

sports

# Pastorini says Stabler won't win job easily



Junior shortstop Bryan "Twig" Little starts his throw to first base to complete a double play against Lubbock Christian

College earlier in the season. The Aggie baseball team is off to a 19-4 start this season. Staff photo by Lee Roy Leschper, Jr.

United Press International  
HOUSTON — Native Californian Dan Pastorini, on his way back home in a trade that brings Ken Stabler to Houston, says Oakland's veteran quarterback may not have an easy time getting past the Oilers' No. 2 passer.

Even coach Bum Phillips, in announcing the trade last Saturday, said Stabler, 34, would have no automatic advantage over Houston's third-year pro Gifford Nielsen, a Mormon whom teammates nicknamed "Pilgrim."

"I'll tell you," Pastorini said, "the kid (Nielsen) is the apple of my eye. He's been a great friend. He's a great athlete. He's learned more football in two years than a lot of athletes would in five or six. He's very intense."

"I think Mr. Stabler might even be surprised when he competes with Gifford. It's going to be an interesting situation."

Pastorini, who age 30 is ending nine troubled seasons with the Oilers, said in leaving he would offer Nielsen the same advice he gave when they first met: "stay out of bars and go to the right churches."

Pastorini did not take his own advice, and his fast lifestyle contributed to friction with some of the city's football fans and with some sports reporters.

"I'm leaving a city that has not been the easiest place to grow up in. It has not been the most difficult either," he said. "I'm leaving with mixed emotions."

Pastorini covets the limelight, and he indicated in a short farewell speech given at a news conference he called Tuesday that the media were

partly to blame for the negative image many fans held of him. Local football fans voting Saturday in an informal newspaper poll preferred Stabler over Pastorini by a count of 43-3.

"I would like to say I'm very sorry for not getting to know everyone in the city, for I feel that had I had that

opportunity, it would have been easier on all of us," Pastorini said.

The incident which apparently caused Phillips to seek a trade was Pastorini's blow up after being told by Phillips he could not race dragsters. At that time, Pastorini demanded to be traded.

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## Baseball year yielding many pleasant surprises

By MIKE BURRICHTER  
Sports Editor  
Tom Chandler entered his 2nd year as head baseball coach at Texas A&M with simple objectives in mind. He had lost some tremendous talent to graduation. The position he worried about most was pitcher, where he had lost all three starters.

Two of those pitchers were Mark Raymond and Mark Ross, mainstays in the Aggie rotation for three years. Between them, 14 Aggie baseball records had fallen. Both went on to sign professional contracts, Thursday with the San Diego Padres and Ross with the Houston Astros. Chandler's starting rotation entered this season consisted of one sophomore and two freshmen. Chandler said this was going to be a re-energized rotation and if his team was to do well, his young pitching staff would have to mature quickly.

The sophomore is Bobby Taylor, who pitched in seven games last season before being sidelined with a hip injury. The two freshmen are Rick Luecken, of Spring Woods High School in Houston and Robert Slavens, who pitched at Houston's Westbury High School last year. Luecken and Slavens are both 5-0 going into this weekend's series on to three batters in Texas Tech at Olsen Field. Luecken leads the 19-4 Aggies with a .280 batting average. Luecken earned run average. Luecken, who has an ERA of 2.12, leads the team in strikeouts, with 27 in 34 innings. Taylor is 2-3 and his ERA is 2.14.

Chandler had said earlier he hoped to get the young pitchers as much game experience as possible before conference play got into full swing. But he hadn't expected them to be so successful. Now he knows they are ready.

"Nothing succeeds like success, and they're stepping forth very well," he said. "That's quite a step, coming from high school right into the Southwest Conference."

Another area in which Chandler was concerned was catcher, where

Buster Turner had started for three seasons. The catching duties are shared by a freshman and a senior walk-on. Freshman Joe Szekely and senior Doug Teague make up the odd couple behind the plate. Szekely has played in 13 games and is hitting .205. Teague, a walk-on split end for the Aggie football team, has made 11 game appearances and is hitting .214.

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