

Texas Now Leads SWC By Three Games

Wittkamp Fires No-Hitter; TCU Wins Other Two

By BILL HENRY
Battalion Sports Editor

What can you say about a baseball team that's pitchers allow only eight hits in a three-game series which includes a no-hitter and a three-hitter and loses two of the three games?

That's what coach Tom Chandler and his Aggies had to face Sunday morning after dropping two of three in last weekend's series in Fort Worth against TCU.

The Frogs have now beaten the Aggies seven of the past nine games.

Sophomore Bobby Wittkamp was masterful in pitching A&M's first conference no-hitter in school history in Friday's 1-0 rain-drenched Aggie victory in 50-degree weather.

The Aggies copped four hits off TCU ace Frank Johnston but it wasn't those hits, or any hits, that enabled the Aggie win.

In the fifth inning of that contest, fireplug David Buxkamper reached first on a walk, went to second on a passed ball, to third on a wild pitch and scored on another wild pitch for A&M's lone run.

Mike Schraeder bounced a double into left center but as was

the story of the series, the hit meant nothing. Hits in general meant nothing as the Aggies out-hit the Frogs 14 to eight while losing Saturday's doubleheader, 3-1 and 4-3.

The series, like usual in SWC athletics, did nothing but help the Texas Longhorns increase its lead in the standings to three full games with nine games remaining with a 9-2 loop mark. A&M and TCU share the second place lead with a 5-4 and 6-5 mark, respectively.

In that opening win, Wittkamp had a perfect game going until the bottom of the sixth inning when he issued his first walk to footballer-first baseman Mike Luttrell. His stay on first was short-lived as the next batter, catcher Dana Carden, hit into a double play. Centerfielder Gene Burton received another walk in the bottom of the seventh.

"I didn't even know I had a no-hitter going until the TCU bench started yelling at me," Wittkamp said following the second no-hitter of his life.

"My curve and slider were working real well and I had good control all day. I also was lucky enough to stay ahead of the batter and not have to throw real

good pitches in clutch situations." TCU coach Frank Windegger congratulated Bobby after the game, saying that was the first ever pitched against him as a coach and the disgusting weather made the feat even greater.

Chandler said his now 4-0 pitcher has overcome his wildness and had great control all day.

From this point, things get bad.

In Saturday's seven inning opener, ace fireballer and strike-out artist Bobby Falcon threw a three-hitter while striking out 10. The Aggies slammed nine hits in the contest but fell 3-1.

The Frogs opened things up in the first when Falcon walked two then All-SWC right fielder Jimmy Torres bounced a triple off the left-centerfield wall to score both Don Bodenhamer and Phil Turner.

Falcon struck out the sides two consecutive innings and no TCU batter was thrown out at first until the third inning.

The key to A&M's losses was leaving nine men on base while the Horned Frogs stranded only four.

In the nightcap, A&M jumped out in the first with two runs off starting pitcher Tom Ladasau with first baseman Paul Miller and Schraeder getting singles. A double error on a pickoff try by Ladasau and Torres enabled Miller to score from second and another sacrifice fly by Bratsen brought in Schraeder.

In the third, TCU tied it up.

The Frogs scored two runs on no hits and no A&M errors except in the pitching department.

Clint Thomas, who had battled the flu all week, walked the first two men to face him in the third. Tommy Butler hit into a double play and the uprising seemed to be quelled. That, however, was soon to be changed. Thomas hit Bodenhamer to put men on first and third and after throwing two balls to Bobby Turner, was replaced by Charlie Jenkins.

Jenkins finished the job on Turner while allowing Carden to score from third on a wild pitch. With the bases loaded, Jenkins walked Torres to tie the game.

In the bottom of the seventh, Jenkins served Luttrell a letter-high curve that was hit 362 feet over the left-centerfield wall and gave the Frogs a 3-2 lead. That was Luttrell's only hit in the series.

A&M tied it up again in the top of the eighth on four walks and two fielder's choices. Buxkamper walked but was cut down on a

fielder's choice from the bat of Gene Reinarz who was safe at first on the double play try. Miller walked to put men on first and second with one out. Schraeder then hit a slow roller down the third base line and instead of fielding the ball, third sacker Bodenhamer let the ball go by hoping it would go out of play.

It didn't go out of play but hit Reinarz sliding into third, who then was automatically out for interference.

Jim Hacker followed with a walk and another walk to Bratsen forced in the tying run and still kept the bases loaded with two outs.

John Woods then hit a sharp blow to second baseman Butler who relayed it to first to stop the rally.

TCU scored the winning run in the bottom of the eighth with a walk, fielder's choice and two singles to take the win.

"We just didn't get the hitting we needed," coach Tom Chandler said after the games. "Our pitching

was good enough to beat anybody but we just couldn't score when we had the opportunity. We left 17 men on base during the series and you can't do that and hope to win."

Only three runs were batted in by the Aggies and all were done by Bratsen who didn't get a single hit in the series. And only two extra base hits were garnered and both by Schraeder.

TCU was leading the conference in hitting with a .315 average and A&M was second at .287 but neither team showed much in the series.

A&M, as a team, went 19-80 while TCU was eight for 80. The Aggies will return to conference action this weekend when they host the Houston Cougars in a three-game series beginning Friday at 1 p.m.



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