



Staff photo by Greg Gammon

Texas A&M's Billy Cannon slides safely into second base with a stolen base against the Oklahoma City Chiefs Tuesday afternoon. After stealing that base in the third inning of the nightcap of the double-header, Cannon scored on a wild pitch. The Aggies, after winning game one of the twinbill 7-6 with

two runs in the bottom of the seventh inning, also won the second game 7-0 behind the pitching of David Flores. The Aggies, 20-10, play the University of Houston, 17-15, in Houston today at 3 p.m.

## Cannon adapting to University scene

By GAYE DENLEY

Battalion Reporter

Last June, Billy Cannon Jr. was working in Yankee Stadium, visiting with Yankee players, and generally getting his first glimpse of what was to be a career with one of professional baseball's most prestigious organizations.

On July 30, following an unexpected turn of events, Cannon was signing a letter of intent with Texas A&M University, postponing his future in professional baseball.

"I had a pretty good deal with the Yankees. They have one of the best clubs in baseball," Cannon said. "But I'm happy I'm here now — going to college, getting an education."

Now a freshman shortstop on the Aggie baseball team, Cannon decided to sign with Texas A&M after baseball commissioner Bowie Kuhn threw a curve into his professional aspirations.

Based on an infringement of major league rules governing the draft procedure, Kuhn nullified New York's choice of Cannon in the third round of the draft.

Since no other teams made Cannon an offer comparable to the Yankees', Cannon decided to temporarily shelve his plans for professional ball and attend college instead.

The next big decision was where to attend — Texas A&M, whose facilities and coaching staff had impressed the young athlete, or Louisiana State University, where his father, Billy Cannon

Sr., had won the Heisman trophy as a running back in 1959.

After a semester at Texas A&M, Billy Jr. said he is convinced he made a wise decision.

He was impressed with Aggie football and Aggie spirit, he said, after witnessing Texas A&M defeat the University of Texas, 13-7, on December 1, 1979.

The next time the Aggies faced Texas, Cannon was suited up in maroon and white, playing as a wide receiver.

"Where I come from — Louisiana — they didn't have traditions at all," Cannon said, reflecting on his first impressions of Texas A&M. "This is all new to me."

A graduate of Broadmoor High School in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, Cannon plans to major in building and construction before going on to a career in baseball.

Despite his father's background in football, which includes a professional career with Oakland, Kansas City and Houston, Cannon feels no real pressure to follow in Billy Sr.'s footsteps.

"My favorite game is baseball," Cannon said. "My father's was football."

Cannon's parents have been staunch supporters of all his decisions regarding baseball and college, he said. They shared in his disappointment when the New York deal fell through, but were very supportive of his decision to attend Texas A&M.

If the Yankees are the losers in the Billy Cannon Jr. ball game, then the Aggies are the winners.

## Baseball team travels to face Cougars for 3

By RICHARD OLIVER

Battalion Staff

If at first you don't succeed, try, try again.

That's exactly what the Texas A&M University baseball team will do this weekend as it tries to improve on a dismal 2-4 Southwest Conference record against the Houston Cougars, 3-6, at Cougar Stadium in Houston.

The first game of the series is today at 3 p.m. A double-header will be played Saturday beginning at 1 p.m. Action can be followed on KAGC radio, 1510 AM.

Outside of league play, however, the Aggies are 18-6, including a four-game sweep of the feisty Oklahoma City Chiefs Monday and Tuesday despite little or no fan turnout.

Last weekend, the Ags took a 2-1 SWC record to Fort Worth and threw their best pitchers against TCU. The result was disastrous as the red-hot Horned Frogs, who have won 18 of their last 20, whipped Texas A&M three straight, the first time in 10 years the Aggies have been swept in a three-game set.

The losses make every SWC contest crucial for the Aggies as they battle for a berth in the four-team SWC post-season tourney in May at the University of Texas.

The season has been one of large contrasts for the Aggies. In SWC play the team has an excellent 2.94 ERA, but the hitting is hurting with a team .192 average.

Outside of league play, the pitching staff has a mediocre 4-plus ERA, but team batting is a torrid .308, with seven Texas A&M regulars batting above .300.

Rodney Hodde, the senior team leader, is batting .398 and leads the team with five home runs. Versatile left fielder J.P. Bramhall has done an excellent job as lead-off man in the Ag batting order, averaging .381 at the plate with 38 walks and 15 stolen bases.

Texas A&M Head Coach Tom Chandler has done some occasional juggling of his lineup and batting order, and a possible change may put Billy Cannon Jr. (.247) in the outfield, away from his usual short-

stop spot. David Kennard (.338) was tried at shortstop during the OCU series and responded well. Clint Heard (.318) at second base.

This may mean the absence of one of two infielders, current right fielder Kevin Smith (.280) and current center fielder Terry Lawrence (.303) from the lineup, however.

The infield third base spot is also up in the air. Late, as Tim Boyes (.317) and junior college transfer Grant Priess (.303) battle for the starting position, that Boyes has held most of the year. Both duties at that position Monday and Tuesday.

At catcher, regular Joey Szekeley is having some difficulties at the plate, batting .264, but a fine hitter has emerged in Mark Magee, who contributed several key base hits in the OCU series and hit a grand slam to his credit this year (against Sam Houston State).

Szekeley's power and potential will probably lead him behind the plate.

The Aggie pitching is finally coming around, as sophomore David Flores, 3-2 and junior Steve Davis, 3-0, providing the best performances.

Flores two-hit the Chiefs through six innings Tuesday afternoon and shut down the Horned Frogs on one earned run last Friday despite losing the contest, 4-1.

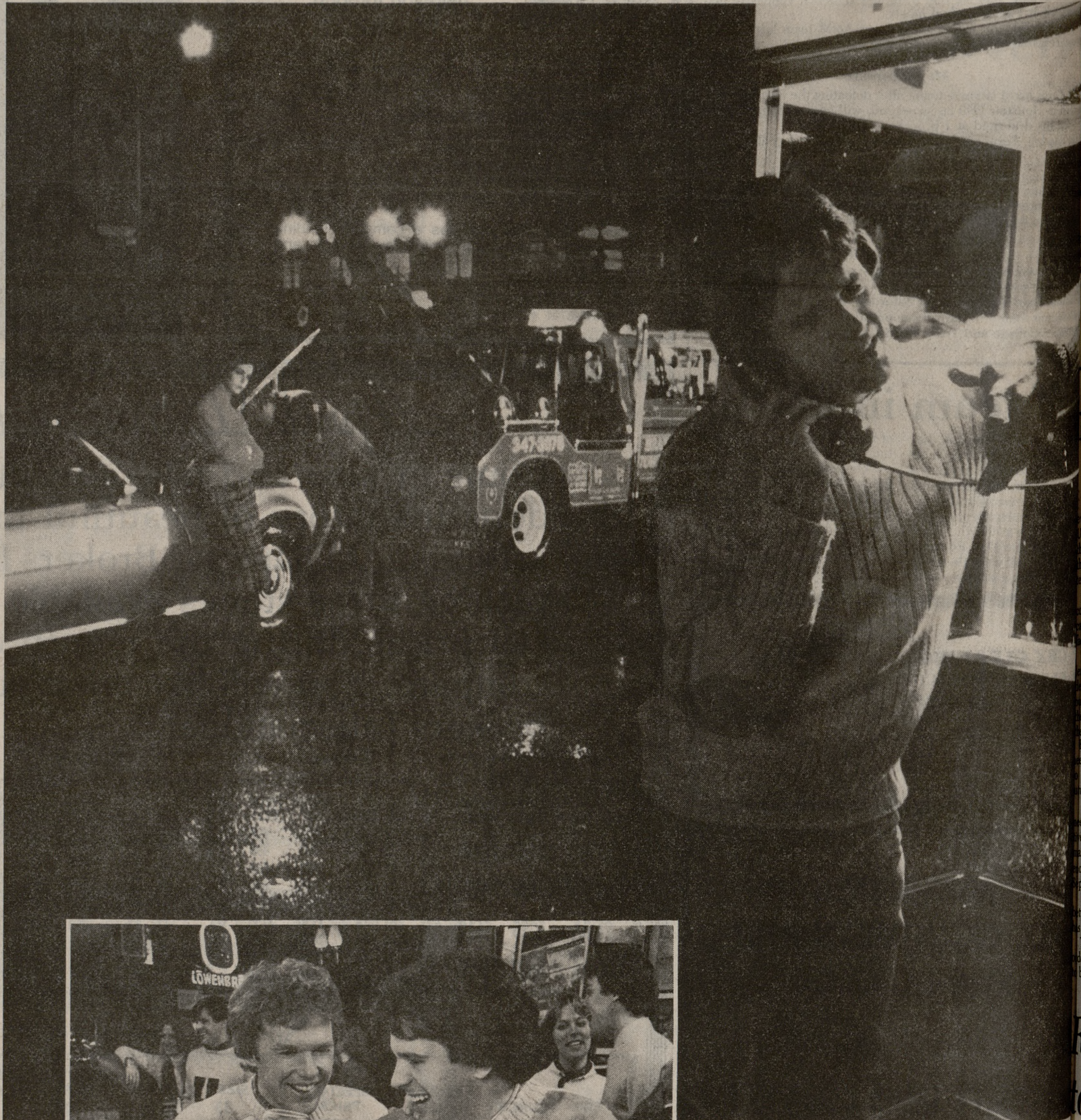
Davis, who had a mediocre year last year and a fine freshman year, has been the most impressive hurler for the Aggies lately, no-hitting the Cougars through four innings Monday before finishing with a four-hitter.

The sophomore jinx has hit 1980 SWC Newcomer of the Year Robert Slavens. Slavens finished the season with an 11-1 record, but is only 1-2 this season.

The other member of the starting staff, Steve Luecken, has compiled an expected 5-1 record and a 3.34 ERA thus far. He will start today against the Cougars.

Although Chandler has gone with Luecken, Slavens and Flores on the mound as his starters thus far, the sudden emergence of Davis and right hander Bobby Taylor, 3-1, make the third starter spot a toss-up going into this weekend's series.

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