

Sports

'Tis the season to be split

The split-season format adopted by Major League Baseball officials after the player strike really spoiled the season for some teams, but it's been a distinct advantage for others.

Without a split-season system, the first-place teams at this point would be Cincinnati in the National League West, St. Louis in the NL East, Oakland in the American League West and Detroit in the AL East. That means the Reds, who now trail the Houston Astros by two games in the NL West second-half race, may finish the season with a better overall record than any team in their division — and not make the playoffs.

On the other hand, Houston trailed first-half winner Los Angeles by 8½ games when the strike began, and would still be in third place at 55-44 if overall season records were the basis for divisional rank. Los Angeles' season record, at 58-40, would trail by 1½ games the 59-38 mark of the Reds. But the Reds can't do anything about the situation, and must make their best effort to catch the Astros during the last 11 games of the season.

Adding to their predicament, the Reds trailed the Dodgers by only 1½ games when the strike started. But Cincinnati's plight isn't the only one which has arisen from the altered season.

The Texas Rangers were only one game behind the Oakland Athletics at the time of the



Frank L. Christlieb

second-half race, and may be a "victim" of the split season. Like the Dodgers, who trail Houston by five games, the Phillies seem to believe that the second season serves as an unnecessary prelude to the playoffs. Maybe I'm misjudging the two teams, but I feel that the Dodgers and the Phillies haven't exactly played their hearts out during the second half.

In the AL West race, Oakland has the best season record at 59-41. They're already in the divisional playoffs because of their first-half win, but I'm sure they would rather win the title outright instead of having to play the second-half winner.

On the basis of season records, the AL East provides the best race of the four divisions. If today's overall records determined final standings, the division would look like this: New York first, at 56-41 (.577); Boston second, at 55-42 (.567); Detroit third, at 56-43 (.566); Baltimore fourth, at 53-41 (.564); Milwaukee fifth, at 55-44 (.556); and Toronto sixth at 35-62. That would have made a tight race in which any of the top five teams might be worthy of a playoff berth.

But the split-season has changed a baseball system which had been a standard for so long. So, all we can do is wait and hope.

That is, wait for the playoffs to begin in October, and hope that next season isn't interrupted as rudely as this one has been.

strike, but as a result of their second-half performance, they'll watch post-season play from home. And Baltimore was only two games out of first when the strike started, but they're about as playoff-bound as the San Diego Padres.

Another situation which isn't as hopeless as that of the Reds involves St. Louis. Although the Cardinals' 51-39 overall record would give them first place and a league playoff berth, they now trail the second-place Montreal Expos by ½-game.

The Philadelphia Phillies, who have played to a dismal second half record of 18-23 after winning the first half with their 34-21 mark, don't deserve to make the playoffs.

Philadelphia finds itself in fifth place in the

Volleyball team sets Cardinals

By GAYE DENLEY
Battalion Staff

The Texas A&M women's volleyball team remedied a frustrating weekend in California with a shot of confidence Wednesday night, defeating Lamar University 3-1 in G. Rollie White Coliseum.

The much-needed victory came four days after a dismal 1-4 showing in last weekend's San Diego State Tournament.

"We needed it for a little boost of confidence," Coach Terry Condon said. "Those California teams are just so good."

Wendy Wilson, the team's hitter and middle blocker, and setter Kristen Bloom keyed a non-stop offensive Aggie onslaught that routed the Cardinals, 2-15, 15-5, 12-15-5.

Lamar woke up a dormant

Aggie team in the first game with a 15-2 romp.

"I think they were too overconfident (in the first game) because they had beaten Lamar so easily when we scrimmaged them," Condon said.

The Aggies smoothed out their rough spots in the second game, winning by a 15-5 margin on the strength of a sharp, versatile offense. A pair of alert, back-to-back plays — a block and a smash — by junior Sue Wetzel gave the Aggies a 5-1 lead and the momentum to complete the victory.

The Cardinals bounced back in game three to take a 12-8 lead after winning two drawn-out points that seemed to temporarily drain Texas A&M's rotation. After a time out, however, the Aggies evened things up at 12-12 and

went on to win, 15-12.

In the final game, the Aggies took a 7-4 lead and racked up six more points before Lamar answered with its final point. A service ace by Wetzel gave the Aggies their ninth point, effectively sealing the victory. Texas A&M eventually won the game, 15-5.

Condon said she was pleased with her squad's unified play, something that has been missing in past outings.

"We've been working hard on moving together as a unit," she said.

Their season record at 5-6, the Aggies travel Friday to Fort Worth for the Texas Women's University Tournament and play their next home game Oct. 8 against Central Florida.

Powerlift meet to be Saturday

The Texas A&M Weightlifting Club will host Louisiana Tech Saturday in a dual powerlifting meet, as both teams begin preparations for the upcoming Region IX Collegiate Championships.

The competition, which will be held in DeWare Fieldhouse, will start at 10 a.m. and will last until about 1:30 p.m. Admission will be 50¢.

The regional meet will also take place in DeWare during December. Among the teams competing will be the University of Texas, Louisiana Tech and the University of Arkansas.

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