

# AHMO®

The chant has been known to strike terror into the hearts of Pirate opponents. And it's been known to cause more than a few new Pirate fans to scratch their head in wonderment.

## Just exactly what does AHMO mean?

There are those who believe it's an acronym for an Agile, Hostile, Mobile, Offense. Others of the defensive persuasion say it stands for Annihilate, Humiliate, Mutilate and Obliterate. But according to the Father of the AHMO tradition, the yell's beginning are a little more "grizzly". As in Grizzly Adams, the television show featuring a mountain man with a bear for a best friend popular in the 1970s and punned on another show of the time, Dean Martin's Celebrity Roast. The AHMO attitude was adopted during the 14-year tenure of Jerry Shaffer, former Wylie High School teacher, athletic director and head football coach. Shaffer came to WISD in 1974. After the Pirates posted a 1-19 record, he was given coaching duties.

According to local folklore, just before the regional playoff game against Breckenridge in 1977, Coach Shaffer returned home from a late practice. Dean Martin's Celebrity Roast was on TV. On this particular episode, a comedian was roasting actor Dan Haggerty, who was the star of The Life and Times of Grizzly Adams. This comedian talked to Haggerty about how different his upbringing on the South Side of Chicago was from the mountain setting on Grizzly Adams. One of the words the comedian recalled from his childhood was AHMO, as in "AHMO go to the store" or "AHMO kick your butt". Knowing that the Pirates were huge underdogs to Breckenridge, and that Wylie had never made it past the second round of the playoffs to that point, Shaffer decided he would use the new word to motivate his team.

The next day, he told his players about the word and the Pirates broke from the huddle with a shout of "AHMO!" The rest is what legends are made of. The Pirates beat Breckenridge on the final play of the game when quarterback Ronnie Cross threw a 30-yard pass to Roy Fuentes. Of course, any true Pirate fan (or anyone who has talked to Ronnie Cross for any length of time) knows, Wylie AHMO'd all the way to the state championship that year. Whatever it means, AHMO is a battle cry, an inspiration. It died out a few years back, but Coach Mark Ball came to Wylie in 1996, he saw the need for AHMO...and encouraged its use. When you're in the stands yelling AHMO, you're part of the community. You're telling those kids on the field you think they can overcome any obstacle.

And that's what AHMO's all about!

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