

monday

October 15, 1979

Arizona State University

Vol. 62 No. 2

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state press EXTRA

Tempe, Arizona

## Attorney absent from test

# Examiner says Kush told truth

By Mark Scarp

Frank Kush's attorney said Sunday he was not in the same room with the deposed ASU head football coach and an examiner when a lie detector test was conducted Friday to determine if Kush hit a former Sun Devil player, as Kush claimed he was.

"I was in the next room. Frank and the examiner were alone in an examination room for about two hours," Harding Cure said.

Kush claimed in a statement Saturday that Cure was present.

The examiner, Tom Ezell of Tom Ezell and Associates of Phoenix, whose office was the scene of the test, said he is "convinced" Kush was telling the truth when the coach told him he did not punch Kevin

Rutledge, a former ASU punter seeking a \$1.1 million judgment against Kush and others. Rutledge alleges Kush punched him in the face during a game Oct. 28, 1978 against the University of Washington in Seattle.

Cure said he asked Ezell to conduct the test, which was made up of 10 questions. The questions were devised after a "discussion" with Kush about his background and the issues at stake, Ezell said.

"After he told me as much as he could about the incident I formulated the questions," he said.

Tracings on an electrocardiograph machine followed Kush's heartbeat and respiration.

"We register these as well as measure emotions

through reactions from the nervous system," Ezell said.

Cure said he received a written report summarizing the test's results. He added he and another attorney who represents Kush, Harry Cavanagh, have not decided yet whether the report will be made public.

Cure said neither he nor Cavanagh had any prior indication that ASU Athletic Director Fred Miller would relieve Kush of his coaching duties.

"Mr. Cavanagh last spoke with Miller about a week before the test, and he (Miller) said nothing that would give us any indication that he would take this course of action," Cure said.

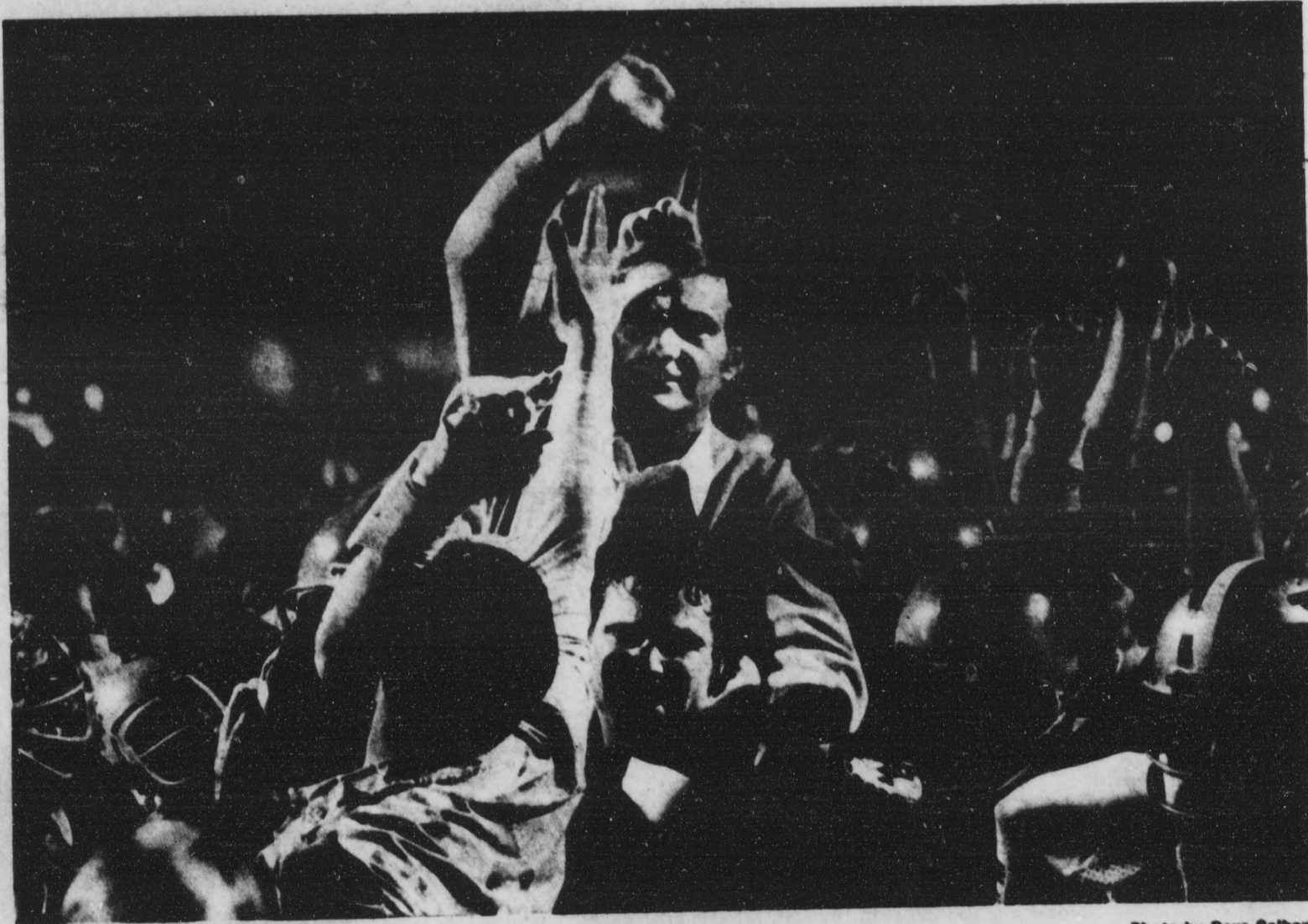


Photo by Dave Seibert

### The last hurrah

Former Head Coach Frank Kush is carried from Sun Devil Stadium after ASU's 12-7 win over Washington by center Norris Williams. Reaching to congratulate Kush is tight end Marshall Edwards.

## Fired Kush holds no grudge against Miller

By Bob Petrie

Despite being relieved of his head coaching duties, Frank Kush says he has "no animosity" toward ASU Athletic Director Fred Miller, the man who let him go.

"I'm not irritated with Fred or anybody else," Kush said at a Sunday press conference. "I'd like to think Fred Miller is still a friend. These things happen. They have to take action, and of course this is their prerogative, and I have to accept what their decision is."

However, Kush made it clear he won't be spending much time around ASU, even though Miller said he still is on the payroll as an assistant professor of physical education.

"Let me put it this way. I cleared everything out of my office, as much as I could handle in about three cars.

"I have nothing planned for the immediate future. I'll probably take a couple of days off," the 50-year-old Kush said. "Those fish better be biting or I'm going to hit them with a fishing pole."

Kush was hit with Miller's announcement "sometime Friday afternoon," and said he did not try to change Miller's mind. The former coach, who was replaced

temporarily by defensive coordinator Bob Owens, made his own announcement of the firing Saturday afternoon.

At that time, Kush said, "I'm told the reason I am being fired was that Dr. Miller did not believe it when I denied punching Kevin Rutledge at the Washington game last year in Seattle."

Rutledge, a former ASU punter, filed a \$1.1 million lawsuit about the alleged incident against Kush, Miller and others a few days before the Sun Devils' season opener against the University of California.

But on Sunday Kush would not comment on anything he said in Saturday's announcement, including the reason he chose that time to say it.

In another press conference following ASU's 12-7 win over Washington Saturday night, Miller said, "The intention (to fire Kush) was to wait until after the game. Frank brought the thing out at his decision."

It was also Kush's decision to coach the Sun Devils against the Huskies.

"I thought it was important for the youngsters to know my position and that I'd be with them from the standpoint that I'd help 'em with the ballgame."

After Kush told the Devil players he was relieved,

he said "most of the players, like me, got emotional and broke down, and a lot of them were crying."

Kush added that he didn't expect anyone to leave the team.

"I hope not. There's no reason to quit."

Kush, who maintains his innocence in the Rutledge affair, told his players about the lie detector test he took Friday in the presence of his attorney, which he said "proved I was completely truthful."

"I told them I hadn't lied to them — that I volunteered to take the lie detector test just to prove that." It was Kush's own decision to take the test, he added.

However, he had no say in the hiring of Owens.

It was Miller's decision to pick Owens as Kush's interim successor.

"He was picked on his past record," said Miller about Owens, who has no head coaching experience. The new ASU coach has been a Sun Devil assistant for 12 years.

Kush said he isn't sure he will attend next Saturday's game against Washington State.

"That'll be very interesting where I will be next Saturday night."

# ASU officialdom puzzled over suddenness of firing

By Dan Fellner

ASU administrators expressed shock Sunday over the firing of Sun Devil head football coach Frank Kush but indicated they have yet to be informed of the reasons behind the dismissal.

"I think we need to know more about the things considered by Fred Miller (ASU athletic director) in making the decision," Troy Crowder, assistant to the University president, said.

"It would be inappropriate to say anything about it until we find out more."

Provost Paige Mulholland also said it would be improper for him to comment on the situation.

"I'll just say I'm very sorry when anything like this happens to any human being," he said.

Dr. William Arnold, member of the University Intercollegiate Athletics Board, said he "had no idea it was coming."

"I'll be anxious to see all of the details — good or bad — when they come out," Arnold said. "But it certainly doesn't look good if one is suspended."

The athletics board serves in an advisory capacity to the University president and is responsible for formulating, reviewing and overseeing the administration of policies governing ASU's athletic program.

Like Arnold, other members of the board said they knew nothing about Kush's dismissal until they heard about it through the media.

"Nothing was ever discussed on the board about it," Dr. Douglas Arner said. "I guess we're all going to have to wait until all the information is in from all parties until we can make any judgments."

Another board member, Dr. John Edwards, said he was "shocked" when he heard the news.

"I would certainly like to know more information," Edwards said. "But so would everybody else."

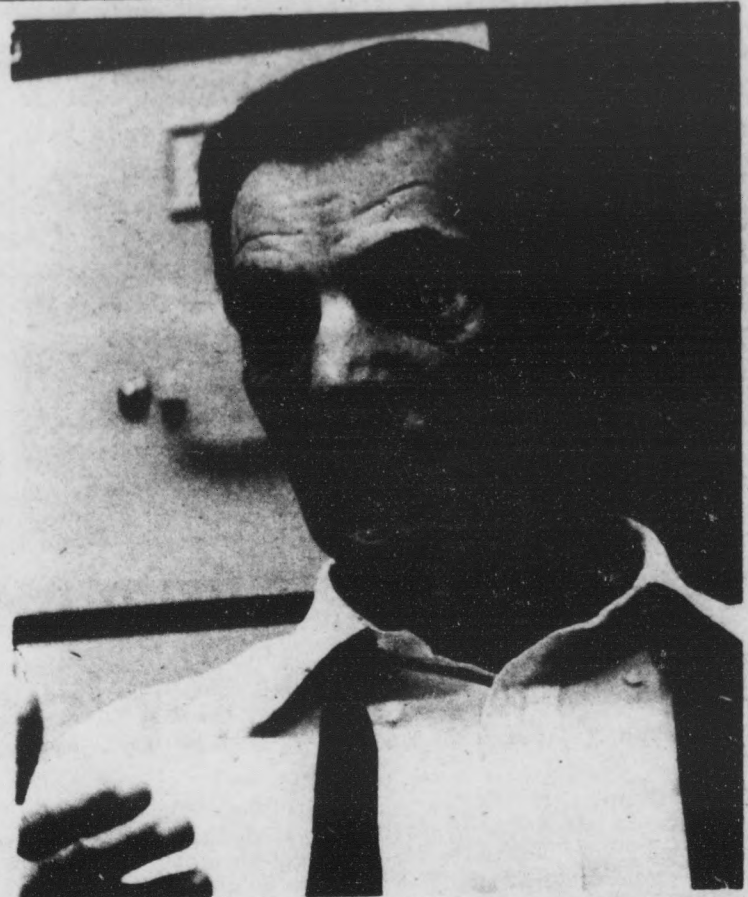
Leaders of the ASU Alumni Association said being kept in the dark about the firing "has caused a lot of hard feelings."

"It's a slap in the face not to have been told," said Karl Wochner, president of the group. "There's a lot of questions that are going to have to be asked."

Wochner said the organization is considering what action it is going to take in response to Kush's firing.

"We're not going to sit back and do nothing," he said. "We will take some sort of stance. Too many people feel too strongly to take a passive stance."

As far as what specific actions the group will take, Wochner said that will not be determined until the reasons behind the firing are made clear.



Staff photo by Tom Tingle

Frank Kush explained his feelings about his termination, his philosophy on football and his relationship with players at a press conference Sunday afternoon.

## Kush's legend 'mountainous' after 25 seasons

By Perry Sams

Some are born great, some achieve greatness, and others have greatness thrust upon them. With the legend that has grown around ASU's 22-year head football coach, Frank Kush, all three might apply.

The myth has become intertwined with the man to the point where separating them is difficult, if not impossible. Born one of 15 children to a coal miner in Windber, Pennsylvania, he should have ended up singing "16 tons" instead of the ASU victory march. Instead, he was thrice elected student body president of his high school and was selected an all-state gridder.

Playing under the immortal Clarence "Biggie" Munn at Michigan State University, Kush earned a starting guard spot in spite of his 175-pound size.

While working construction, a scrap of steel struck him in the eye before his senior season, but he turned the tables on doctors who said he would never play football again by helping the Spartans to a 9-0 national championship season. He earned almost every All-America honor that year.

He served three years as assistant coach at ASU

before taking the head coaching job in 1958. Frank Kush would turn the former teacher's college into a Rose Bowl contender, piling up 176 wins along the way.

ASU dominated the Western Athletic Conference in the 1960's but received little national recognition. Kush's reputation grew as former Sun Devils turned professional. Kush resisted efforts to meet ranked teams in post-season bowls.

He may be best remembered for the 1975 season. Kush took a young and scrappy 11-0 Sun Devil squad into the Christmas Day game against highly-rated Nebraska.

Their 12-0 season earned the Sun Devils a No. 2 national ranking, highest in the school's history.

Perhaps ASU's August training camp, Camp Tontozona, is the best example of the Kush mystique. Set in the pines 20 miles from Payson, Saddleback Mountain overlooks the practice field and military-style barracks carved out of the woods. It was labeled "Kush's Mountain" as the head coach sent players

scrambling up its granite slope.

This season, Kush seems to have come in for more criticism than usual. Even though he may have toned down Tontozona, giving out no "mountains" this year, a local television channel showed footage of him striking a player on the helmet. The player, Mike Lee, walked out of camp, prompting an Arizona Republic editorial questioning his rigid discipline.

The week before the season opener, Kush was named in a \$1.1 million complaint by former ASU punter Kevin Rutledge.

Shutout wins over Toledo and Oregon State seemed to turn the season around for ASU, but during this time articles appeared in the State Press reporting that Kush had criticized an ASU booster who told players to "tell the truth" in the Rutledge case, and that an ASU player had seen him strike Rutledge during the Washington game.

During the week before his firing, he answered questions about the team, though refusing to comment about the Rutledge case.

Opinion

state press

I haven't done anything I'll ever regret.  
—Frank Kush



## Who's really giving the orders?

chet barfield

It takes a powerful force to topple a granite mountain.

And when a 25-year dynasty like that of Frank Kush crumbles as suddenly as it did, you can be sure there've been some mighty big hands pulling the strings.

As yet, Athletic Director Fred Miller has not stated why Kush was fired, other than making some vague allusions to "information" he received last week.

He claims the reasons for Kush's dismissal are "separate" from the \$1.1 million lawsuit of Kevin Rutledge, yet somehow are "intertwined." This kind of doubletalk is having the intended effect — serving to muddle what's going on behind closed doors.

In between the tears during Saturday's press conference, Kush said he was dumped because Miller didn't believe him when he denied punching Rutledge in the face last year.

Although that could be a factor, it's certainly not the real reason.

Kush told a Phoenix reporter last week that he thought influential people in the Valley were seeking

to oust him and discredit the ASU athletic program in a plot to bring professional football to the Phoenix area.

With Kush out of the way, ASU's domination over football fans here would be eroded.

But anyone who's been following the Rutledge suit since it was filed last month should notice some interesting developments.

Kush's financial records, as well as those of the Sun Angel Foundation, have been ordered scrutinized by Rutledge's attorney, Robert O. Hing.

Also, many prominent people have been ordered to testify under oath.

A glance at the Sun Angel roster reveals a lot of very, very big names. That's because it takes big bucks to buy those Winnebagos, and even bigger bucks to keep the athletic department of the country's sixth largest university in any organization's hip pocket.

It's been hinted — but as yet stands unconfirmed by Hing — that some of the heat would be taken off the Rutledge investigation if the University met three conditions: make a public apology to Rutledge, pay all attorneys' fees — and fire Frank Kush.

That last variable is a pretty tall order, yet it's been done.

Miller has denied that Kush's dethroning had anything to do with a "deal." But if this is true, why would he stab his No. 1 breadwinner in the back unless he was pressured into it?

As mighty as Kush is — or was — it appears even

he could be looked upon as an expendable pawn if the stakes were high enough.

It stands to reason that if enough powerful figures in this area had to choose between Kush and maintaining the secrecy of their University contributions and financial matters, the decision would be simple: dump the coach.

Granted, that doesn't seem fair. But when money talks, fairness often isn't part of the vocabulary.



PHOTO BY TOM TINGLE

# Private fund collected for Kush

By Bruce Kaplan

A retirement fund of an undetermined amount was started for suspended ASU football coach Frank Kush seven to eight years ago by a private corporation, according to the president of the Sun Angel Foundation.

Harry Rosenzweig, president of the non-profit booster organization for the past 16 years, told the State Press that neither he nor the Sun Angels have any connection with the fund.

The name of the corporation is LEGNA, angel spelled backwards, according to Rosenzweig. Information on a supposed inner group of the Sun Angels, known as the NUS SLEGNA, has been requested by Kevin Rutledge's attorney in U.S. District Court.

Robert O. Hing, Rutledge's attorney, also had the court order Rosenzweig and 57 other people to appear for the purpose of giving a deposition on the case in Hing's office later this month.

"Ten to one I won't be subpoenaed," Rosenzweig said. "I don't know anything."

"I have no involvement whatsoever," he added.

The corporation was formed separately from the Sun Angel Foundation seven to eight years ago,

about the time the Pittsburgh Steelers offered Kush a coaching job, Rosenzweig said.

"I don't know what the stipulation is for collection," he said.

However, according to a Los Angeles Times reporter, Rosenzweig said earlier Sunday that Kush could collect on the fund when he turns 57. He is now 50-years-old. If fired, he can collect on the fund accumulation to that date. If Kush dies, his family could collect what has been accumulated in the fund to that date.

Rosenzweig said he does not know of any fund-raising activities by the Sun Angels for Kush, but acknowledged individuals within the organization hold such fund-raising activities for the coach.

Rosenzweig once contributed to one such fundraiser, he said.

Several sources have told the State Press that there have been several fund-raising banquets in the past several years where large amounts of money were collected for Kush.

Rosenzweig denied any knowledge of the banquets.

The Sun Angels have no connection with the Rutledge case, Rosenzweig said.

"The Sun Angels were not involved in the decision (to suspend Kush)," he said.

Rosenzweig said he could not say why Sun Angel Executive Director Gene Felker has refused to talk to the State Press about any connection with the case.

Numerous attempts have been made by the State Press to contact Felker in the past two weeks. One item on the request for documents filed by Hing, was for records pertaining to gifts made by the Sun Angels to Kush and coaching staff members.

Susan Ish, Felker's secretary, said in an interview two weeks ago that the foundation receives gifts from members and distributes them to the players requested by the donor.

After consulting with Felker, Ish would not comment further on the donations.

When contacted for further information on the gifts, the Sun Angel office declined comment.

"We've been advised by our attorneys not to speak with anyone from the press. In other words, we are not available for comment," a secretary said.

"That has been the general decision by our attorneys," she added. "We were spoke to and told we were not available for comment."

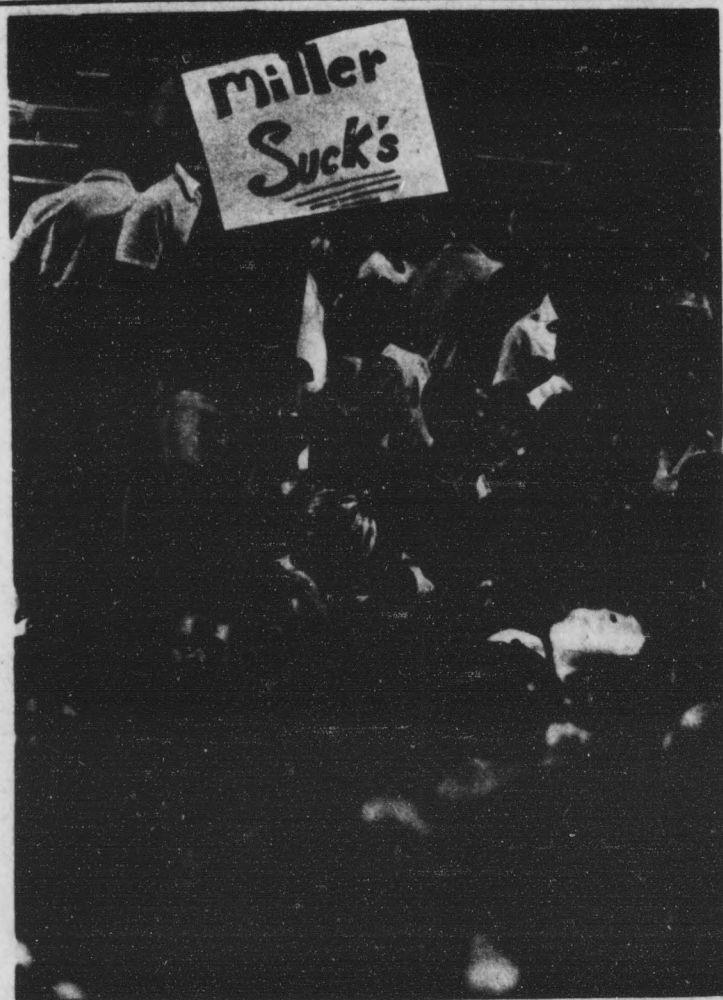


Photo by David Seibert

## Fans display loyalty to Kush with hero's welcome at game

By Perry Sams

Fans trickling into Sun Devil Stadium Saturday were strangely serious and silent. There were few "tailgate parties." At one, almost hidden by two recreational vehicles, two long candles illuminated a table set with silver and china.

The trickle turned into a stream, and they noticed that the "A" had been turned into a "K" on Tempe Butte. You began to hear the name. Tones ranged from funeral to astonished. "Kush. Kush! Kush?" Faces wore masks of shock or patina of pain. Some walked with eyes scanning the ground. Few laughed.

Two hours earlier, ASU head football coach Frank Kush tearfully announced he had been relieved of his coaching duties — fired.

He has been called the "Punishing Polack" — the "Mountain Master" — and other unprintable names. Now he is being called on the carpet.

As fans formed lines and milled around the gates, the question on the crowd's collective lips was "Why?"

"By who?" was the second question. Dr. Fred Miller, ASU athletic director, was the answer and he is mum about why.

Sitting behind glass in his section of the pressbox, Miller found himself staring down at upthrust middle fingers and the icy glares.

Spontaneous cheering sections started.

"We want Kush, we want Kush!" They yelled,

with all eyes on the diminutive figure on the sidelines.

Sheets were turned into improvised signs. "Bring back Frank," "Keep Kush!" they read.

On the field, the irony was tremendous. Players obviously psyched up by the situation held the strong Washington Husky team to seven points. The deposed coach still paced the sidelines.

Kush was hoisted on players' shoulders as the gun sounded and carried off the field. But he was a marked man.

In the midst of the ASU win, confusion reigned. Fans milled around the gates after the game, and writers slipped to a hastily called press conference.

A mimeographed statement announcing the press conference with Miller was passed around before the game's end. It stated that, for obvious reasons, the public shouldn't be told of its location or time.

A final irony. In a game last year, an ASU punt went up — and came back down at the line of scrimmage. ASU would be trounced, 41-7. A coach allegedly struck the punter after the punt, and reportedly said after the game, "He'll never punt for ASU again."

The player — Kevin Rutledge. The coach — Frank Kush. The opponent — the Washington Huskies.

### Reasons hidden in 'apology'

## Miller's action is unexplained

By Dave Walker

The prepared statement meant to explain the end of Frank Kush's 22 years as ASU's head football coach turned out to be more of an apology than an explanation.

"This is without question the most painful decision that I have ever made in my professional career," the statement began.

ASU Athletic Director Fred Miller spoke before a roomful of hastily assembled newsmen Saturday night after ASU's victory over Washington.

His head coach had jumped the gun on him that afternoon by announcing his own firing.

Miller explained that he had met with Kush Friday afternoon, informing the coach of his decision.

The decision would be made public on Sunday, Miller had decided, after the football game.

But Kush had wept his words as his players prepared for the contest and Miller was forced to explain his motivation after the game.

"Based upon information received this past week, I have relieved Frank Kush from responsibilities as ASU head football coach pending further review of the matter," the statement read.

Miller elaborated that Kush had been suspended, remaining on the ASU payroll as an assistant professor of physical education.

The key statement was "... information received this past week ..." and the writers in attendance would not let the statement stand.

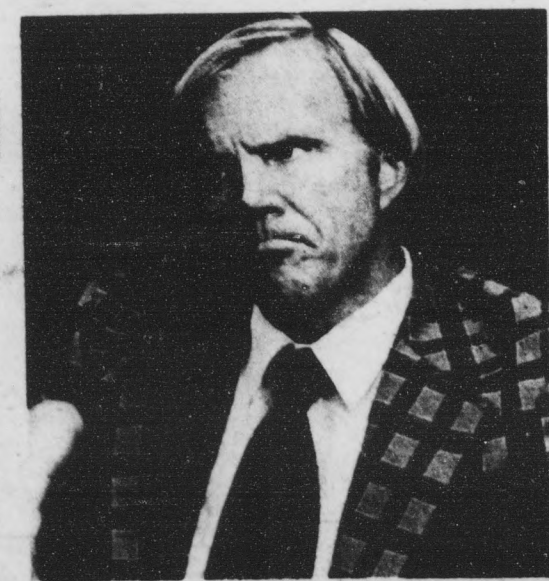
Litigation in the Rutledge case would not allow him to answer any questions concerning the details of those events, Miller explained.

The conference ended without any further explanation from Miller concerning his actions.

Despite ASU Athletic Director Fred Miller's contention that his firing of head football coach Frank Kush was for reasons "separate and apart" from the \$1.1 million Kevin Rutledge harassment suit, the Rutledge litigation remains the primary focus of Kush's abrupt dismissal.

After discussing the decision with Miller on Friday evening, Kush said Saturday afternoon he "felt obligated to take a lie-detector test in the presence of my attorney, and it proves I have been completely truthful" regarding his statement insisting he never hit Kevin Rutledge, a former ASU punter, despite contrary eyewitness testimony.

A current ASU football player, who was granted anonymity because he said he feared reprisals, told the State Press Oct. 8 he saw Kush "take his palm to Kevin's mask and shove



Fred Miller

it up as high as he could. Then he gave him an uppercut under the mask with his opposite hand."

But Kush was quoted in the Sept. 7 edition of *The Arizona Republic* as saying "that statement is absolutely, totally untrue."

Miller repeatedly refused to give the reasons for Kush's firing because he said it is "a subject of litigation." He repeated, however, that the litigation had nothing to do with the Rutledge case.

Fifty-eight persons have been ordered to give depositions to Rutledge's attorney, Robert O. Hing, in connection with the suit filed last month in U.S. District Court.

Both Hing and Miller have said that far more important issues are involved than whether Kush slugged Rutledge.

## Rutledge litigation looms as a factor in Kush dismissal

# By the way, ASU won the game



Staff photo by Tom Tingle

Washington quarterback Tom Porras [7] has plenty of company in the backfield as he attempts a pass against ASU. Attempting to knock down the pass is Sun Devil defensive end Bob Kohrs [95].

By Jim Eleger

The ASU-Washington football game Saturday night probably will go down as a trivia question. The query probably will go something like, what was the score in the final game that Frank Kush was head coach of?

The answer is profound, and maybe lost among the potpourri of the fall of Kush. For the record, it was 12-7, ASU won.

Washington, the No. 7 ranked team in the country, was swept away in the path of ASU football player and fan emotion, squeezed between the art of how it is to win with a 12th player.

The game was in the middle of Sun Devil Stadium, but the attention centered on the 70,000 fans that engulfed it, and the variety of reaction from them to the day's events.

Regardless, there was the game.

The ASU defense stopped one of the country's most formidable rushing attacks, holding it to 161 yards on 45 carries, and just about eclipsing the ideas that have been tossed around that the nation's No. 1 defense against the rush was a lion feeding on squirrels.

Linebacker Gary Padjen turned in a performance that could arguably be called brilliant, with four unassisted and eight assisted tackles, recovering a fumble and causing another.

The complexion of the game was established early, when Washington tailback Joe Steele tried a straight-ahead run and was stopped by defensive end Bob Kohrs on the game's initial play. Fullback Touissant Tyler then went to the same spot on the next play, and linebacker Joey Lumpkin did the honors. Total on the carries was six yards.

Steele was not the rushing giant he has been this year, getting 72 yards on 22 carries. The

middle was closed early, and when Husky coach Don James decided to take things outside, pursuit was stamped on the backs of Steele and Tyler.

"It was a very emotional time for all of us," Padjen said. "I was ready to play. We all were. It was the best game yet from a coaching standpoint."

Padjen's fumble recovery with 4:52 left in the game closed out the Huskies' final gasp at winning and brought mayhem to the Valley.

With the score 12-7, Washington recovered a fumble by ASU quarterback Mark Malone on the Sun Devil 29 yard line, and it looked like Kush's supposedly final hurrah would not be print for memorabilia. But two plays later, Steele went over the right side, and a defense that was not going to break didn't, tearing the ball loose for Padjen's heroics.

While Washington was letting the game go by the boards with poorly-executed offensive plays and a defense that broke but wouldn't bend, the ASU offense, and in particular the line, gave the coaches a good clean shot of smelling salts.

Continually, and doggedly, the offensive line "fired" off the ball with every snap like Mr. Stretch and his pitchfork were right behind.

"The difference (from last year's 41-7 loss to Washington) was our minds were there in this game," offensive tackle Kani Kauahi said. "The difference was we got the shit kicked out of us last year, and we couldn't let them do it again. We did some things different, and this time we kicked the shit out of them."

The Sun Devils put a 70-yard, 12-play scoring drive together in the first quarter, culminated by a three-yard run by Malone.

Eight minutes later, Kohrs recovered a Washington fumble in the end zone and the ASU balance was born.

## Players shoulder shock while rising to occasion

By Murray Froehlich

Sun Devil Stadium never has been filled with as much emotion as it was Saturday night when ASU defeated No. 7 Washington.

The Sun Devils, obviously motivated by Coach Frank Kush's announcement of his firing just three hours before kickoff, were jubilant with the victory over the Huskies but the feeling was bittersweet because of the loss of their coach.

Inspired by the sudden decision, ASU's players had nothing but praise for Kush. Some, overcome with emotion, broke down and wept openly as Kush was carried off the field on his players' shoulders after the victory.

"I was emotionally impressed (with being carried off the field)," Kush said. "One of the problems you have as a head coach is that you like to be intimate and close to each and every player, but this isn't always possible."

"There's a lot of youngsters somewhere along the line that you don't think you're really close to and they come and put their arms around you and they're crying. This is what it's all about. Sooner or later you find out that all of the things you're doing pay off."

ASU quarterback Mark Malone said after the game, "the firing gave us an emotional lift. We wanted to win. The game was for Kush."

Most of the Sun Devils reacted to the decision with an expression of shock and dismay.

"It's a sad moment, he's a great man," Willie Gittens said. "He's the main reason I'm doing so well. He had confidence in me and that's why I have confidence in myself."

Curtis Aaron, starting at left guard for the first time, said, "I love the man. He meant a great deal to me. I'm deeply sorry he won't be here."

Offensive left tackle Kani Kauahi also expressed displeasure about the incident. "Personally I think it's a bunch of bullshit," Kauahi said after the game. "I have so much respect for the man. This whole thing leaves a funny feeling in my stomach."

Reserve quarterback Steve Bratkowski said, "the guy dedicates 25 years to ASU, he deserves to be treated a little better."

Even though Kush questioned the way in which the firing was handled, he did not leave Sun Devil Stadium in the usual manner.

Kush was given a thunderous ovation for the last time by a capacity crowd of 70,912 as he was carried off the field by his players.

It seems Sun Devil Stadium will never be the same.



Staff photo by Tom Tingle

Fired up with emotion, the Sun Devils escort Frank Kush from the field after defeating the Washington Huskies 12-7.

## Owens ready to pick up ball as head coach

By Jim Eleger

Bob Owens said Sunday he received word that he had been named as interim head coach of the ASU football team while getting in his car to drive to a pre-game meeting with the players Saturday afternoon.

"John Wadas (assistant athletic director) asked me to get the team through the night," Owens said. "He talked to me in the parking lot and told me about the decision (about 3:34 p.m.)."

Owens, a defensive coach at ASU for 12 years before replacing Frank Kush as the head coach, said the announcement that Kush had been fired was "tragic, a shock and gave me a deep sense of loss."

"I spent most of today (Sunday) getting my own thoughts together," Owens said. "We're going to try and keep the same routine, not break out of it. A lot of the kids

(ASU players) and coaches felt a gut feeling yesterday, but they seem to be taking it better now."

Owens said he will coach the Devils at least until the end of the season, and will re-evaluate the program and his position at that time.

He anticipates no big changes in the ASU football program because of the coaching switch, and added the effects of the move are hard to determine.

"There's no one that can judge how much effect this will have on the team," he said. "I'm looking for a positive response from the fans about this, because you need the fans to win. I don't think the people in the Valley know who I am, either by design or personality. It's hard to say. I just hope they accept me for the players."

Owens replaced Larry Kentera as defensive coordinator this season, and is one of the few coaches on the team that has a doctorate (education).

Owens and his wife Judy have two children, Kerry 18 and Robyn 14, and live in Tempe. He is a native of Lubbock, Tex. and graduated from Fresno State.

"Kush and I have similar football philosophies," Owens said. "We've worked together for a long time and are close to in our thinking of what it takes to win."

Owens said Kush still would figure in the football program at ASU.

"I will still look to him for advice and rely on his experience," he said. "He developed the program here and you can't overlook that."