

Sax makes amends quickly in LA victory over Astros

United Press International
HOUSTON — The question mark in the Los Angeles Dodgers' infield is turning into an exclamation point.

Not only that, but rookie second baseman Steve Sax is getting on base so often from the leadoff position that he may make Dodgers fans forget what Dave Lopes once did for the offense and defense of the defending world champions.

Sax, 22, reached base four times in six trips to the plate

Tuesday, igniting early rallies that carried the Dodgers to a 9-5 win over the Houston Astros. He also scored two runs, stole a base and handled four plays in the field flawlessly.

All of that came one night after his eighth-inning error cost the Dodgers a game.

"He's going to win the hearts of the fans," Dodgers Manager Tommy Lasorda said.

Astros right fielder Terry Puhl said Sax "causes us all kinds of problems with his hitting and

his speed."

The young Dodger received plenty of help in getting around the bases as his team pounded 13 hits. Sax led the offense with three singles. Dusty Baker slammed a two-run home run and had a single. Steve Garvey, Pedro Guerrero and Steve Yeager had two hits apiece.

Baker's second home run of the season boosted the Dodgers to a 5-2 lead and the score mounted to 7-2 before the Astros rallied.

Sax is in his first week as the Dodger regular at second base after taking the job from Lopes in the last 31 games of 1981 and during the playoffs and World Series. He said he does not feel out of place among first baseman Garvey, shortstop Bill Russell and third baseman Ron Cey — a trio with which Lopes played as a unit for 8½ years.

"I couldn't sleep last night because of the error," he said. "It was on my mind a lot. It's an experience that I will grow from."



The Goodrich blimp? staff photo by John

It's difficult to say whether Aggie tennis team member Van Barry is staring into the sky at a bird, a plane or an unidentified flying object. However, he

obviously isn't disgusted with the come of this match, won by Barry and Andy Meikle of New Mexico 6-4. The men host Rice Saturday at

Rags to riches

Yanks' Morgan helps teammates to 6-3 victory

United Press International
ARLINGTON — The Mike Morgan Story has the look of so many others in major league baseball.

He was drafted high, rushed into the major leagues and quickly found himself going straight downhill.

Two years with the Oakland A's brought him only a 2-13 record and it was off to the minors.

After posting a 6-9 record with Ogden in 1980, the right hander was traded into the New York Yankees' farm system. He improved to 8-7 with Nashville last year and suddenly, this spring, he was the terror of camp. He did not allow a run in 12 innings of spring work.

So Tuesday night was a significant evening in Morgan's life. He was starting his first major

league game in three years and his first game ever with the Yankees.

It turned out to be a success. Morgan worked his way out of early trouble and survived 6½ innings to help the Yankees overcome the Texas Rangers for the second straight night, 6-3.

"It's been a long climb back up," said Morgan, 22, who scattered eight hits and gave up all three Texas runs.

"A lot of people said they rushed me into the majors in 1978," he said. "But, as you can see, I've managed to retain my sanity."

"If you analyze my season last year (with Nashville) you would think I wouldn't be here now. This is a first class organization and it is a tough team to make it with. I got here by working my rear off."

Morgan was given support by a two-run homer by Lou Piniella in the fifth and a solo blast by

Rick Cerone in the eighth, but the stretch that turned the game in New York's favor came in the fourth inning.

Texas' Rick Honeycutt, making his first start of the year, carried a 1-0 lead into the fourth, but Dave Winfield and Piniella both singled to start that inning.

Bob Watson singled in Winfield with the tying run and Honeycutt hit Craig Nettles with a pitch to load the bases and then walked Cerone to force in a run. A fielder's choice ground ball by Willie Randolph produced the third run of the inning.

"Rick (Cerone) told me after that that I had a 3-1 lead and I should just fire it in there," said Morgan. "I wasn't nervous, but I could never get comfortable. I really didn't have my best stuff. I felt out of control. I was falling too far forward."

"My curve ball wasn't working and I just stuck with my fast ball and slider."

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Spurs' sparkling victory dashes title hopes of Nuggets

United Press International
You didn't have to be a jeweler to appreciate San Antonio's victory over Denver Tuesday night.

"The game was a diamond for us," said Spurs' Coach Albeck after San Antonio eliminated Denver from the NBA Division title race with a 144-137 victory. "It was by far the most important game of the year. This was like a playoff game and teams played extremely well."

George Gervin, Mike Mitchell and Mike Bratz hit 10 points in the fourth quarter to lead the Spurs as the Nuggets fell games behind front-running San Antonio with three to play.

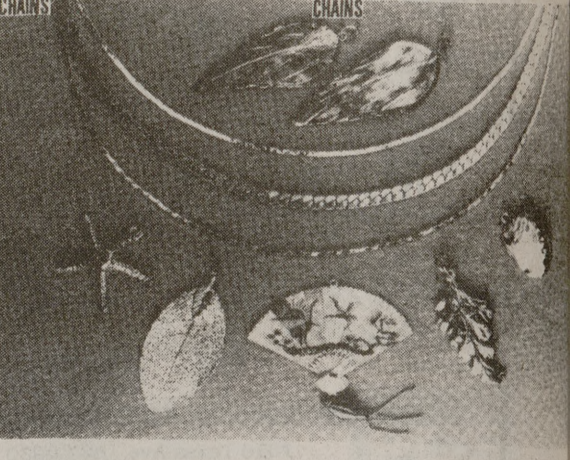
Gervin scored 39 points overall and grabbed a career-high 19 rebounds. Mitchell added 36 points and Bratz scored 19, handing out 12 assists. The loss was the Nuggets' fifth in the game of a six-game road trip.

"They can blitz you or you can hit a drought, and we with their run at us," Albeck said. "We've eliminated them from contention and Houston has to win all four of their games. If they do that, and they are capable, we must win two of the last three."

In other games, New Jersey trimmed New York 104-102, Philadelphia defeated Indiana 93-89, Atlanta beat Cleveland 113-109, Chicago topped Boston 120-115, Washington downed Milwaukee 109-99, Houston defeated Kansas City 99-95, Seattle edged Portland 88-86, Phoenix defeated San Diego 105-94 and Golden State whipped Los Angeles 106-101.

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