

SPORTS

# Ags use series of firsts to dismanttle Bears

By BRANDON BERRY  
Sports Writer

This weekend was an experience of "firsts" for the Texas A&M baseball team.

For the first time in the '85 season, the Aggies received two consecutive complete game pitching performances. For the first time this season, defense became a strong point rather than a disappoint. And A&M swept up, bagged up and generally roughed up a conference contender three games to zero, also a first.

With Sunday's 5-2 and 10-2 double-header sweep over the Bears, the Ags are just one game out of, you guessed it, first place in the Southwest Conference.

"We told the team last Friday that the conference race this year was so crazy that somebody was going to sneak in and win a championship," said A&M coach Mark Johnson. "And it might as well be us."

Until this weekend, the Baylor Bears thought the "sneakers" were on their feet.

They led the conference in fewest runs allowed. They led the conference in double plays and defensive fielding average. They led the conference in stolen bases.

And they led the conference.

Now the Bears have settled a cozy den in fourth place and they're there because they didn't do what everyone else this season has been able to do — hit Aggie pitching.

"I really feel that if I would have been healthy from the beginning of the season, we would have been in first or second place from the very beginning," said senior right-hander Tom Arrington, who recently returned to the mound after missing several weeks due to a back injury and was the complete game winner in Sunday's 5-2 victory. "The type of pitcher I am, I don't feel I'm ever going to lose."

Arrington didn't need much losing empathy Sunday afternoon, when he shackled Baylor on five hits and improved his record to 5-1.

"Right now, I'm up there around 85 percent, but I'm not going to miss any more starts this season," Arrington said. "The way I see it, this team has the hitting. We just need to get the pitching down the stretch."

Arrington's performance followed a masterful six-hit complete game 2-1 victory by Philip Taylor on Friday night.

Taylor, now 8-1 on the year, won his fourth straight conference game and never let the Bears seriously threaten.

"It may have just been the breaks of the game, but I like to think we're playing some pretty good baseball right now," Johnson said. "We got not only the good pitching, but we also played good defense. I was really pleased with Scott Livingstone's defense at third base. He made some great plays for a freshman."

"We're just tickled to death to sweep a series and especially against a good team like Baylor. And we beat two pretty good left-handers, which is a real lift because we didn't think we were hitting left-handed pitching all that well."

The Aggies hit right-hander Alan Koonce worse than either of the Baylor left-handers they faced Sunday. Koonce limited A&M to three hits in Friday night's game, but one of those was a Scott Livingstone home run. Junior Jeff Schow scored the Ags other run on a wild pitch.

But with Taylor pitching, two runs were enough.

"Let's face it, it was the throwers against the hitters out there in that series," said Aggie shortstop Rob Swain. "In the end, we just got the key hits and they didn't."

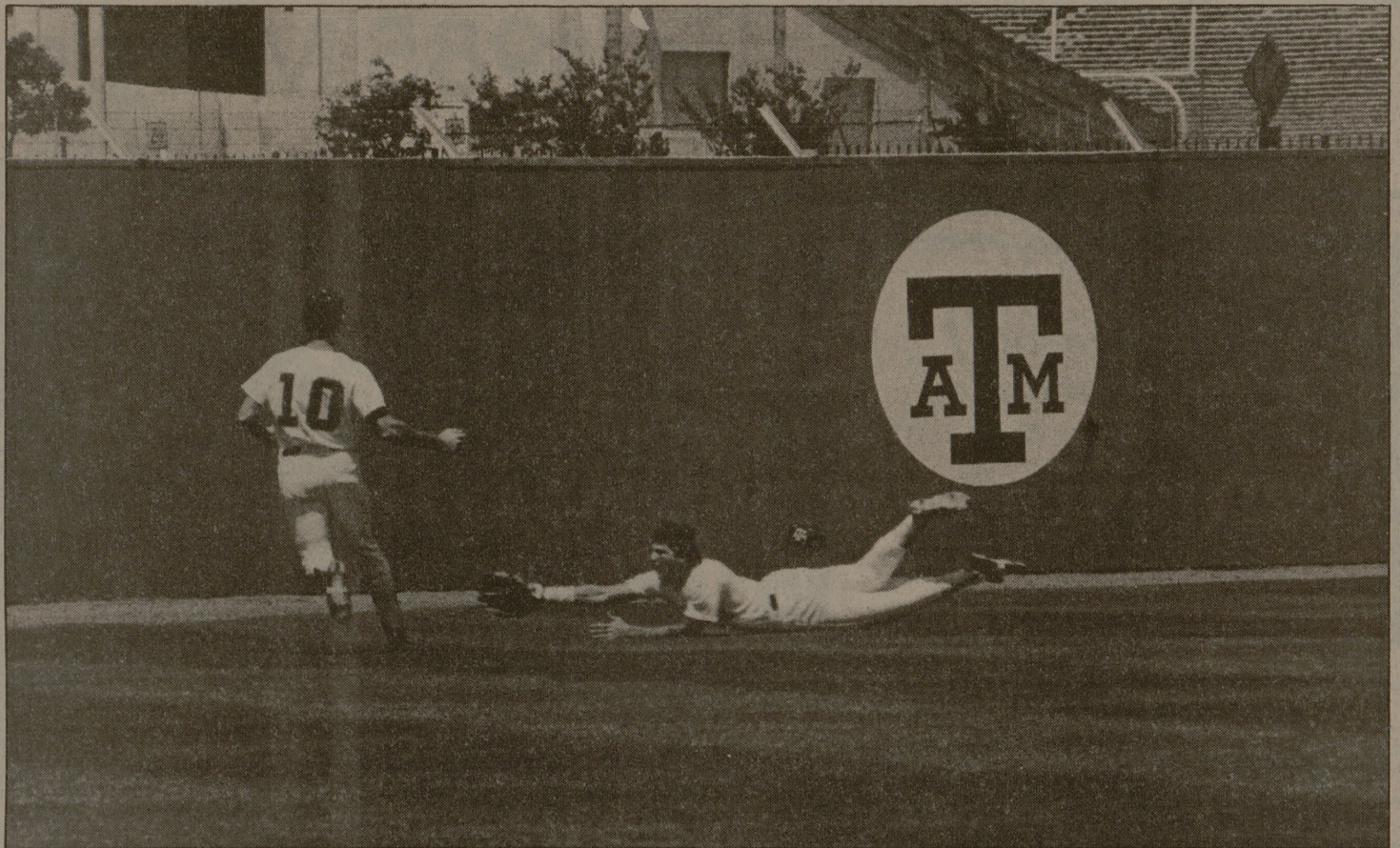


Photo by ANTHONY S. CASPER

Texas A&M centerfielder Mike Scanlin (right) dives unsuccessfully for a catch as left fielder Buddy Haney (10) tries to back up the play during Sunday's double-header with Baylor.

The Aggies (33-11, 8-4 in the Southwest Conference) swept the league-leading Bears in the three-game series to move within a game of first place Houston in the SWC standings.

## West German surges to Masters victory

Associated Press

AUGUSTA, Ga. — "It would have been a helluva story, wouldn't it?" Curtis Strange said. "We can all dream about it."

But Stranges' hopes of the greatest comeback in Masters history turned into a puzzling nightmare Sunday in the waters of the 13th and 15th holes, and Bernhard Langer became the first West German to win any of golf's four major championships.

While Strange's bid to rebound from an opening round of 80 fell apart, it was "a dream come true," for Langer, who surged from four strokes back with nine holes to play. He claimed his first American title and became only the third foreign player to don the green jacket that goes to the Masters champion.

He won it with a 4-under-par 68 in steadily building pressure under gloomy skies that sprinkled an occasional drizzle. He won by two shots

with a 282 total, 6-under-par on the Augusta National Golf Club course. He won it by playing the last nine in 33 strokes.

But ultimately he won it on the two back-nine par-5s, the 13th and 15th, both reachable in two, both prime birdie targets, both guarded by water.

Langer made birdie on both holes, two-putting on each occasion.

And Strange made bogey-6 on each, hitting into Rae's Creek with

his second shot on the 13th and lashing a 4-iron into the pond in front of the 15th green.

Strange, the leading money-winner on the PGA Tour this season, said the two strokes he played from the little stream trickling along a rocky ravine on the 13th "was not my downfall."

"I guess the miracle of '85 didn't happen."

But it did. It just happened to Langer.

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