

Texas claims SWC title; Aggies eliminated early

by RICHARD OLIVER
Sports Editor

Paced by the brilliant pitching of Keith Creel and the bat of Randy Richards, the University of Texas Longhorns won the Southwest Conference post-season baseball tournament championship Tuesday by defeating Arkansas, 9-4.

The Texas A&M University baseball team, however, stumbled to two consecutive losses and was the first team eliminated in the double-elimination tournament.

Richards' fourth inning, two-run home run highlighted a 12-hit Texas attack against three Arkansas pitchers.

In the meantime, Longhorn stalwart Creel was stifling the potentially potent bats of the Hogs, giving up only five hits and one run in the five innings he worked.

Because of Tuesday's victory, Texas will host the NCAA Central Regionals in Austin Friday through Saturday. The Horns will play Louisiana Tech, 42-22, Friday night. Arkansas, however, will play in Tulsa, Okla., as the at-large team in the NCAA Midwest Regionals, to be held at Oral Roberts University Thursday through Saturday. Arkansas will take on Oral Roberts in the first round Thursday.

Despite losing the final game to regular season champion Texas, Arkansas was the surprise of the tournament. After demolishing Texas A&M Saturday in the first round, 19-10, they were beaten Sunday by Texas, 6-4, in a thunderstorm-plagued game.

In the loser's bracket, Arkansas defeated Texas Tech Monday in the closest match-up of the tournament, 6-5, and came back that evening to beat Texas, 8-7, in the championship game. The win shouldered both the Longhorns and the Razorbacks with one loss apiece, forcing an extra championship game. It was the first time in SWC tournament history that the tournament had to go an extra game.

In five games, the Razorbacks had 64 hits and 41 runs. They were led by tournament MVP Kevin McReynolds, who won the triple crown in the SWC (leading the league in runs batted in, home runs, and batting average). McReynolds was the most valuable player in the tournament, going 10-for-20 with eight runs scored, 10 RBIs, one triple, and four home runs.

The Aggie pitching, considered the backbone of this year's successful season, fell apart in their two games, allowing 27 runs and 34 hits. Robert Slavens, who was 11-0 during the regular season, allowed three runs on three hits and three walks in the bottom of the eighth inning against

Texas Tech on Sunday afternoon, and lost his first decision, 8-5. That loss eliminated the Aggies.

The Aggies underwent the first embarrassment Saturday night, when Arkansas erupted for 22 hits and 19 runs to bury the Ags, 19-10. The Aggies, who came within one percentage point of setting an SWC fielding percentage record during the season, committed six errors in the game.

Arkansas starter Steve Krueger, who is considered by many to be the best all-around pitcher in the SWC, was peppered for 10 runs (seven earned) on 11 hits by the Aggies, but he pitched the entire game.

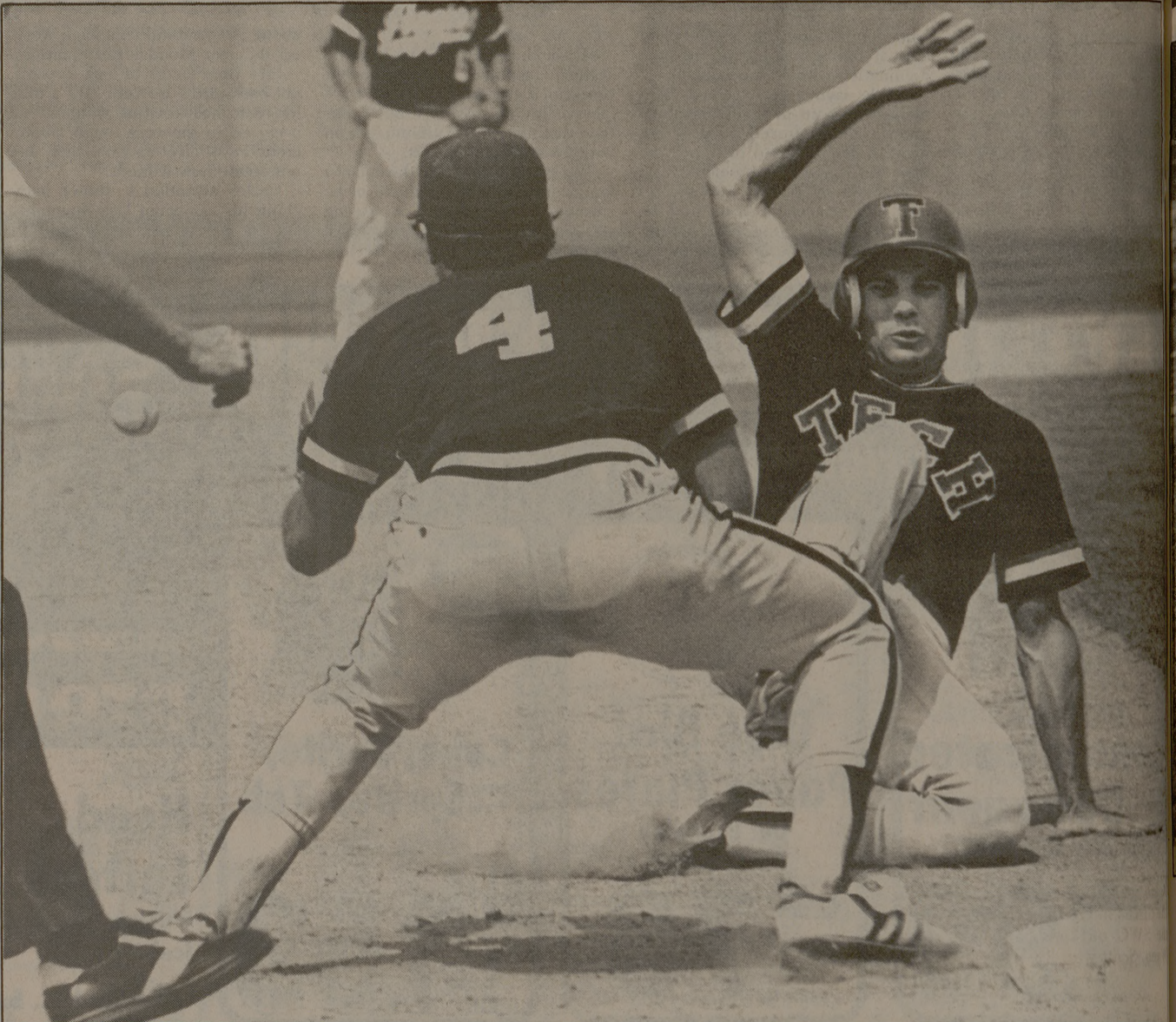
Arkansas and Texas A&M set or tied 14 SWC tournament records in the game, including most combined score (29), longest game (3:27), most hits in an inning (seven, Arkansas in the eighth inning), and most errors (6, Texas A&M).

Texas A&M has now lost eight out of 11 games in SWC tournament action.

Competition in the SWC post-season classic was scheduled to begin last Friday, but heavy rains Thursday and Friday forced postponement of the tournament for one day (until Saturday).

The rain continued to give tournament officials headaches, as Sunday's Arkansas-Texas game was delayed for 45 minutes in the eighth inning due to a spectacular lightning display and a heavy thunderstorm.

Arkansas led the four teams in all-tournament selections with five, and Texas had four. Aggie center-fielder Simon Glenn, who stole four bases against Texas Tech and set a school record with his 36 season thefts, was the lone Texas A&M selection.



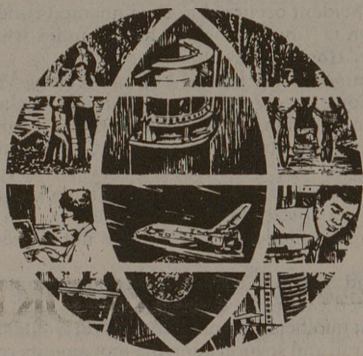
Texas Tech pinch runner Harry Roper slides safely into third base while Aggie third baseman Harry Francis awaits the throw from center field. The Red Raiders defeated Texas

A&M, 8-5, to eliminate them from the SWC post-season baseball tournament held last weekend at Olsen Field.

Staff Photo by Lee Roy Leschper

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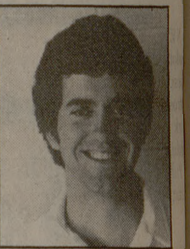
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Reflections

by Richard Oliver



The Southwest Conference baseball tournament is finally over, and not one second too soon.

After enduring monsoons, watery cokes, and the University of Texas' "wild bunch" for four days, I was tottering on the verge of collapse.

Not that the tournament wasn't

exciting; the long-ball hitting of Arkansas' Kevin McReynolds and the swift base running of the Aggies' Simon Glenn gave me all the excitement I needed.

There were disappointing moments, obviously. The Aggie pitching, which I so zealously played up from here to Corpus Christi, failed miserably at the one point of the season where they needed to do their best, giving up an astounding 27 runs and 34 hits in two games. The Aggie defense, which came within one percentage point of setting an SWC record for fielding percentage during the regular season, set an SWC tournament record with six errors against Arkansas in losing, 19-10.

AARCH!!!
The high point of the entire tournament came during the Arkansas game, however, when Aggie announcer Derrick Grubbs

announced the Texas A&M team had won the SWC championship in Waco. The 5,000 fans in attendance responded with a standing ovation. It motivated the Aggie baseball team who proceeded to jump on Razorback's Steve Krueger for runs in the bottom of the ninth then, though, it was too late.

The most disgusting facet of tournament was the staunch Longhorn-supporting "wild bunch" fans who sit behind the U.T. dugout and insult opposing players. Right player for making an error is all of baseball, but there is even a to this. Calling a player an "idiot" after he has been smacked in the by a bad hop ground ball is with reason.

Watching the "bunch" play their own little kazooes through things was humorous, though, of fit in with their entire immature childish.

The Texas baseball team deserves classier support. They rode the bionic arm of Keith Creel to a tournament championship, and their py play made them deserving conference title. Their players worked hard, and overcame Arkansas team that plastered opposing pitchers for over 60 hits and home runs in five games (for them hit by McReynolds). In end, it came down to consistency, confidence, and Texas had it.

All in all, tournament officials worked hard and got it into as good condition as possible. It added a good time for all.

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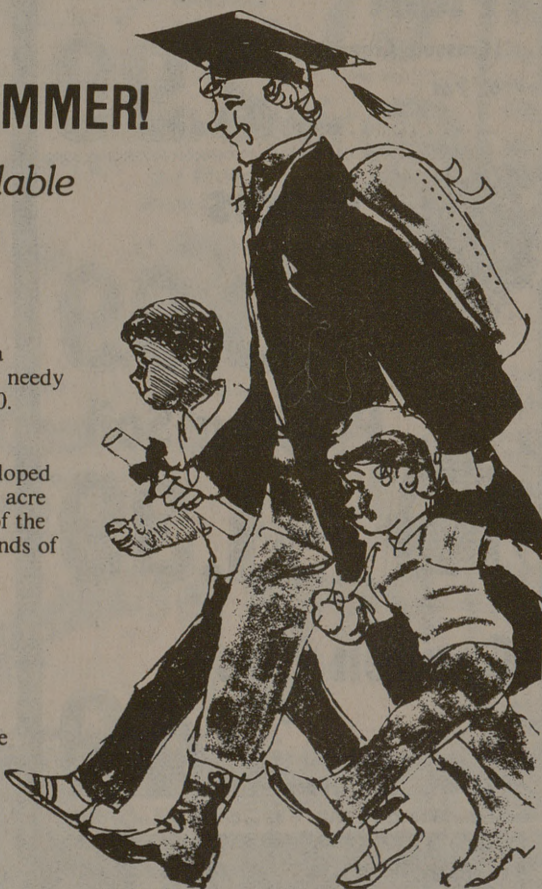
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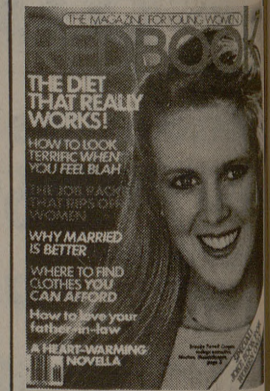
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