

Texas A&M

The Battalion Sports

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Baseball season starts Saturday

Chandler prepares for '83

by John P. Lopez

Battalion Staff

It's almost here — springtime. A time for kite-flying, sun-bathing, picnics and baseball.

And with baseball will come hot dogs, chewing tobacco, double-headers and Longhorns. Lots of Longhorns — with lots of talent.

Once again the battle for the Southwest Conference baseball title will be between Texas and the rest of the SWC.

There's no doubt the Horns will be the class of the conference, but don't count Texas A&M out yet. The Aggies are young, talented players that are anxious to show the conference that they are a team to be reckoned with.

Coach Tom Chandler's Aggies will have few familiar faces roaming the diamond this year, but even without experienced players Texas A&M should be a solid defensive team. Offensively, the Aggies won't have a lot of power, but Chandler said Texas A&M should still be able to give the official scorer writer's cramp.

"We have two good power hitters right now in Billy Cannon and Buddy Haney," Chandler said. "but we're still going to miss (Joey) Szekely." Szekely was drafted into the big leagues last season after having a banner year at the plate for the Aggies. "We've had some pretty good hitters for us lately though. Cannon, Don Robison and Tom

Dean (Chandler) have had good outings for us this spring in our scrimmages."

The Aggies should be able to produce runs, but their games will be won or lost on the infield — a place where only one starter returns. Haney will be the only returner at first, but Chandler pointed out that the rest of the infield should be able to hold their own.

"We're going to be much better on the infield than last year," he said. "We had a lot of errors last year. When the game was on the line, somehow we managed to kick the ball. We've really been pleasantly surprised with our defense so far. We have made some outstanding plays."

The middle of the Aggie infield will be made up of Todd Edwards at shortstop and Clint Heard at second — both of whom, Chandler said, are coming into their own.

"Edwards has improved the most since the fall," Chandler said. "He's got an accurate arm and good hands, but he doesn't have good range. But neither did Twig Little (Former Aggie shortstop now playing for the Montreal Expos of the National League). And Clint is getting to be a very good ball player. He's good on defense and has a good bat on offense."

Tony Metoyer will be at third, while the catching chores are still up for grabs.

"Our catching is going to be a little shaky," Chandler said. "No one has come

out and just taken charge of that position. Right now, I guess Ron Devereaux is our catcher.

"We've been working very hard on our game and it looks pretty good, but pitching is still our main concern. We know our pitching is going to be thin. We feel like we can get to be a good defensive team though. We really have to have good defense to make up for our lack of pitching experience."

While Texas A&M is worried about pitching, Texas isn't worrying about anything. The Longhorns, Chandler said, are sitting pretty.

"Texas is loaded," he said. "I don't just think they're going to be Southwest Conference champs, I think they're going to be national champs. They just have tremendous pitching and depth."

"But you never know, I think it can be a good race if we can keep Texas from running off and leaving everybody behind. We need to age in a hurry. It just all boils down to us being as good as our pitching. We've got to get good pitching."

The Aggies' first test will be Saturday afternoon at noon when they take on Southwestern University in a doubleheader at Olson Field.

Texas A&M then travels to San Antonio to face St. Mary's before returning to College Station for a 10-game home stand.



photo by Michel Chang

Aggie baseball coach Tom Chandler says the Aggies should be a factor in this year's Southwest Conference race, although the UT Longhorns are favored.

A&M rally falls short

Hogs stop Aggies 62-55

The Arkansas Razorbacks continued their domination in Barnhill Arena Saturday night, as they defeated the Texas Aggies 62-55 in a game that was marred by three controversial technical fouls.

Darrell Walker and Alvin Robertson combined to push

Arkansas into a 10-point lead midway through the second half, but the ninth-ranked Razorbacks had to fight off a Texas A&M comeback to win.

All three technicals were called on the head coaches — two on Arkansas' Eddie Sutton and a critical one against Texas A&M's

Shelby Metcalf with 1:10 to play in the game.

The Aggies trailed by two at the half, 24-22, and still faced only a two-point deficit a third of the way into the second half.

But Walker and Robertson combined for eight straight points to run the Hogs' advan-

tage to 42-32. Arkansas led by as many as 11 with eight minutes left, but Tyren Naulls helped the Aggies run off a 12-5 streak to get them to within four.

Ricky Norton made the two free throws on the technical to break the back of the A&M comeback.

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