

SPORTS

Johnson's baseball debut worth the wait

By **BRANDON BERRY**
Sports Writer

The Texas A&M baseball team found that good things come to those who wait.

The Aggies started the '85 season later than any other team in the Southwest Conference. Because of rain, they postponed until Sunday a double-header originally scheduled for Saturday against Northeast Louisiana. And they waited until the eighth inning of the second game to explode for eight runs and swept the Indians, 10-1 and 12-11.

"Considering they were our first games, we did some things wrong that we need to work on," said A&M Coach Mark Johnson, who received the first head coaching victories of his career. "But we also did some things better than I expected us to."

One of these "better than" was the Ags hitting. A&M rocked NLU's pitching for 12 hits in the first game and 16 in the second. And the list of hitting "heroes" was as long as the roster.

"Everyone contributed and that's always a good sign," Johnson said. "We came from behind in the second game and that's also a good sign."

"We're just trying to improve every game, but we have to pick up some wins along the way."

The second game was much in doubt going into the eighth inning. The Aggies were trailing 7-2 and had not shown any offensive consistency

against Chuck Finley, the Indians' left-handed starting pitcher.

A&M starting pitcher Kelly Keahy was ambushed early in the game and displayed little of the form that made him one of the Aggies most effective starters last season. The wind was blowing and the temperature dropped to 46 degrees.

Derrick "D.D." Grubbs, the versatile public address announcer at Olsen Field, had even resorted to a "celebrity sing-along."

Things were looking really grim.

Then Ag shortstop Rob Swain stepped to the plate and began a rally that saw twelve men come to bat and eight of them score. The Indians shuttled in more pitchers than The Dixie Chicken on a Saturday night, as four different hurlers tried to stem the Aggie tide. The loudspeakers brashly blared the "Rolling, Rolling, Rolling" theme from Rawhide to the seven chilled fans, and a poodle in a maroon sweater, left in attendance.

Things were looking really nifty.

But the Indians weren't through. They scored four runs in the top of the ninth to pull out to an 11-10 lead. Phil Taylor replaced Barry Smith and struck out the Indians' Andy Jones to end NLU's scoring.

Then the Aggies really went to work. Rob Swain was walked intentionally to load the bases and designated hitter Bill Doug Potter stepped to the plate. His single to

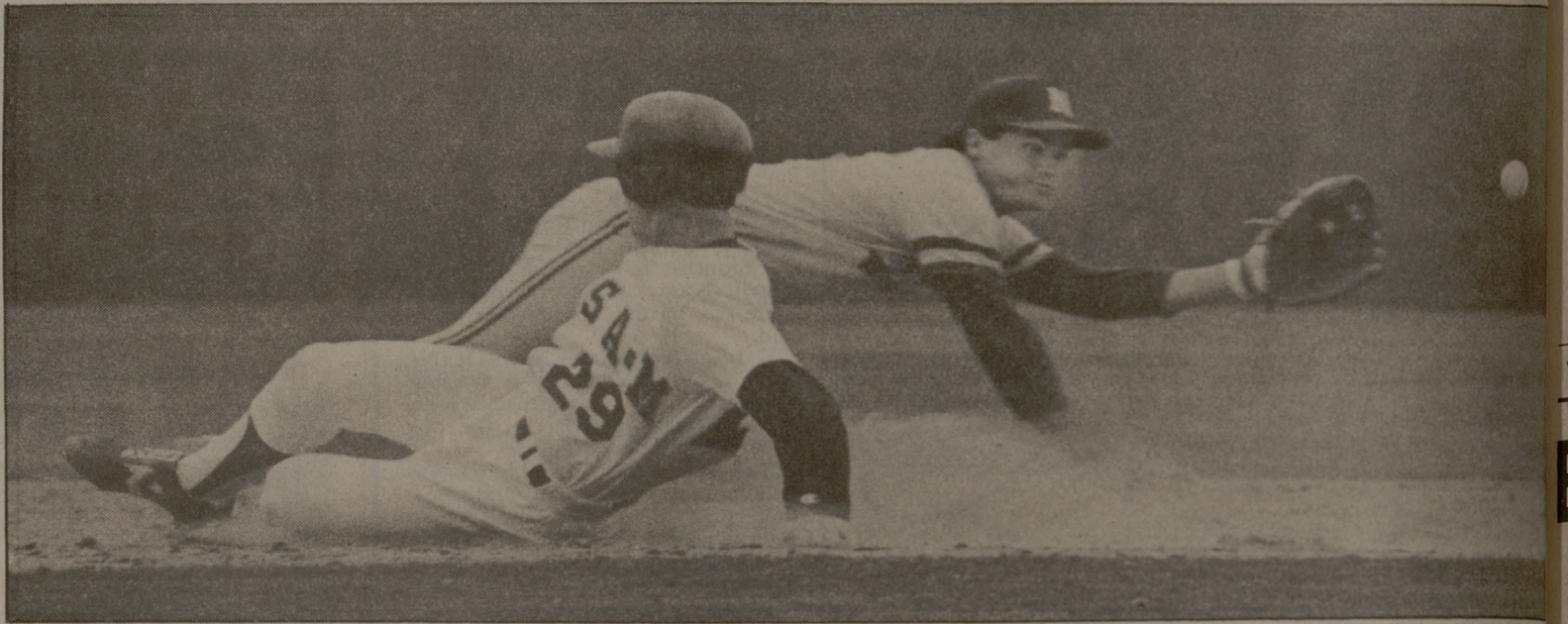


Photo by DEAN SAIT

A&M's Bill Doug Potter (29) slides into second base as Northeast Louisiana's Jeff Schexnaider dives for an errant

throw from the catcher. The ball sailed into the outfield and Potter was safe on the play. A&M defeated NLU, 10-1, 12-11.

right center field ended the scoring and the game.

"A lot of people have believed in me," said Potter, who had four hits in five at-bats, "my friends, my coaches and my teammates. I can at-

tribute everything good that happened to my confidence.

It shouldn't have after the first game. The Aggies scored ten, count 'em, ten unearned runs on six, count 'em, six errors.

Whenever the Aggies hit normally routine ground balls to the Indians' infield, the crowd chanted "E" (for ERROR) and were seldomly disappointed. NLU starting pitcher Mitch Thomas allowed 10 runs, but actu-

ally left the game with no ERA.

"We got a lot of opportunities because of some mistakes they made on the field," Johnson said.

And that understatement was most worth the wait.

A&M's SWC title ship sinks before Metcalf's very eye

By **CHAREAN WILLIAMS**
Assistant Sports Editor

Parity. That's probably the best way to describe this year's Southwest Conference race.

SMU, ranked in the Top 10 all season, was expected to walk away with the crown. However, every team in the SWC has experienced a breakdown of sorts, and the Mustangs were no exception.

It all boils down to a Texas Tech-SMU matchup in Dallas Wednesday night for the title.

And what about Texas A&M? The Aggies had three chances to

take over the No. 1 position and came up empty handed. Saturday night, was perhaps their last chance at the championship, and, once again, the SWC title ring slipped off their fingers.

The Ags are experiencing their "sinking period" right now. A&M has lost three of its last four games including a 58-50 loss to the Red Raiders Saturday night in Lubbock.

"It's time to get it back," said A&M Coach Shelby Metcalf. "There's no doubt we've had a sinking period. Our timing was just real poor. This is the only real sinking period we've

had all season.

"I think we can bounce back. Almost every team has had one. It's very hard to mount a winning streak in this conference. We had a five game winning streak at one time. That might be the most of any team this season."

Metcalf said the key to a long winning streak was mental preparation.

"You have just got to be ready to play," Metcalf said. "We have no excuses for our losses. I really like this team. We are really balanced. Everybody in the league has experienced this at one time or another."

The Aggies are two games out of first-place with two left to play. Wednesday, A&M travels to Houston to battle the Cougars in Hoffeinz

Pavilion and Saturday the Ags return home to take on Rice.

It now appears the Aggies will finish no higher than fourth in the conference behind SMU, Tech and Arkansas.

The Aggie women, on the other hand, are fighting for the sixth and final SWC post-season spot.

A&M lost 77-69 to No. 19 Texas Tech Saturday night in Lubbock. However, the Ags are in a good position for sixth-place with a 5-9 SWC record, one game ahead of SMU.

A&M Coach Lynn Hickey said she was pleased with the Aggies' effort

in Saturday's game.

"It was tough," Hickey said. "I did some nice things out there, easy for us to play Tech. They're real fast, so we can match up with them."

"If they're the No. 19 team in the country, maybe we don't have to go as we thought. Our kids work hard. We're not a rinky-dink basketball team anymore."

A&M travels down Highway 69 to Houston Wednesday to play the Cougars and then the Ags return home to play Rice on Saturday.

Texas A&M Weekend Basketball Roundup

McDONALD'S

INTRAMURAL HIGHLIGHTS

At University Drive
At Texas and S.W. Parkway
At Manor East Mall
At 2930 E. Highway 21

IM GAMEPLAN

ENTRIES CLOSE:

TABLE TENNIS DOUBLES - Entries close Tuesday, Feb. 26. Play begins Monday, March 4 in 304 East Kyle. USSTA rules will apply. Matches consist of the best two out of three 21 point games. Free.

ENTRIES OPEN:

BADMINTON DOUBLES - Entries open Monday, Feb. 25 and close Tuesday, March 5. Tournament play begins Tuesday, March 19 in Room 351 G. Rolfie White. USBA rules will apply. Matches consist of the best two out of three games. No entry fee.

VOLLEYBALL TRIPLES - Entries open Monday, Feb. 25 and close Tuesday, March 5. Play begins Monday, March 18. Only one TAMU Volleyball Club member or former varsity player is permitted per Class A team. USVBA rules with Intramural supplements will apply. Entry fee is \$15.

INNERTUBE WATER POLO - Entries open Monday, Feb. 25 and close Tuesday, March 5. Play begins Monday, March 18. Only one TAMU water polo player is allowed per team. NO TAMU swimmers may compete. Innertubes and caps will be provided. Entry fee is \$15.

PENBERTHY SOFTBALL TOURNAMENT - Entries open Monday, Feb. 25 and close Tuesday, March 5. Tournament dates are March 22, 23 and 24. (Rainout dates are April 6, 7 and 8.) Entry fee is \$40.

SPORT CLUB UPDATE

So far this semester, little has been said about the various sport clubs on campus. Well, that's about to change. Since sport clubs play an integral role in the workings of Intramurals, sport club highlights will appear in this page as often as possible. Who knows, maybe you'll be inspired to join a club just because you read about it here.

Boxing Club - Sent a group to the Houston Golden Gloves Tournament which was held Feb. 3 - Feb. 9. For only having three people, the team made a clean sweep: one first and two seconds. Jimmy Arca placed first in the novice middleweight class while Peter King and Rand Egge placed second in sub-novice and novice lightweight classes, respectively.

Gymnastics - Aerofit was the site of the Gymnastic Club's men's meet on Feb. 16. Sponsoring the meet didn't hinder the A&M effort by a long shot - A&M placed first out of the three teams (Tech, t.u. and A&M) participating. The Aggie men chalked up five first and one second place finishes on the road to overall victory. Winners were: Kris Longwell and Allen Vaughn - 1st floor exercise; Brad Nehring - 1st pommel horse; Grant Lauderdale - 1st parallel bars and 2nd rings; and Danny Barnett - 1st horizontal bar.

Wrestling - Aggies can be proud of their state champion wrestlers. The team won that title in a meet Feb. 16 at Southwest Texas State in San Marcos against LeTourneau College, Southwest, U.T., TCU and U.T. - San Antonio. Three firsts and four seconds lifted the Ags over the other teams. First place winners: Gerry Holthaus (150 lbs.), Rob Ward (167 lbs.), Dale Deibert (177 lbs.). Second place finishers: Eric Brown (134 lbs.), Bob Swearingen (142 lbs.), Brian Matthews (158 lbs.) and Pat Cox (heavyweight). Gerry Holthaus was named the most valuable wrestler.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

McDonald's Intramural Highlights is sponsored each Monday in the Battalion by your local McDonald's® Restaurants at University Drive, Manor East Mall and on Texas Avenue. Stories are written by members of the Intramural Staff, graphics are by Joel Hickerson, and photos are by Tom McDonnell and Marcy Basile.

Wayne Snider of the TAMU Gymnastics Club works on his parallel bar routine in East Kyle.

PENBERTHY TOURNAMENT

The Penberthy Softball Tournament is held in honor of the father of Intramurals at Texas A&M, Walter Penberthy, who still gives advice to the Intramural staff. He even shows up at the tournament to throw in the first ball.

The tournament has changed over the years. Originally, the tournament was to be played 48 hours straight. Now, the tournament is held over three days, ending at midnight each night.

The A&M Intramural staff attempts to make this tournament the most competitive of the season. The only teams allowed to register are Intramural teams which thrive on competition. The best officials available are called on insuring accurate calls.

Entries are being taken for this tournament through March 5. Take advantage of this tournament to see how your team stacks up to the best.