

Texas A&M

The Battalion Sports

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Baseball team takes role of tournament 'spoiler'

by John P. Lopez

Battalion Staff
Even though the Texas A&M baseball team is mathematically out of contention for any post-season play, the Aggies are hoping to have a big say in exactly who will go to Austin for the Southwest Conference tourney.

Baseball coach Tom Chandler's team will be in Houston to face Rice in a three-game series beginning Saturday with a single game, followed by a double-header Sunday.

Should Texas A&M win at least one game in the series, the Aggies will spoil the Owl's hopes of wrapping up a tournament bid with an Aggie sweep. Also, Texas A&M is one of only three teams which still has a chance of

dethroning the University of Texas from its stranglehold of first place in conference. Texas is working on its fourth consecutive championship.

The Longhorns lead the conference with an 11-1 record, but Houston, which is also on Texas's schedule, is breathing down the Horns' neck with an 11-4 record. Fourth-place Texas Tech will have its shot at the Horns this weekend.

Naturally, the Aggies would also like to be playing for a spot in the tourney, but the consensus among the players is that playing the role of "spoiler" is the next best thing.

"We can make things hard on a lot of people," Aggie relief pitcher Rock King said after

Tuesday's victory over Lamar.

Texas A&M will play Texas May 6 and 7 at Olsen Field — a series which might prove to be more important to the Aggies' pride than for the Horns' tournament hopes. Texas A&M needs to win three of their remaining six games to avoid finishing the year with a school record for most losses in a season and Texas might be the team the Aggies need to go through to avoid the mark.

Despite the dismal season, however, the Aggies are not without outstanding individual performances.

Bobby Beach, who is hitting at a .450 clip on the year, is close to breaking the Aggie record of .443 set in 1965 by Mike

McLure. Beach is also closing in on the Texas A&M record for most RBIs in one season. Beach has 49 RBIs so far this year — nine short of Rodney Hodde's mark of 58 set in 1981.

In conference play, Beach has a .415 batting average — good enough to place him sixth overall in the Southwest Conference. Corky Swindell of Houston leads the pack with a .473 mark. Other Aggies in the top ten in conference include Buddy Haney at .362 and Tony Metoyer at .358.

Beach seems to be the most consistent player on the Aggie team as he is ranked among the Southwest Conference leaders in four categories — batting average, hits (22), RBIs (17) and runs (14).

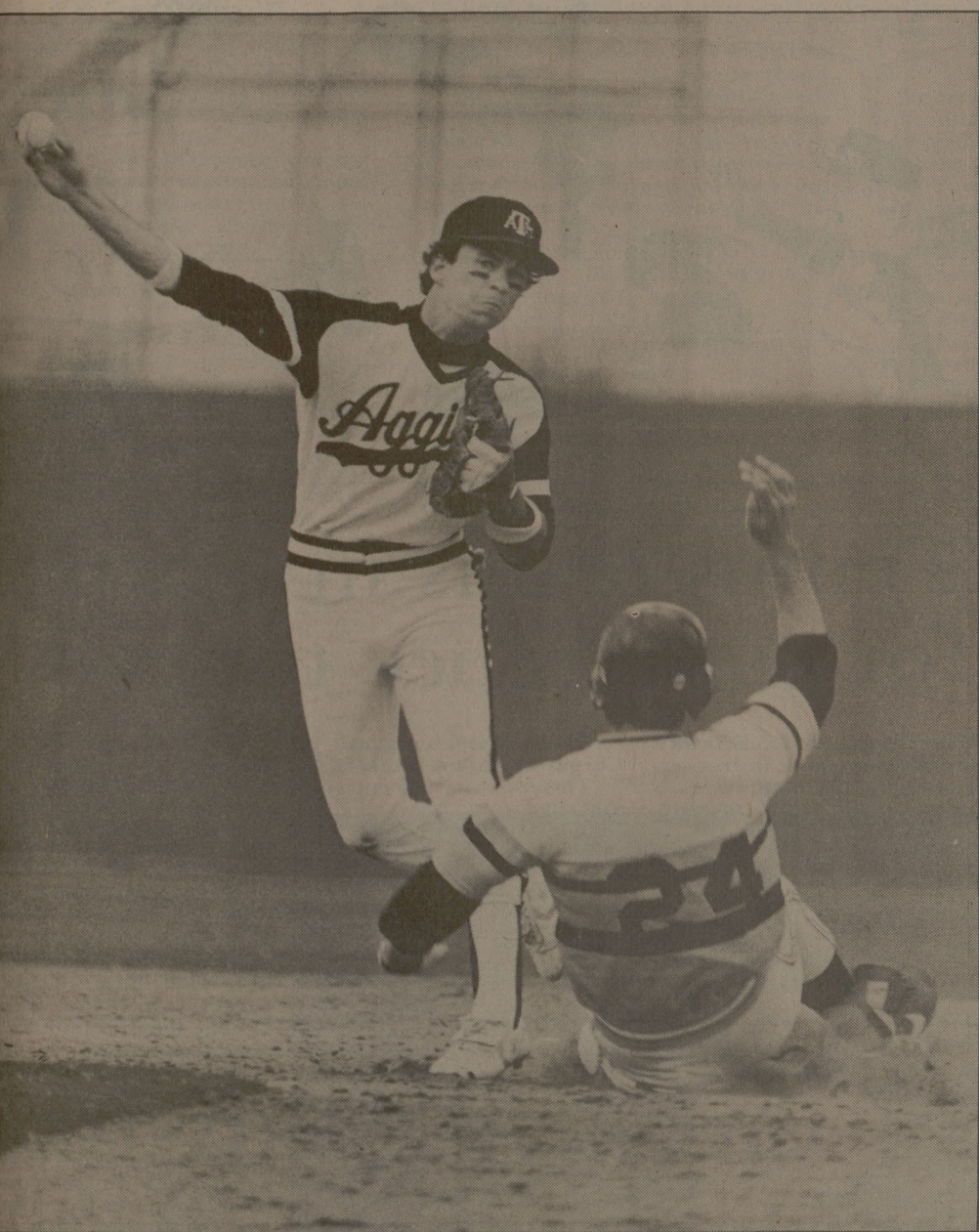


photo by Peter Rocha

Texas A&M's Clint Heard completes a double play against Southwestern. Heard and the Aggies are in Houston this weekend to play the Rice Owls.

A&M hoping for tourney sweep

by Joe Tindel Jr.

Battalion Staff
The saga of the Texas A&M softball team's road trip continues.

After a bit of rest earlier this week, the Aggies are in Lincoln, Neb. for the Nebraska Invitational tournament today and Saturday. Lincoln is the fourth stop during the latest series of road games for the 30-8 Aggies.

Three other teams, Nebraska, Creighton and Cal-Berkeley will also be in the tourney. Aggie coach Bob Brock said the Aggies will have a tough time with all three teams.

The Aggies will open against Creighton, a team that they haven't met in two years, at 2:30 p.m. today. Saturday, Berkeley and host Nebraska will take on the Aggies. Championship and consolation bracket play will begin Sunday.

Brock said none of the games are back-to-back, meaning that if pitcher Lori Stoll has to pitch more than usual because of

pitcher Shan McDonald's nagging shoulder injury, Stoll will at least have some time to rest between games.

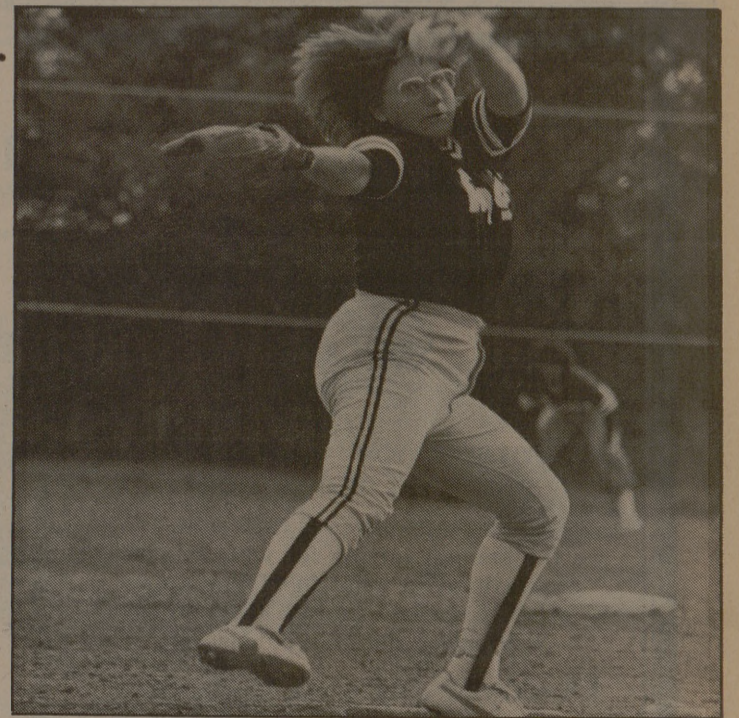
Brock said he's much more pleased with the present road trip than the last one, during which the Aggies dropped five games. Texas A&M is 8-2 on its current road trip, which began April 13 against Sam Houston State.

Better hitting has been the secret, Brock said.

"I think one of the reasons that we did so well — besides the pitching — was the ability to hit," he said. "I think it's (hitting) on the rise and each and every day it gets stronger and better."

"We've got some people on the team who in the past have been good hitters, like Josie Carter. She's been down a little bit, but all of a sudden, her RBI output has picked up. Her average is coming back up and it's good to see that."

When the Aggies come back from Nebraska, they'll have un-



Aggie pitcher Lori Stoll may have to pitch more than usual in this weekend's Nebraska Invitational.

til April 29 to prepare for an away game with Louisiana Tech. They won't play at home again until May 1, when Sam Houston will visit College Station for the sixth meeting this spring be-

tween the two schools. That will be the last game for the Aggies

before NCAA post-season play, which begins May 12 with regional playoffs.

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Sat. Apr. 23
6 p.m.-Midnight
FINALS

Admission FREE at this time.