

Gymnasts 'favored' to win state meet

by John Wagner
Sports Editor

The Texas A&M gymnastics team is hosting the state championship meet here Saturday, and team member Mark Hartwell says the Aggies should be, well, favored to win. Sort of.

Texas A&M has never won the state championship, and last year's winner, Texas Tech, will return to give the Aggies a test. But Hartwell says the Aggies have to be confident of their chances.

"It's (the conference) real stacked at the top with Texas Tech and A&M," Hartwell said Tuesday, "and close behind is UTA (University of Texas at Arlington).

"But my prediction is this is going to be our first year to win state. I really believe we're going to do it."

One of the reasons Hartwell is so confident is the fact that Texas A&M has five gymnasts entering the all-around portion of the meet. Team captain Jim Gill, Hartwell,

Grant Lauderdale, Ray Moltz and Mike Tanner are all entering as all-arounders.

All-arounders participate in every event, instead of specializing in one particular area. Most teams have three all-arounders at the most, Hartwell said, and the Aggies' large number means they "are really a strong team."

"We have a very good chance in the all-around to pick up places there," Hartwell said. "I think we're going to stand out in the all-around."

But there is another reason Hartwell is confident. The Aggies have defeated Texas Tech — the other favorite — twice already this season, including a 204.15-190.20 defeat of the Red Raiders in a dual meet in March.

Team competition begins at 1 p.m. Saturday on the third floor of East Kyle. Then, at 7 p.m., the top eight finishers in each event will meet for the individual finals. Admission is one dollar.

Rangers nip Indians on Hostetler homer

United Press International
CLEVELAND—It was a long time between home runs for Dave Hostetler.

Last August 17 and 53 games ago, last August 17, Hostetler hit a home run off Dennis Lamp of the Chicago White Sox. Tuesday afternoon, the 27-year-old slugger homered off Bert Blyleven to pace the Texas Rangers to a 2-1 victory over the Cleveland Indians.

"I am not worried about homers and I wasn't really thinking about it," said Hostetler, who also walked with the bases loaded in the fifth inning to force in the Rangers' winning run. "I am hitting the ball well, but the biggest things for me are RBI.

Hostetler's homer, which cleared the 395-foot wall in center field, gave Texas starter Rick Honeycutt a 1-0 lead in the fourth inning. The Rangers' lefthander allowed only two fly balls to be hit to the outfield in raising his record to 2-0.

Honeycutt gave up consecu-

tive singles to Chris Bando and Julio Franco leading off the Cleveland sixth and Bando scored on a sacrifice fly by Alan Bannister. Manny Trillo beat out an infield hit and Toby Harrah walked to fill the bases.

But Andre Thornton, who came into the game hitting .625 with nine RBI, hit into an inning-ending double play.

"I threw a change up to Thornton because I felt he would be looking for something else," said Honeycutt, who lasted eight innings and struck out three in allowing seven hits. "I used all my pitches today and mixed them up well."

The Rangers had chance to break up the game against Blyleven in the fifth, but the veteran starter got Larry Parrish to hit into an inning-ending double play after the walk to Hostetler.

"I have a history of losing close games. I just do my best to keep the game close. I can't control the offense," said Blyleven.

Reliever Odell Jones picked up his second save of the season, retiring three straight Cleveland

batters in the ninth.

Rookie designated-hitter Wil Culmer made his first major league start for the Indians and banded out a pair of singles. He was robbed of an extra-base hit on a diving catch by Wright in the fifth inning.

The Rangers are now 6-1, and are off to one of their best starts since the team came to Arlington.

In other American League action, the Detroit Tigers executed the hit-and-run perfectly, challenged the New York Yankees' arms in the outfield and succeeded in taking the extra base every time and pummeled Ron Guidry and two relievers for 16 hits en route to a 13-2 drubbing. Tom Brookens, with four hits and three RBI, and Glenn Wilson, with three hits and three RBI, led the Tigers.

In the rest of American league action, Milwaukee edged Toronto, 6-5, while Kansas City downed Boston 5-1. Seattle drubbed California, 8-1, and Oakland tripped Minnesota, 4-3, in 14 innings.

Softball

continued from page 13

"I think probably one of the biggest things that happened to (during) this tournament was actually rekindled the fact that there are a very good ball club and can play the kind of ball that are expected to play," the coach said.

Thursday the Aggies will play for Albuquerque, N.M., in the Diamond Invitational. In addition, Brock said, the Aggies will make an unscheduled stop in Canyon on the way

to play West Texas State.

Brock said the Diamond Invitational will be played as a double round robin tourney, meaning the Aggies will play each team twice. Three teams in the national top ten will be playing in the Albuquerque tourney.

The Aggies will open tourney play against old nemesis Cal State-Fullerton at 10 a.m. Friday. Fullerton was ranked fourth in the nation last week. They've already met with the Aggies three times this spring, and have defeated Texas A&M

in two of those outings.

On Saturday the Aggies will take on New Mexico. Sunday they will meet Oklahoma State for a chance to avenge a 2-0 loss to the Cowgirls in March. Brock said he's eagerly awaiting that matchup.

The coach said he thinks another reason his team will be in much better shape for this road trip is because the weather has been more favorable for practices and games this time and his players have had plenty of time to refuel for the trip.

Baseball

continued from page 13

"It's hard for someone to come out and take charge when you've lost your last 10 games." Another problem, Smith said, is the Aggie defense and pitching — or lack of it.

"When you score 10 or 11 and you're supposed to win," he said, "You can blame the pitcher but the defense has made a lot of mistakes too."

"I think what we need to do is together as a team. Everybody's uptight. It's a complex problem where everyone does their own thing. We're just playing individuals — and that's

bad. There's no reason why our record is 2-10."

Smith added that the rest of the Southwest Conference schedule "doesn't look promising" for the Aggies since Texas A&M must still play Baylor, Rice and Texas — all of which are having good years. But Heard said the Aggies shouldn't be counted out of the running yet.

"We're working just as hard now as we were at the beginning of the year," he said. "I really don't think we'll have any trouble regrouping. I even think we can win our next nine games — we've got to think that or else we won't accomplish anything."

Should the Aggies fail to regroup, Texas A&M might not only finish in the cellar of the conference, but could possibly set a record or two doing it. The Aggies currently stand at 21-14 on the year and 2-10 in the SWC.

Should they continue to falter, the Aggies could set a school record for most losses in one season and most losses in conference. Texas A&M needs to win seven of its remaining nine conference games to avoid matching the 12 conference losses in 1979. And the Aggies are six losses away from the 20-loss regular season mark they established also in 1979.

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