

The Battalion Sports

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A&M overcomes tough Gophers 3-2, 4-3

Heard, Hisle bring home winning runs as relief pitchers victorious

by John P. Lopez

The Texas A&M University baseball team used solid defense and strong relief pitching Wednesday night in sweeping a double-header from the University of Minnesota 3-2 and 4-3.

"We made some really great plays on the field tonight," head coach Tom Chandler said.

Chandler also credited the Minnesota pitching staff for limiting the Aggies to a combined nine hits in both games.

"It wasn't that we were hitting bad," Chandler said. "We just faced good pitchers."

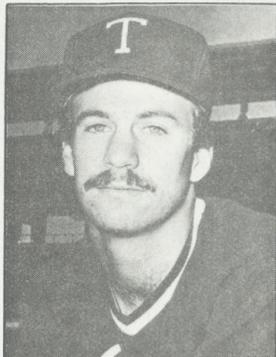
In the first game, Texas A&M took a 2-0 lead on a walk and a pair of singles before Minnesota pitcher Jim Francour settled down and retired 14 consecutive Aggie batters.

Texas A&M starting pitcher David Flores and reliever Robert Slavens also played well, striking out eight and holding the Gophers scoreless through six innings.

Minnesota tied the game in the top of the seventh inning, however, on two walks and singles by Greg Olson and Terry Steinbach off Slavens.

In the bottom of the seventh inning Francour walked Kevin Smith and gave up a game-winning double to Texas A&M pinch hitter Clint Heard.

"He (Francour) had a good curve ball," Heard said, "but the



Clint Heard

one I hit was a fastball."

Rock King, who relieved Slavens in the top of the seventh, was credited with the win for the Aggies.

In the second game, Minnesota's best defense was again its pitching. Starter Bob Meyer held the Aggies to only two hits and three runs through seven innings for the Gophers.

Texas A&M scored its runs off Meyer in the bottom of the second inning when Meyer walked Buddy Haney, hit Bobby Beach with a pitch, and then

gave up an RBI single to Kevin Smith and a bases-clearing double to Brad Hisle.

Not to be upstaged by Meyer, Texas A&M starting pitcher Phillip Taylor was flawless through four innings in the second game, retiring 11 consecutive Minnesota batters before giving up a base hit to Tom Steinbach. Taylor was relieved in the sixth inning by Steve Davis after retiring 15 of the 19 batters he faced.

Minnesota then tied the game at three with a walk off Davis, an Aggie error and three base hits. Davis was relieved by Gerry Salinas who retired the side in the sixth inning and then held the Gophers scoreless in the top of the seventh.

In the bottom of the seventh inning, Meyer was relieved by Doug Kamson after walking Hisle and Ronnie Risinger. After Kamson hit Texas A&M shortstop Dave Kennard with a pitch to load the bases, Hisle scored the winning run on a wild pitch. Salinas was credited with the win for the Aggies.

With the two-game sweep over the defending Big Ten champions, Texas A&M raised its record to 20-7. Minnesota's record is 1-4-1.

The Aggies host TCU in a three-game series Friday and Saturday at Olsen Field. The two teams will play a single game Friday night at 7:30 and a double-header starting at 1 p.m. Saturday.



photo by Karen Kaley

Aggie right fielder Kevin Smith slides past Minnesota catcher Greg Olson for the winning run in the first game of Wednesday night's double-header. Smith, a

sophomore, came in on a pinch-hit by Clint Heard in the bottom of the seventh inning, giving A&M a 3-2 victory. The Aggies won the second game 4-3.

Tar Heels ready for tough game against Cougars

United Press International HOUSTON — North Carolina Tar Heels coach Dean Smith says the Houston Cougars have a psychological edge in the NCAA Tournament finals because of their unranked status.

And Smith should know. "The ideal way to come in would be to be the one that everyone ignores," Smith said Wednesday. "The times we've been that way, we've played some of our best basketball in the Final Four. From that standpoint, I think Houston has a good psychological situation."

"I don't think our players are paying any attention to being ranked No. 1, although I noticed Guy (Lewis) quickly alluded to that."

Smith pointed out the Final Four favorite has not won in the past three tournaments. North Carolina, 30-2, plays Houston, 25-7, Saturday in a semifinal at New Orleans.

Not intending a putdown, Smith pointed to their last 14

games — in which they've won 13 — as an indication how well the Cougars are playing.

Smith said the Cougars were the "finest rebounding team we've faced to date," but Lewis responded that he didn't consider the Cougars to be one of the strongest rebounding teams he's had.

That caused Smith to say, "I'm impressed with Houston maybe more than Guy is." He added: "I think they're a marvelous team. They are playing extremely well at this point."

He said his primary concern is keeping the Cougars from rebounding on the offensive board with 6-6 forwards Clyde Drexler and Michael Young, and centers Larry Micheaux, 69, and Akeem Abdul-Olajuwon, 7-0.

Lewis put the Cougars through a two-hour workout Wednesday and planned another practice at home today before flying to New Orleans.

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