

Sports

Ranger bats come alive in 12-2 win

United Press International
ARLINGTON — The Texas Rangers have had few offensive performances in either season this year to match the 18-hit, 12-run assault launched on the Oakland A's, but for Al Oliver — holding one of the team's hotter bats — the win was not that great.

"Yes, it's nice to have a good night like the team had tonight," he said after Tuesday's 12-2 win over Oakland, "but it's only one win. Winning big every few days doesn't make it. Every game is a big now and if we win only 1-0, it's a win just the same."

For his contribution, Oliver hit two doubles and two singles in five at bats, collected four RBI and scored once. Ahead of him in the lineup, leadoff man Bump Wills went 4-for-4 and scored four runs while No. 2 hitter Mickey Rivers had three hits, three runs and three RBI.

But hot as the Rangers bats were Tuesday, they have been generally cool in the second half of the season. The team was hitting .284 before the players' strike, but registered at .251 before Tuesday's outburst.

"For me, it was a good night. I don't think I've had four RBI in a game this year," Oliver said. "But we have not been hitting as well since the strike. It's obvious some guys didn't lift a bat the whole time we were off. I won't say they were wrong, but we haven't been hitting the ball as well because of it."

The A's, however, have improved from a .243 pre-strike average to .258 in the second half.

That is, until they ran into knuckleballing Charlie Hough.

Hough, while granting five walks, spread six hits over eight innings with seven strikeouts for his first win of the season against one loss. He was relieved by Bob Lacey, throwing in his first major league game, allowed one hit in the ninth inning, a solo homer by Oakland second baseman Dave McKay. McKay had Oakland's other RBI, an unearned run scored off Hough in the third.

"We needed a win badly," Hough said. "We need to win a bunch of them badly. I struggled a little out there. Oakland doesn't have the big names like Reggie Jackson, but they have a lot of players who hit the ball well. This was one game we needed, but we will be saying that for the rest of the season."

Oliver began the scoring with a two-run single in the third, followed by Buddy Bell who sacrificed to right field.

The hits kept coming in the fifth, sixth and seventh innings.

Oliver doubled one run across in the fifth and drove in another in the seventh. Rivers had two RBI in the sixth and one in the seventh in handing Brian Kingman, 3-6, the loss.

Ranger catcher Jim Sundberg's only hit of the game, a single in the seventh, set a team career mark. The previous record for total hits was 916 notched by Toby Harrah.



Major League Baseball

National League				American League			
East				East			
St. Louis	19	13	.594	Detroit	22	12	.647
Montreal	17	16	.515	New York	20	15	.571
Chicago	16	18	.471	Milwaukee	21	16	.568
New York	15	18	.455	Baltimore	19	15	.559
Pittsburgh	15	21	.417	Boston	18	15	.545
Philadelphia	13	19	.406	Toronto	16	17	.485
				Cleveland	17	19	.472
West				West			
Houston	22	13	.629	Kansas City	20	15	.571
Los Angeles	20	15	.571	Oakland	16	17	.485
Cincinnati	19	15	.559	Minnesota	17	19	.472
San Francisco	19	15	.559	Texas	15	18	.455
Atlanta	18	16	.529	Chicago	14	21	.400
San Diego	11	25	.306	Seattle	14	21	.400
				California	12	21	.364

Tuesday's Results	Wednesday's Games	Tuesday's Results	Wednesday's Games
Cincinnati 4, Houston 0 Philadelphia at New York p.p.d.	Houston at San Diego Atlanta at Los Angeles Cincinnati at San Francisco	Texas 12, Oakland 2 Detroit at Boston p.p.d. rain	Oakland at Texas Detroit at Boston
St. Louis 3, Montreal 2 Montreal 4, St. Louis 3 Pittsburgh 8, Chicago 2 San Diego 8, Los Angeles 2 San Francisco 6, Atlanta 5	Pittsburgh at Chicago St. Louis at Montreal Philadelphia at New York	Baltimore 7, Cleveland 6 Toronto 4, Minnesota 2 Milwaukee 2, New York 1 Seattle 5, Chicago 4 Kansas City 3, California 2	Minnesota at Toronto New York at Milwaukee Kansas City at California Chicago at Seattle Baltimore at Cleveland

Cincinnati does it again

United Press International
HOUSTON — Houston manager Bill Virdon said the Astros have no excuses for their 4-0 loss to the Cincinnati Reds — they've seen Charlie Leibrandt before.

"They just outplayed and out-pitched us two nights in a row," Virdon said Tuesday following the Astros' second loss to the Reds.

Leibrandt tossed a five-hitter while striking out four and walking three en route to his first decision since being called up from Indianapolis Sept. 1. He won nine of his last 11 decisions for the farm club.

Speaking of Leibrandt, Astros centerfielder Tony Scott said: "Well, he got away with it. He had good location on his pitches tonight, but next time we might be able to punch a few through there."

Leibrandt said he expected at the start of the game to pitch only seven innings.

"But we got an early lead and I got out of that first inning jam and

took it from there," he said. "I knew if I didn't start challenging the batters I'd be out of there after one or two innings."

Scott led off the first inning for the Astros with a double and Leibrandt then walked Phil Garner. A double play helped get him out of the jam.

Cincinnati took a 1-0 lead off starter Nolan Ryan, 8-5, in the first when Dave Concepcion singled with two out, advanced to third on an error and passed ball, then scored on George Foster's first single.

The Reds added a run in the third as Paul Householder walked, went to third on Ken Griffey's single and scored on Concepcion's sacrifice fly to deep center.

Ryan was touched for two more runs in the sixth, issuing leadoff walks to Griffey and Concepcion before Foster and Ray Knight delivered RBI singles.

The victory pulled the Reds to within 2½ games of first-place

Houston, the closest Cincinnati has been to the lead since Aug. 31.

"At least we delayed the funeral," Reds first baseman Johnny Bench said of the wins. "I want to be able to read in the paper that we've caught up with someone and are going to make a pennant race out of it."

But Houston third baseman Art Howe said, "We hope to go to Los Angeles with a three-game lead like last year."

The Astros will finish this season against the Dodgers.

Houston starts a five-game road trip today in San Diego. The Astros are 10-10 on the road in the second half of the season.

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L78-15	6Ply	R/W/L	\$100 ⁹⁷	FET 3 ⁸⁶
11-15	4Ply	R/W/L	\$101 ³⁰	FET 4 ⁵⁰
11-15	6Ply	R/W/L	\$106 ⁷⁹	FET 4 ⁷⁰
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