

North Texas Edges Netters; Spartans Here Friday

By Clifford Broyles
Battalion Sports Writer

North Texas State won two of three doubles matches here Wednesday afternoon to defeat the Texas A&M netters 5-4 on Varsity Courts.

The two teams split six singles matches but the Eagles won two close doubles matches to wrap up

the victory.

Lawton Park and Tommy Connell were victims in one loss, 6-3 and 10-8 while David Chastain and Carl Jaedicke were dropping a heartbreaker, 10-8 7-5.

It was the third time this season that the Aggies had gone into the doubles matches needing to win two out of three to win

the match but it was also the third time they failed to do so.

A&M's number one singles player Dickie Fikes came from behind in two sets to defeat Danny Haddox, 7-5, 6-3. Fikes trailed Haddox 5-1 in the first set before winning six games in a row to win the set. He also trailed 3-0 in the second set but again

won six games in a row to win the match.

Lindsey Kroll and Lawton Park also won singles matches for the Aggies and Fikes and Mike Hickey won the only doubles match for A&M.

A&M had earlier defeated North Texas in the Corpus Christi Intercollegiate Tennis Tournament 5-2. In that match the Aggies played without number two singles player Hickey and the Eagles were playing without two of their leading players.

The Aggies now 7-6 in match play this season play host to Michigan State Friday afternoon in College Station.

They also open Southwest Conference play this weekend when they play Texas Tech here Saturday.

Results of the North Texas match were:

Singles—
Dickie Fikes, A&M def. Danny Haddox, NTSU, 7-5 6-3.
Tom Abercrombie, NTSU, def. Mike Hickey, A&M, 6-3 6-3.

Doubles—
Lindsey Kroll, A&M def. Steve Buck, NTSU, 6-2 7-5.

Bill Uncapher, NTSU, def. Tommy Connell, A&M, 5-7 8-6 6-2.
Lawton Park, A&M, def. Jim

McCracken, NTSU, 6-3 6-4.

Dixie Mabe, NTSU, def. David Chastain, A&M 6-4 6-4.

Doubles—
Fikes and Hickey, A&M, def. Abercrombie and Uncapher, NTSU, 6-2 2-6 6-2.

McCracken and Haddox, NTSU, def. Park and Connell, A&M, 10-8.
Buck and Mabe, NTSU, def. Chastain and Carl Jaedicke, A&M, 10-8 7-5.

Oakland, Orioles Picked To Win

By Mike Rathet

Associated Press Sports Writer

NEW YORK (AP)—The Baltimore Orioles, who have the power, and the Oakland Athletics, who hope they have added the power, figure to be the teams to beat in the American League pennant races that begin next week.

Each, however, likely will be faced with different problems.

The Orioles, who do not seem to have stiff competition facing them in AL East, will have to overcome whatever psychological scars were inflicted by losing to the New York Mets in the World Series. The A's will have to overcome the Minnesota Twins in AL West.

With the exception of these three teams — the Orioles, the A's and the Twins — it looks from here as if the others will have difficulty keeping within hailing range. The entire order of finish should look something like this: East—1. Baltimore; 2. Boston; 3. Washington; 4. New York; 5. Detroit; 6. Cleveland. West—1. Oakland; 2. Minnesota; 3. Kansas City; 4. California; 5. Chicago; 6. Seattle-Milwaukee.

The big battle most likely will develop in AL West with the defending champion Twins meeting the challenge of the A's. The Twins, who won it under Billy Martin last year, will be trying to duplicate that effort this year under Bill Rigney and the adjustment required in adapting to that change-over may have been reflected in Minnesota's 0-9 record at the beginning of spring training.

There is heavy artillery available, with Harmon Killebrew and Tony Oliva and the pitching should have improved with the addition of Luis Tiant to a staff that includes Jim Katt, Jim Perry and Dave Boswell.

The A's, however, seem to have improved themselves to the point where they have the ability to overtake the Twins. The addition of Don Mincher and Felipe Alou should add even more dynamite to a line-up that already includes a legitimate super-slugger in Reggie Jackson.

There doesn't seem to be any way the others can be a factor. The Royals' youthful forces may be the only edge needed to finish third in what figures to be a three-team race with California and Chicago. Seattle-Milwaukee, or whatever, will bring up the rear.

In the Eastern sector, only a complete turnabout can keep the Orioles from another World Series engagement.

With Frank Robinson, Boog Powell and Brooks Robinson swinging and Mike Cuellar, Dave McNally and Jim Palmer pitching the Orioles just could be as convincing winners as they were last year when they finished 19 games ahead of second-place Detroit.

The Tigers figure to fade this year, without the suspended Denny McLain for a half season, and the most likely challenger is Boston, hoping to recapture the spirit of 1967 under new manager Eddie Kasko with a solid team led by Carl Yastrzemski.

Another year under Ted Williams should see the Senators improve to third place despite improvements made by the Yankees with the acquisition of first baseman

Danny Cater and outfielder Curt Blefary.

The Tigers are tagged to sink to fifth, winding up ahead of only Cleveland.



TOP HITTER—Billy Hodge, a junior catcher from Bryan, is the top hitter among Aggie regulars through 13 games this year. He has a .351 mark for the nation's sixth ranked team (Collegiate Baseball Magazine). (Photo by Mike Wright)

Denny Suspended Until July By Baseball Commissioner

NEW YORK (AP)—Denny McLain, cited for being glib and greedy, was suspended until July 1 by Commissioner Bowie Kuhn Wednesday after investigation disclosed the Detroit Tigers' pitcher had attempted to become a partner of gamblers allegedly involved in bookmaking operations.

The action by Kuhn, who some six weeks ago suspended McLain while investigating his off-the-field activities, also prohibits the ace of Detroit staff from appearing at the Tigers' camp or in their clubhouse until the suspension is lifted.

In addition, McLain was placed on probation with the proviso that he be required to provide the commissioner's office with such data on his financial affairs as may be requested so that further such difficulties do not again lead him into a similar situation.

The cost to McLain, already deep in myriad financial difficulties, is estimated at about \$45,000—half of his yearly salary—plus the \$5,700 Kuhn said the pitcher was duped out of by the gamblers with whom he was associating.

Kuhn handed down his decision at a formal press conference held in a midtown hotel, ending speculation about McLain's fate that has existed since Feb. 19 when he indefinitely suspended the pitcher because of his "involvement in 1967 bookmaking activities and associations."

In the six weeks since, Kuhn revealed his investigation had disclosed that McLain became involved "with certain gamblers said to be involved in a bookmaking operation" after playing an engagement at a bar in Flint, Mich., in January of 1967.

"McLain at that time commenced placing basketball bets with this operation," Kuhn said in reading his two-page prepared statement before a battery of cameras and kleig lights, "and subsequently he was persuaded to make financial contributions totaling approximately \$5,700.

"While McLain believed he had become a partner in this operation and has so admitted to me . . . it would appear that in fact he was the victim of a confidence scheme. I would thus conclude that McLain was never a partner and had no proprietary interest in the bookmaking operation.

"The fair inference is that his own glibness and avarice had permitted him to become a dupe of the gamblers with whom he associated."

Kuhn went on to say that his

investigation had not shown any other material facts beyond those—that no evidence exists that McLain "has been guilty of any misconduct involving baseball or the playing of baseball games."

Kuhn, however, concluded that his association with gamblers "was not in the best interests of baseball" and "therefore must be made the subject of discipline." Kuhn pointed out, at the same time, that the suspension was not based on McLain's "irresponsibility."

Kuhn also said, in answer to questions, that had McLain actually become a partner in a bookmaking operation it would have been a fact he would have had to consider "but he was neither a bookmaker nor a partner in the book. He thought he was, but he wasn't. He didn't get a penny out of the entire thing."

Pressed as to what the difference is in attempting to become a bookmaker and actually being one, Kuhn said.

"I think you have to consider

the difference is the same as between murder and attempted murder."

Asked if McLain wasn't being let off easy, Kuhn answered sharply:

"I do not think it the suspension is a slap on the wrist. I think a suspension for half a year is a very serious matter."

Kuhn said McLain had been notified of the decision by a member of the commissioner's staff prior to the press conference. He also revealed that he had disclosed the action he was going to take to President Nixon when they met at the White House Tuesday.

"In the President's judgment," said Kuhn, "the decision was fair one."

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