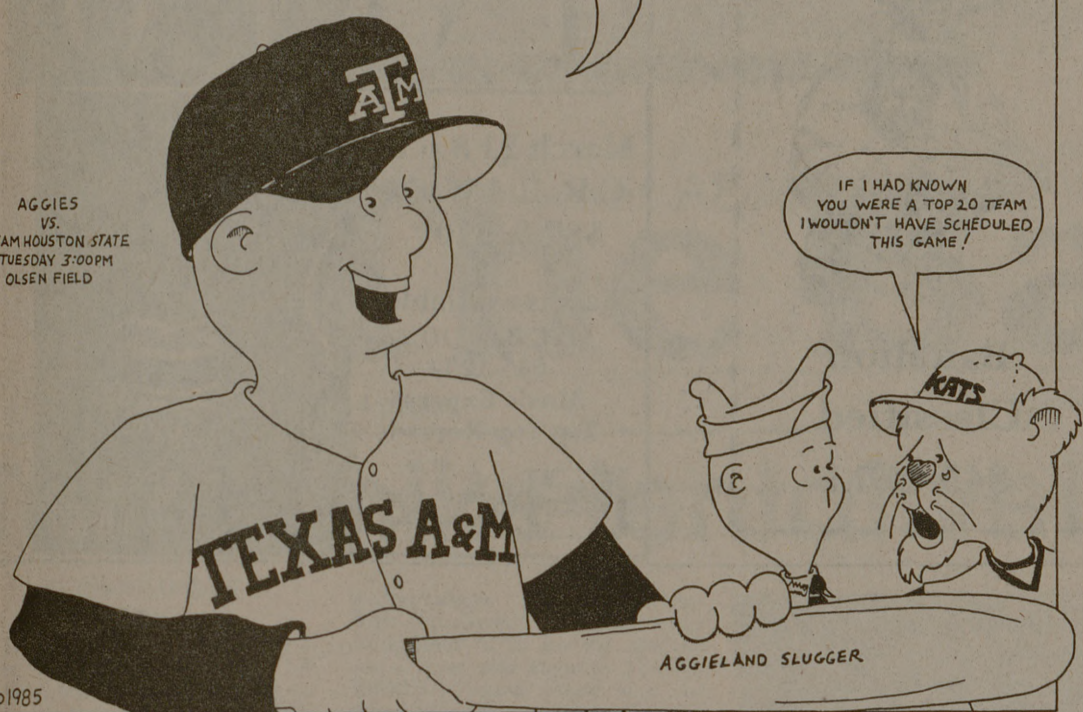


NOW COMES BASEBALL TIME!



Sambito hopes to make Astro-nomical impact

Associated Press
 KISSIMMEE, Fla. — Houston Astros pitcher Joe Sambito is at least pleased Manager Bob Lillis is considering pitching him *somewhere* this season.
 Last season, Sambito felt inactivity caused him to gain one day and then lose two days of progress.
 Sambito thought he was ready to play a dominant role of out the bullpen last season after recovering from elbow problems that led to two surgeries and caused him to miss much of the 1982 season and all of the 1983 season.
 Lillis thought Sambito should go at a slower pace in his comeback attempt last season. He allowed Sambito to pitch only sparingly and in no games when the final result was on the line.
 "The only thing that I didn't agree with is the fact if I'd pitched a little bit more last year I think I'd have progressed a little quicker," Sambito said.
 "For every day you miss, you

move back a day, so you actually miss two days. You miss that day and you move back a day in your progress. That's what happened to me last season."
 But this season is going to be different, Sambito says. "I'm definitely better now than I was during the season last year," he said. "Last season I was experimenting on a whole lot of things, choice of pitches, when to throw them, how I was going to feel after the game and how I'd feel the next day."
 "Everything was 'let's do it and see what happens.' Now I think I've been through that and I know what to expect."
 Sambito expects more this year than appearing in 32 games for 47 2-3 innings.
 "I've got good pop on the ball but it's not enough to throw it by guys," Sambito said. "I can throw by a guy if I fool him and he's looking for something off-speed."
 "I feel I have command of all pitches. I can hit spots and I have a

greater variety of pitches now. What I may lose in velocity, I'll make up for with other things."
 Sambito, a 1979 National League All-Star, is second on the Astros' all-time save list although he has not recorded a save since April 27, 1982 and hasn't won a game since Sept. 28, 1981.
 Now he says he's rested and ready to pitch.
 "When the season was over I went home and didn't touch a baseball for two months," Sambito said. "When I did start throwing again in December I felt a lot of difference in my arm, it was a lot stronger."
 Sambito says he never doubted he'd get a chance to pitch again in the major leagues.
 "I never counted myself out," he said. "I knew I was down but I wasn't out. In my mind it was just a matter of being given enough time, that I would be able to compete on this level."

Ags look to break slump in softball home-opener

By CHAREAN WILLIAMS
Assistant Sports Editor

After 23 straight road games to open the spring softball season, the Texas A&M women will finally play in the comfort of their own backyard.
 The Aggies started the season with the Mardi Gras Tournament in Houma, La. A&M didn't allow a single run to win seven games and the tournament championship by a combined score of 38-0. That was followed with 10 days on the road over spring break.
 The team traveled all over California, facing some of the best competition in the nation last week. From there the Ags didn't even return home but instead headed to Norman, Okla. for the Oklahoma Tournament.
 Unfortunately, the Aggies didn't find as much success this road trip.
 The Aggies returned home at 1 a.m. Sunday morning with a 17-6 record, including losses to teams they were expected to defeat.



A&M Softball Coach Bob Brock (above) — "We're not moving the runners around. It seems like we either all hit or nobody hits. That's been the characteristic since I've been here. We will keep working on our hitting. If you can't get them on, you can't hit them in."

"We have played a lot of road games," said A&M Head Coach Bob Brock. "Our lack of hitting at times cost us. Four of our six losses were one run games. I didn't anticipate losing any one run games. But, even the one run games didn't have anything to do with our defense or our pitching."
 A&M hitters had problems knocking in base runners. The Aggies left 17 base runners stranded in a 1-0 loss to Missouri and 13 in a loss to Oklahoma.
 "We need to do something about that," Brock said. "We're not moving the runners around. It seems like we either all hit or nobody hits. That's been our characteristic since I've been here. To their credit though, they haven't had much opportunity to swing the bat except in games."
 "We will keep working on our hitting. If you can't get them on, you can't hit them in."
 Brock said the hard part of the Aggies' schedule is over and the benefits of such a strong schedule will soon begin to show.
 "We played an outstanding schedule," Brock said. "It was a very strong schedule. The hard part

home to play. A&M gets a rematch with Missouri in a doubleheader Tuesday at 4 and 6 p.m.

"They have a pretty good ball club," Brock said. "If we hit the ball well, we'll be tough on them. If we don't, we'll allow them in our park. They have a good pitching staff and they're winning games. They've also gotten a chance to look at our pitching staff."

"We beat them 7-0 in the Mardi Gras Tournament and then they beat us 1-0 last week."

Brock said he was just happy to be home — and get to stay home for awhile.

"We're real excited to be playing at home," he said. "We are still tired though. We're just trying to recover from the trip."

"One thing that bothers me is that it's been a long time since we had a long, hard working practice."

The Aggies will have a lot of time to try to free Brock from his worries. The rest of March finds the Aggies at home. On March 26, they play Sam Houston in a double header. Then on March 29-31, A&M hosts the Aggie Invitational at Southwood Athletic Complex.

Brock said the toughest opponents left on the Aggies' schedule are the teams entered in the Aggie Invitational.

"Our tournament with Utah State, Louisiana Tech, New Mexico, Missouri will be the toughest," Brock said. "Florida State is a ranked team. And, I would have to include Baylor in that group. They're having a good year."

Still, the Aggies biggest opponent this season is themselves.

"We have to worry about ourselves," Brock said. "Sometimes, we let other teams in the park with us."

"The team has a good attitude though. They believe they are the team to beat. They know everybody plays their best against the Aggies."

Today, the Aggies will just be taking care of their business — only they will be doing it at home.

ACTIVITIES:

- Panel Discussions
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- Dealers' Room
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- Masquerade
- Readings
- Open Gaming
- Sock Hop
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Workers' Meeting
 March 19th, Tues.
 7:30 p.m. in
 Rudder 301