

Batt Pix



Sean Petty



Mark Patterson



dp

WEEK 3

Texas A&M-Penn State	Penn St. by 17	Penn St. by 21	A&M by 1
Arkansas-Oklahoma St.	Arkansas by 14	Arkansas by 11	Arkansas by 7
Baylor-Alabama	Alabama by 20	Alabama by 7	Alabama by 14
Rice-LSU	LSU by 31	LSU by 9	LSU by 10
SMU-North Texas St.	SMU by 6	SMU by 4	SMU by 7
Texas-Iowa State	Texas by 21	Texas by 29	Texas by 14
TCU-Tulane	Tulane by 5	TCU by 6	Tulane by 10
Texas Tech-Arizona	Tech by 2	Tech by 10	Arizona by 2
Houston-Cincinnati	Houston by 7	Houston by 6	Houston by 3
Dallas-Cleveland	Dallas by 8	Dallas by 13	Dallas by 3

Last week's record	8-2	8-2	6-4
Season percentage	.750	.750	.600

the sports

Astros do or die against the Reds

United Press International
HOUSTON — A three-game series beginning tonight against the Cincinnati Reds is the last hope for the pressing Houston Astros, who owned a 10-game midsummer lead over the National League West but watched the bottom drop out slowly and agonizingly.

Early season winners of a string of heart-stopping triumphs, the Astros trailed Cincinnati by 2½ games going into Thursday night but still were trying to become one of the least offensive championship teams in recent Major League history.

Manager Bill Virdon said the 10-game lead his team held on July 4 misled people.

"I don't think anybody ever thought we would ever have that big a lead. Our club had played well, there's no question about that," Virdon said, "but there was nobody else in the division winning at that time."

they have 9 games to go — they rate as one of the lightest hitting contenders ever.

The 1973 New York Mets, the epitome of a non-power division winner, hit 85 home runs. Kansas City's 1975 division winner hit 65. Chicago Cub Dave Kingman had 47 this season. The Houston Astros have 46.

The last team to go through a season with more triples than home runs was the 1949 Chicago White Sox. Houston, with 50, could do it again.

Pitching has been Houston's primary strength but only J.R. Richard has thrown consistently since the All-Star break. He is 16-13 and is scheduled to oppose Tom Seaver, 15-6, in tonight's game.

Saturday night Joe Niekro is scheduled to win for his 20th win.

"I'd love to win 20 games but if we don't win the division it won't matter whether I do or not," Niekro said.

The Reds played better in the second half while the Astros, usually a second-division finisher able to relax and play solid baseball near season's end, slumped.

Since July 4 the Astros are 31-37. Since July 6, no Astro other than a pitcher has hit a home run with a runner on base.

Virdon disagreed with critics of the team's winning formula: speed, defense and pitching.

"It's always effective, regardless of where you are in the standings. It is always potent if you have consistent hitting. You don't necessarily have to have power, just consistency," he said.

"In the first half of the season we were not hitting for average but we were hitting consistently."

Whether the Astros win their first pennant in 18 seasons or not — and

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A tough place to play

Aggs head for Mt. Nittany

By MARK PATTERSON
Battalion Sports Staff

The Battalion, Thursday night, 10 p.m. — I just got off the phone with a gentleman who lives in State College, Penn. His dad is an Aggie, his roommate is an Aggie and he has followed Aggie football for the past 18 years.

He called long distance to ask if, in my opinion, the Aggies had a chance this weekend against Penn State.

I had to be honest with him. It doesn't look like a good weekend in University Park for the Aggies.

Picked as 10- to 27-point underdogs by the bookies across the state, the Aggies venture into Beaver Stadium looking for their first victory of the season. It won't come easy against Joe Paterno's Nittany Lions.

With one outing under their belts, a 45-10 victory over Rutgers, the Nittany Lions are ranked fifth this week in the national polls. Their rushing defense rates as the second-best in the country with an eight yard per-game average. Yes, eight yards a game.

"There's no question that Penn State is deserving of their ranking," Aggie coach Tom Wilson said. "There's not a whole lot we can do about Penn State."

They run a multiple-set defense. You have to limit yourself somewhat so your blocking assignments can be adapted to their defense. That limits what you can do on offense.

"We're going to have to put the ball in the air. We're not going to be able run with the ball or play a ball-control offense. Nobody's been able to control the ball against Penn State."

The Caller, his optimism sinking, asked if there was any chance that the Aggies could pull off an upset. Could the Aggies somehow snap Paterno's magic spell (he's never lost to a Southwest Conference

team, in six games, since he became Penn State's head coach) and come away winners? I told him that the signs don't look good.

This will be the first time since the Virginia Tech game, the Aggies second game of the 1977 season, that the Aggies have played on a grass field. It's a fact that has Wilson worried.

"Our team relies on speed," Wilson said. "There's no doubt that playing on artificial turf helps us because turf is so much faster."

"Our main adjustment this week has been getting used to wearing cleats (opposed to turf shoes). Some of our players have NEVER worn cleats."

"This is an important game for us.

At times like this, we could go in a lot of different directions. But no one on this team is ready to throw in the towel because we're 0-2. We're just going to circle the wagons, get tight and work together."

The Caller thanked me for my time and, as he said goodbye, there was still a touch of optimism in his voice.

He told me to look for him at the game Saturday. He'll be the one wearing an Aggie beanie, an Aggie T-shirt and maroon slacks. He said he wouldn't be hard to miss, just look for him in the middle of the Penn State section yelling for the Aggies.

I hope he has something to yell about this Saturday afternoon.

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TI Interviews on Campus September 24 & 25

Talk to Digital Systems Group representatives from Houston, Austin and Temple concerning jobs in manufacturing and design for BS/MS in Electrical Engineering, BS/MS in Mechanical Engineering, BS in Industrial Engineering or Manufacturing Technology, and BS/MS in Computer Science.

Information Session September 23 & 24
All students are cordially invited to attend an information session and slide show on Sept. 23, 7-9 p.m., in Room 410 of the MSC or on Sept. 24, 7-9 p.m., in Room 510 of the MSC. These presentations will be particularly informative to those students who will be interviewing with TI Sept. 24 & 25.