

Reflections

By Richard Oliver



Yes, some sports succeed

"I can't believe this school. It seems with the loads of money we have and over 33,000 students, we could mold a winning team on the campus. What's the use sometimes? The football team can't get off the ground ever. The basketball team can't draw fans because it's so wishy-washy and heaven knows baseball is not our most popular sport."

Fred leaned back on our exclusive corner MSC table. "I've been here seven years," he began again, "and I've yet to get excited about something that doesn't turn sour on me. In sports, I mean." He grinned crookedly as a young coed sauntered by.

A moment before, I had been eating my lunch calmly, reading over Mark Twain's Huckleberry Finn and dreaming of dumping referees in the Mississippi River when Fred walked up and accosted my ears. Not that I don't mind, but his views of sports don't exactly match mine.

"Listen, you're the sports editor," he said dryly. "What's wrong, here? Am I wrong? Is there something to get excited about around here? I sure give up."

Yes, Fred, there is life beyond basketball at Texas A&M University.

There seems to be a feeling on campus that sports at Texas A&M are really in the dumps. Fred is not alone in his sour views on our athletic economy, and on the surface — that is, looking at the major sports — we have hit rocky trails.

But, Freddie old boy, here I go as promised. Champions are alive and well at Aggieland. They may not be too noticeable, and they surely never get enough recognition, and perhaps we should finally give them some.

First, the women:

— The women's tennis team, behind the work of Jan Cannon and David Kent, has molded an 8-4 record so far and will likely be nationally ranked soon. The pluses of having Kent as coach have paid off tremendously in the past few years, especially in recruiting.

— The women's soccer team, behind Rob Borgeson, finished fifth in the nationals this past fall, and have an all-America on the team in Adele Fairman.

— The women's softball team, coached by Bill Galloway, which ended 1980 as third in the nation and first in Texas, is now ranked second in the nation behind Utah State and has already compiled a 6-0 record this spring. They play at Bee Creek Park in College Station.

— The women's track team under Bill Nix will have several home dates this spring at the newly redone Kyle Field track, and have a fine and potentially explosive team once again.

— Kitty Holley's women's golf team is nationally ranked also, and won the Future Pros Tournament two weekends ago at the Briarcrest Country Club.

Now, the men:

— The men's volleyball team is perhaps the most powerful in the state, and is rapidly gaining national recognition. They won the Valentine's Day Invitational over 20 other teams in February at G. Rollie White, and won the Southwest Texas State Invitational in San Marcos Saturday.

— The baseball team last year finished a mere one-half game behind perennial powerhouse Texas in the SWC season standings and hosted the SWC post-season tournament. This season the team, currently 6-2, returns with essentially the same strong pitching staff and some surprisingly good hitters — and are ranked 29th at this moment. The Aggs' excellent chances may be the best-kept secret on the University. And judging from the lots-of-trumpets, little results we've received from our other two "major" sports, it's probably good to keep quiet and simply back up the baseball team.

The team has numerous home dates this year against national powers such as Tulane, Texas, Arkansas and Kansas at Pat Olsen Field, and those games will be at night starting in March, so Aggies will have the chance to see some good baseball action after classes.

— The men's lacrosse team waltzed through the fall pre-season schedule undefeated, and compiled a 3-0 record this spring before losing to a couple of experienced city clubs. Regardless, the Aggies field a strong team made up of University students like you and me, and play on the drill field. They're an all-student project, and fortunately are starting to get some all-University support.

— The men's polo team qualified for the national collegiate championships this past weekend, and have an excellent squad that rarely tastes defeat. They play on the polo fields, of course.

— The men's tennis team's record talks for itself. Long a doormat in the conference, the Aggies are now 12-3 behind coach David Kent and are knocking on the door for a few upsets this season in the SWC. Last weekend, their first league opponent, Baylor, became their ninth victim as Texas A&M trounced the Bears 9-0 at the Omar Smith Tennis Center. If you'd like to spend a fine afternoon soaking up some rays and seeing some good action, the varsity courts are the place to be on dual match day.

This year, you'll get more than sun, you'll see a nationally ranked squad in action.

— Men's track is the Aggie mainstay. For two years now, we've only read about the men's victorious travels. Last season, the men won both the indoor and outdoor SWC championships for the first time in Texas A&M history. Saturday they won the Border Olympics in Laredo.

This year, Charlie Thomas and Ted Nelson's Ags will be having meets at home at Kyle Field, including a couple of pretty large ones. Now's our chance to do some supportive loitering at Kyle.

— The Aggie men's golf team, under Bob Ellis, won the Border Olympics last weekend in Laredo. They've been doing a lot of good things lately.

Sports

Play St. Mary's today at 1 p.m.

Aggies sweep pair from Cowboys

By RICHARD OLIVER

Sports Editor

Prior to Monday's doubleheader against Hardin-Simmons, the Texas A&M University pitching staff had been a little sluggish.

So, two pitchers fighting for starting positions decided to show their teammates what good pitching was all about in front of a crowd of approximately 350.

David Flores and Steve Davis both pitched complete games as the 28th-ranked Aggies swept the Cowboys, 11-3 and 2-1. The victories raised Texas A&M's season record to 6-2.

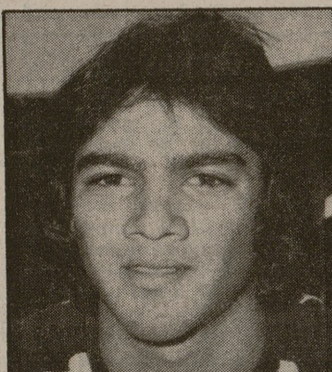
The Aggies journey to San Antonio today to play St. Mary's in a doubleheader beginning at 1 p.m.

Five walks and a key Joey Szekely single off of HSU's Greg Wilson in the first game gave the Aggies a quick four runs and the Cowboys could never recover. The Ags, who have now scored 69 runs in six games, were led later in the game by Joey Szekely's three-run home run in the sixth inning and Rodney Hodde's one-run shot to lead off the fifth.

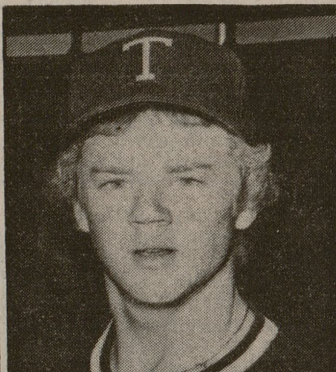
In game two, Hodde led off the scoring in the first inning when he singled in Terry Lawrence, who had stolen second base after a single. In the second inning, Billy Cannon singled, stole second, and was advanced to third on walks to Grant Priess and Tom Dean Chandler. A sacrifice fly by J.P. Bramhall scored the second run of the game.

But it was the Texas A&M pitching that told the story.

In the first game, sophomore David Flores, referred to as the "third man" most of last year behind Robert Slavens and Rick Luecken, shut down the potent



Steve Davis



David Flores

HSU bats despite some early troubles, allowing only a three-run home run to Cowboys catcher Randy Jones in the fourth inning. In the fifth, however, Flores, 1-1, retired the Cowboys on just four pitches, and Chandler decided to stick with him. The right-hander retired 10 of the last 11 batters to face him to seal the win and restore his confidence.

The fourth starting spot has been a source of speculation for Head Texas A&M Coach Tom Chandler throughout the fall and spring workouts, but that matter may be solved by the sudden resurgence of junior Steve Davis.

Davis allowed only six hits and struck out eight in winning his second game in as many starts. He also walked two and hit two batters.

"I'm tired," he said, "and I'm happy. I used mostly fastballs and curves. When I really want to get somebody out I throw curves."

"I kind of lost my concentration in the last inning, but I wanted to finish it bad."

In the seventh, Davis jeap-

Chandler said Cowboys' pitcher Mike Richard's good curve kept Texas A&M's hot hitters at bay the second game.

"The kid's got a good curve," he said. "He kept the ball down."

The first conference action of the year comes Friday in Houston against the red-hot Owls, whose pitchers just finished a string of more than 66 innings without allowing a run.

Ag men in action today

The Texas A&M University men's tennis team, 12-3, takes on the University of Oklahoma at the Royal Oaks Raquet Club today at

1:30 p.m. Playing for the Ags will be Brian Joelson, Reid Freeman, Trey Schutz, Max King, Tom Judson and Leonard Smith.

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