

# Aggies fall twice to Cougars

By FRANK L. CHRISTLIEB  
Battalion Staff

The Texas A&M University baseball team, playing its second Southwest Conference road series in a row, lost two games and tied one against the University of Houston over the weekend.

The Aggies lost Friday's single game 1-0, and after a one-day postponement of Saturday's doubleheader, the Cougars took another one, 9-6. The final game of the series ended in a 3-3 tie when it was called after nine innings because of darkness.

The three games drop the Aggies' record to 20-12-1 overall and 2-6-1 in SWC play. The Cougars lifted their record to 21-15-1 and 5-6-1.

Friday's low-scoring game was a pitcher's duel as A&M's Rick

Luecken and Houston's Jeff Achilles matched each other pitch for pitch throughout most of the game. The only run of the game scored in the third inning when the Cougars took advantage of two of Luecken's six walks, a sacrifice bunt and a sacrifice fly.

Luecken, 5-2, gave up three hits in a losing cause while Achilles, 3-3, gave the Aggies six hits before being replaced by reliever Rayner Noble, who earned the save.

Sunday's first game began with a bang for the Aggies as they scored six runs in the first three innings and led 6-3 going into the fourth. However, the Cougars narrowed the gap to 6-5 on four successive singles in their half of the fourth.

Houston took the lead for good

in the fifth when Brett Baker and Mark Lavespere hit back-to-back homers to take an 8-6 lead. The final run of the game was a single marker scored in the sixth by the Cougars.

Bobby Taylor, 3-2, took the loss in relief of starter David Flores, who left the game in the fourth inning. Cougar reliever Brent Bentley gained his fifth win of the season against no losses, while Noble earned his second save in two games for the Cougars.

The final game of the series saw the Aggies take an early lead again, 1-0, into the fourth inning. But the Cougars' Lavespere cracked another solo homer to tie the game after four innings.

Houston scored a single run in the fifth to take a 2-1 lead, which it held until A&M's half of the seventh. The Aggies scored two runs in that frame to make the score 3-2.

However, the Cougars came right back and scored an unearned run in their half of the seventh when Aggie centerfielder Terry

Lawrence made the Aggies' only error of the game to allow the tying run to reach base. Since the game was called after nine innings because of darkness, it goes on record as a tie.

The Aggies out-hit the Cougars in two of the three games, but were unable to score in several clutch situations. During the series, A&M left a total of 30 baserunners stranded on base, 11 in each of Sunday's games.

One bright spot in the series was leftfielder Joe Paul Bramhall, who broke the A&M single-season record for walks when he received his 41st free pass of the season. The previous record was 40 in one season, set by Bill Rayner in 1976.

The Aggies will try to regroup this weekend in a three-game home series with the University of Arkansas. The series will be the first home stand during conference play for the Aggies, who now must set their sights on finishing in one of the top four spots in the SWC in order to qualify for the post-season tournament in May.

The Aggies will play an exhibition game in San Antonio Wednesday night against the San Antonio Dodgers, the double-A farm team of the Los Angeles Dodgers. The game, billed as "Aggie Night," will be played at V.J. Keefe Field at 7:30 p.m.



And she's safe!

Staff photo by Brian I...

Karen Guerrero, rightfielder for the Texas A&M softball team comes up out of her slide at second base during Friday's doubleheader sweep of LSU. The Aggies won both games, 4-0 and 8-2, to up their record to

26-3 for the spring season. The women return to action Tuesday afternoon when they host Sam Houston. Gametime is set for 4 p.m. at Bee Creek Park.

# Rockets oust Lakers, meet The Spurs Tuesday night

United Press International  
INGLEWOOD, Calif. — Just when everyone began to think Magic Johnson was gliding through life with a marked deck of cards in his pocket, it all came crashing down on him.

In three years, Johnson led his Everett team to the Michigan high school championship, his Michigan State squad to the NCAA championship and the Los Angeles Lakers to the NBA championship.

The first inkling of the possibility that Johnson just might be human came earlier this season when he sustained severe cartilage damage to his left knee, and it didn't heal overnight.

And the final, decisive proof that the Magic Man wasn't born on Pluto came Sunday afternoon.

With the Lakers and Houston Rockets tied with 30 seconds remaining in the game, Johnson had three shots to make two from the free throw line. His first two shots banged off the rim. His third went in to give Los Angeles an 86-85 lead.

After Mike Dunleavy gave Houston an 87-86 lead on a 15-foot jump shot with 15 seconds left in the game, Johnson got the ball (time to prove the missed free throws were a fluke) and began a frantic, length-of-the-court drib-

ble. He couldn't miss. These were the moments created just for Johnson. A winning basket at the buzzer.

Well, he took the shot. A 10-footer. And it fell three feet short. Maybe four feet. It was like Michelangelo using a spray can. Sherlock Holmes proclaiming, "The maid did it."

It just wasn't the script. Moses Malone added a pair of free throws for Houston with three seconds remaining, and with one temporary demise of a hero the surprising Rockets posted an 89-86 victory, clinched the best-of-3 mini-series, advanced to the Western Conference semifinals against Midwest Division winner San Antonio and eliminated the defending NBA champions in the first round of the playoffs.

The first game of Houston's best-of-seven series starts Tuesday in San Antonio. "They just didn't fall for me today," said Johnson, who was held to one point in the first half and 10 for the game. "It's a big letdown. I'm real disappointed. I could have won the game. But I didn't. Houston did. And there's next year to look forward to."

The Lakers lost the opening game of the series Wednesday night in Los Angeles with Malone

scoring 38 points and pulling down 23 rebounds. The Lakers evened the series Friday night in Houston with a 111-106 victory behind Kareem Abdul-Jabbar's 30 points and 17 rebounds.

But the Rockets, who finished third in the Midwest Division with a 40-42 regular-season record, held a 49-47 halftime lead but Los Angeles outscored the 10-2 in one spurt and took a 77-75 lead with eight minutes left. Houston tied the score on a pair of field goals by Robert Reid and then Calvin Murphy, who finished with 14 points, put Houston ahead 79-77 with 6:45 remaining.

Dunleavy, a 6-foot guard, turned in a miserable performance until the end. He had committed five fouls, while scoring just eight points in 14 minutes and watched most of the game from the bench because of foul trouble. But when it counted, Dunleavy was the man Houston wanted to take the shot.

Dunleavy said the key to the game-winning shot was concentration. "I knew the shot was good," said Dunleavy, in his fifth year of South Carolina. "The only thing I saw was the rim. You just have to block everything else out at a time like that. It's so easy to get distracted."

Los Angeles coach Paul Westhead said the best defense was "Both teams were playing hard and extra cautious on defense," Westhead said. "The defense made it very difficult for either team to get anything done. The emotion was there and the guts were there on defense. It's hard to analyze accurately how I feel. I'm disappointed. There's a deep emptiness."

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