

Sports

Reflections

By Richard Oliver



They sit behind the Texas Longhorns' baseball dugout and blow on kazooes.

They razz opposing teams, wear orange and try to be as obnoxious as possible. They turn out to ballgames in large groups, and are perhaps the most spirited fans in Southwest Conference baseball.

"They" are the "Wild Bunch," a mob of a few dozen Longhorn supporters which follows the orange and white around the state. The groups' exploits have become legendary in SWC circles.

This weekend, the mundane mob descends on Pat Olsen Field. The Longhorns, who have already clinched the SWC regular season title, will be taking on the red-hot Texas Aggies, a team which has a deceiving 8-9-1 SWC slate with only this weekend's three games to go.

The problem: The Aggies must win all three from Texas, no ifs, ands or buts.

That may seem impossible, granted, but consider this: Texas A&M has won eight straight games, including sweeps of Tulane and South Alabama. They have gone from 3-8-1 in SWC play to 8-9-1 by beating Texas Tech two out of three and Baylor three straight.

Texas, third-ranked in the nation, is beatable. Both Baylor and Texas Tech accomplished the feat this season.

This has been the fastest Aggie team in school history, stealing a record 72 bases, a whopping amount when you consider the old record is 60.

But, disappointingly, there has been less support of Aggie baseball than in recent memory.

This weekend, there will be a good crowd, simply because the Longhorn fans will be out in full force. And if you don't think fan support swings ballgames, consider this.

Last Friday, 2,200 Aggies crowded the seats, as a fired-up team whipped the Bears 3-1 as Hodde and Tim Boyes slammed home runs.

This weekend the Aggies will host Texas, the "Wild Bunch" and whatever maroon and white fans happen to appear.

One loss and it's all over. Texas hasn't been swept since 1968. The Aggies may be the best team in the conference at this point. And Texas A&M supposedly has the best fans.

Those fans watched the football team drown in controversy and the basketball team stumble when it counted.

Now they're needed again. Let's hope the "Wild Bunch" isn't the only fan support this weekend. The Aggie baseball team may be the answer.

Ags finish sweep; prepare for Texas

By FRANK L. CHRISTLIEB
Seniors Rodney Hodde and J.P. Bramhall of the Texas A&M baseball team are playing as if they want the fourth SWC tournament spot more than they want their diplomas.

Hodde and Bramhall combined for six of the Aggies' 12 hits in a more-one-sided-than-it-seems 10-5 win over Tulane University in Olsen Field Wednesday afternoon. Once again, the Aggies ignored the impressive offensive statistics of the Green Wave and took advantage of some less-than-impressive pitching on the way to their eighth win in a row, their 12th in the last 13 games.

The win completed a three game sweep over TU for the Aggies, who must now concentrate every ounce of their finest and most flawless baseball into this weekend's three-game home series with the University of Texas. Texas A&M must sweep the Longhorns, and if it does, the persistence of Hodde, Bramhall

and the other members of the team will be rewarded by a SWC fourth-place finish and a berth in the May post-season tournament.

The Aggies' bats hadn't cooled off since Tuesday night's 10-run sixth inning, as they scored six runs in the first inning off Green Wave starter Paul Fitch. Texas A&M put together five hits and two walks to take a 6-2 lead, with Hodde's two-run single, Grant Priess' two-run double and Billy Cannon's RBI single doing most of the damage in the inning.

Leading 7-5, the Aggies scored three more runs in the seventh when Bramhall hit an RBI triple, his fourth hit of the game, and scored on a wild pitch. Two outs later, Hodde hit his 11th home run of the year, giving him 53 RBI for the season and tying the club record set by Kyle Hawthorne in 1978.

Cliff Ranson, in his first appearance of the year, won the game in relief of Gerry Salinas and Bobby Taylor.

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Aggie skeet team national champs

The Texas A&M Trap and Skeet team competed in the 13th Annual American Collegiate Union Trap and Skeet championship last week in Peoria, Ill. and returned home with several awards including the national championship and two individual champions.

Jeff Sizemore took the men's division, shooting 480 out of 500. Sherry Rains captured the women's title with a score of 388 out of 500.

The four day meet consisted of four events: modified clay trap, international skeet, American trap and American skeet.

The men's team, consisting of

Kirk Cleere, Chris Albrecht, Vince Wiseman, Glenn Douglas, Jeff Sizemore and Monty Been, took several honors in the meet.

The men placed third in the modified clay trap, shooting 312 out of 400. Sizemore finished second individually with a score of 93 out of 100.

The Aggies took first place in the international skeet event with 343 out of 400. Sizemore won with a score of 91 out of 100.

The squad took second in the American trap in which Sizemore won with a score of 197 out of 200.

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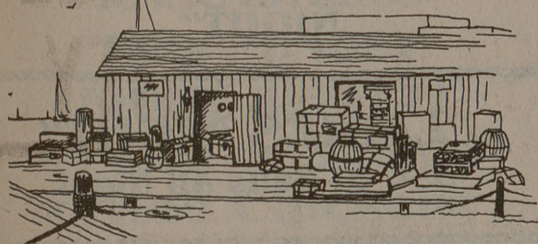
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