

Baker emerges from shadows

By MIKE BRUTON
Sports Editor

A&M hurdler Shifton Baker ran the 1974 season in the shadows of stellar hurdler Scottie Jones but has made himself well known owning the leading time in the Southwest Conference in the 120 highs. He is also the leading point getter for the 75 track team.

Baker, making marked improvement this season has posted a 13.8 in the highs and a 52.1 in the mediums and could possibly end up being a double winner in the conference meet. He has already qualified for the NCAA meet in the highs and is a mere tenth of a second from qualifying in the 440 intermediates.

The former Elgin High School great liked the weather conditions and the potential learning experience that Texas A&M offered and after an illustrious prep school career he came to Aggieland in

1973. "I like the warm climate," said Baker. "I can't run in the cold." The lanky sophomore also felt that he could learn from a star hurdler like Jones.

"Another reason why I came here, was because of Scottie (Jones). He showed me a lot of things - technique, stretching, arm and knee action and how to improve my sprinting," Baker explained.

You can bet your bottom dollar that Coach Charles Thomas is glad to have Baker at A&M. As a high school senior Baker ran 14.0 in the highs and tied for second best in the nation with Alex Ray of Galveston Ball in the 330 mediums with a 37.4 time. He also ran in the Golden West and United States Track and Field Federation meets in his final high school season.

The modest bio-med major continued his sparkling performances in his freshman year at Texas A&M covering the 120 highs in 13.9 seconds and the grueling 440 intermediates in 52.4. But to SWC track enthusiasts Baker was the other A&M hurdler. Jones was king of the hill and Baker battled with inconsistency.

Baker was not hidden in the background long as he came out this season and defeated everything in his path to a SWC hurdling title in the highs. The SWC meet is yet to be run but Baker is certainly the man to beat. Baker said the big difference in this season and last season for him was strength and consistency. "I got in good preseason training and strengthened my legs last year. I was sporadic, because I

was so tired from working so hard, but the hard work last year made me stronger for this year and I'm more consistent," commented Baker.

Baker has set personal goals for the 1975 season and he expressed confidence in achieving them. He wants to run a 13.6 in the highs and a 51.5 in the intermediates. "Under the right conditions, I can accomplish them (goals)," said Baker. He said weather, competition, condi-

tion of running surface were factors when considering achieving a lifetime best.

The fleet hurdler hinted that he would make a move in this evening's quadrangular meet in Austin. "I'm going to try to really run fast tomorrow," said Baker with a determined tone of voice.

The A&M hurdler will be pushed in both hurdling events with Rice's Mike Fulgham (13.8) and Curtis

Isaiah (13.8) in the highs and Robert Primeaux (52.3) in the intermediates. Both Owl hurdlers have wind-aided bests at 13.8.

Baker would not pick a winner in either race. "It's a toss-up right now," he said. "I think whoever feels the best will win it." What Baker said could be true, it might be a toss-up, but if consistency means anything the A&M sophomore should cross the finish line first.



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Phillies nip Expos, 2-1

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — Steve Carlton pitched a six-hitter for his first victory of the season while Dave Cash scored one run and drove in the other to lead the Philadelphia Phillies to a 2-1 victory over the Montreal Expos Wednesday night.

Carlton, 1-3, struck out seven, walked three and lost his shutout when Barry Foote led off the eighth inning with his first home run of the season.

Cash, who had four singles, led off the first with a hit to right. Steve Rogers, 0-4, hit Mike Schmidt with a pitch and Greg Luzinski lined a run-scoring single to left.

The Phillies made it 2-0 in the seventh.

Bonds' late shot defeats Orioles, 6-4

NEW YORK (AP) — Bobby Bonds greeted Baltimore reliever Bob Reynolds with a three-run homer in the bottom of the ninth inning Wednesday night to catapult the New York Yankees to a 6-4 victory over the Orioles.

Walt Williams led off the ninth against Grant Jackson with a single. Bob Oliver forced him but Roy White and Elliott Maddox singled for one run. Reynolds replaced Jackson and Bonds bashed his fourth homer of the season over the center field fence.

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