authors and this collaboration:** This article was collaboration of Mel Newman and Seth Fisher. Mel is a retired City of Oak Park information director and a former assistant metro editor at the *Detroit News*. He pitched the article from Hank's old stories and wrote the first draft.

Seth is associate editor of MGoBlog and co-editor of HTTV. He did the research, interviewed Shemy & Gil Brandt, and wrote the final version.