

Ags take one, lose two in high-scoring series

By FRANK L. CHRISTLIEB

Battalion Staff "Snakebit" and "shell-stocked."

Texas A&M baseball coach Tom Chandler accurately described the condition of his team after each of its two weekend losses to the Arkansas Razorbacks.

His first description came after Friday night's game, in which bad breaks for the Aggies helped the Razorbacks and pitcher Scott Tabor to a 4-0 victory over the struggling Aggies, who have now lost seven of their last nine conference games. Tabor, considered by many to be the best pitcher in the Southwest Conference, is now 8-1 for the season.

Chandler's second interpretation came after the second game of Saturday's doubleheader, won by the hard-hitting Hogs 19-6. In that game, third baseman Kenny Rogers was 5-for-5 with five RBI and four runs scored.

The Aggies managed to win the first game Saturday 9-2 behind the ace-hitting pitching of Steve Davis, who 4-0. Davis stayed ahead of the Arkansas hitters the whole game, and as a result, didn't walk anyone.

Pitcher Rick Luecken started Friday's game against Tabor, and for three innings, outpitched the Arkansas righthander, giving up no hits while Tabor gave up two. Then, after throwing his fourth-inning warm-ups, Luecken came off the field following a discussion with Chandler and some of the other coaches.

The announcement came that Luecken had pulled a groin muscle and was being relieved by David Flores. The muscle pull was only the first bad break for the Aggies on a night when, as Flores said later, "Everything went their way."

Luecken said: "I was just starting to get in a good rhythm, and then when I was pitching to the second batter in the third inning, I pulled the muscle."

Flores, 3-3, pitched well in Luecken's relief, but Tabor pitched better, giving the Aggies two hits in the last eight innings for a total of four in the game.

A&M's bad luck returned in the second game of the doubleheader, when Aggie leftfielder Joe Bramhall moved over toward the foul line to catch Arkansas first baseman John Hennell's sinking liner. Just as he was about to catch the ball, Bramhall slipped, allowing Hennell to reach second for an RBI double, making the score 1-0. The Hogs' Reggie Thomas led



Staff photo by Greg Gammon

Head Aggie baseball coach Tom Chandler shows his disgust with an umpire's call during the second game of Saturday's doubleheader. The Aggies won the first game, 9-2, but lost the nightcap 19-6. The 21-14-1 (3-8-1 SWC) Aggies return to action Tuesday against Sam Houston at Olsen Field.

off the ninth with a homer, for all practical purposes ending A&M's chances for a win, since Tabor's mastery of the Aggie hitters was not likely to end.

However, Arkansas was not

through scoring in that inning, as it combined two more hits, a walk and a two-run single by Billy Dees for the final 4-0 score. In the bottom of the ninth, the Aggies' frustrations peaked when Bramhall

led off with a walk, and one out later, was doubled off of first base on a liner to second by Tim Boyes.

In their first-game win Saturday, the Aggies picked up 15 hits and looked like the team everyone expected them to be this year. Rodney Hodde and Kevin Smith led the offense with three hits apiece, while leftfielder Billy Cannon hit a double and a single to break the slump which had seen him go 0-for-25 in the Southwest Conference.

The Aggies decided the game in the first inning when they put eight men on base and six of them scored, with the big hits being back-to-back homers by Hodde and Joey Szekely, and triples by David Kennard and Clint Heard. Eight of the Aggies' 15 hits went for extra bases with Hodde accounting for three of them with a homer, double and triple.

In Saturday's second-game slaughter, almost every Razorback who played contributed to the 18-hit attack, with Rogers and catcher Dave McClure combining for eight. The Aggies couldn't keep Rogers off the bases, as he walked once to go along with two home runs, two singles and a double.

Rogers' first homer traveled about 420 feet as it cleared the 400-foot center field wall for only the second time since the Aggies have been playing in Olsen Field. His homers, however, were not the only ones the Hogs collected, as Marty Rogers hit a three-run homer and McClure connected on a two-run homer.

The Aggies used five pitchers in the game, none of whom could stop the Hogs' bats. They also hurt themselves by making four errors,

with three coming in one inning when Arkansas scored three runs.

The two-out-of-three game series loss to Arkansas all but eliminates A&M's chances of finishing in one of the top four spots in the SWC to qualify for the May conference tournament. To do so, the Aggies must win almost

all of their remaining nine conference games and teams like Texas, TCU, Arkansas and Houston must lose nearly all of theirs. Right now, that's not very likely.

After Saturday's split, Chandler said although the team is young, the players have good morale and attitudes about the job ahead of

them. And as pitcher Davis said: "We've just got to do the best we can."

The team has a doubleheader against Sam Houston State University here Tuesday at 5:30 and goes to Lubbock to play Texas Tech Thursday and Friday.

Ags third in own tourney

By CAROLYN BARNES

Battalion Staff Intense competition was the name of the game during the Aggie Invitational tournament this weekend in which the second-ranked Aggies battled to a third place finish.

UCLA won the tournament by taking Arizona State University Sunday afternoon.

The competition began with a marathon game Friday night with the Aggies and UCLA going 29 innings with the Bruins winning 2-1.

"It was the kind you hate to lose. We played good enough to win, we just didn't get the timely hits," Aggie Head Coach Bill Galloway said.

Saturday the Aggies went 10 innings against Cal State-Fullerton winning 1-0.

Galloway pointed out Mel Pritchard for his defensive play during the game.

Shan McDonald picked up the win as Mary Lou Youngblood tripled during the Saturday afternoon game against Texas Women's University which the Aggies won 3-2.

The Aggies followed the afternoon contest with a 1-0 victory over Kansas Saturday night.

Sunday the Aggies were down 5-0 against Arizona State University but started a comeback in the fifth inning. After scoring twice, the Aggies ended the inning leaving the bases loaded resulting in a 5-2 final score.

Five of the eight teams involved in the Aggie Invitational were ranked in the Top 10 of the latest Coaches Poll.

"I think the tournament was good, the teams involved enjoyed the competition. It was intense," Aggie Assistant Coach Sue Becher said.

Four Aggies were elected to the All-Tournament Team: Pitcher Lori Stoll, Leftfielder Mel Pritchard, Catcher Rhonda Reese and Centerfielder Mary Lou Youngblood.

The Aggies are now 29-5 for the spring and will play Cal State-Fullerton 6:30 p.m. Tuesday at Bee Creek Park.

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