

TANK McNAMARA®

by Jeff Millar & Bill Hinds



Bruises, blood, parties all a part of Ag rugby

The whole scene made me nervous — and I was on the sidelines. The trainer's kit, bulging with tape, scissors and extra mouthpieces, was lying wide-open in front of the bleachers. It was open, I assumed, because it would get a lot of use on this day. Over-inflated footballs flew by my head, only to be caught by over-inflated, yet well-proportioned, men.

Rugby, that physical European game you thought only existed on ESPN, was being played here at Texas A&M.

Last week, I did a routine interview with several A&M rugby players.

No big deal, I thought. I found out that the Aggies have won 15 consecutive Texas Collegiate championships and have an unbeaten Southwest Conference record over the last 20 years.

Impressive, I thought, but it's still just another game with over-inflated ball.

Last Saturday, however, after watching 30 men (and one referee) run up and down an extended football field playing an organized version of "kill-the-man-with-the-ball," I learned my lesson.

Rugby is a big deal. Fifteen-minute quarters with a 30-minute half-time? No way, that's football. This is rugby, where real men shun quiche and play two 40-minute halves with only a five-minute break.

Rugby was everything I thought it would be — rough, tough and full of excitement.

Before the game started, the 15 Aggie players huddled on the field. Shouts of encouragement

DOUG HALL
Sports Writer

and motivation could be heard on the sidelines. As the referee's whistle blew, someone shouted, "Let's beat the f..... s... out of them."

This wasn't going to be a friendly game.

Play began and immediately I was lost. But so was the group of Oriental men with their Nikon cameras, so I didn't feel too bad.

"What are they doing out there," I asked in amazement. "It's a 'scrum,'" someone said.

Oh, thanks.

A "scrum," it seems, has eight players from each team lock arms and try to push the other team backwards. Meanwhile, the "scrum-half" throws the ball into this herd of feet at which time the "hooker" tries to kick the ball back to the "scrum-half," who started this whole mess.

If that sounds confusing, you should try explaining it.

Meanwhile, the game wore on and the bruises got bigger. Blood on uniforms, elbows and foreheads was as common as the six packs of, uh, "beverages" many of the 100-plus fans carried around.

The crowd, though not as large as its European counterpart, was friendly and boisterous. Everyone seemed to know each other. Surprisingly, no one told me to get lost, even though I was the only one walking around with pen and paper in hand, instead of "beverage" can.

The players, however, weren't so kind to each other.

One crushing blow came after the other, until finally one of the Austin players stayed on the ground, having apparently been stepped on.

"That'll teach him to stay off of the ground," one Aggie player said.

But everyone applauded when they carried the injured player off the field. He was replaced by another brave spartan.

Did I feel sorry for the players? No way. They willingly subject themselves to the rigors of this rough-and-tough sport.

The referee, however, I felt different about. He too ran around for the full 80-minutes always chasing down that misshapen ball and calling penalties.

On one such penalty, the Aggies kicked the ball straight up in the air. At least 10 of these large men fought for position, as if they were going up for a rebound. And who was caught in the middle of this ferocious mass? The referee, who, even in rugby, everyone loves to hate. He paid his dues on that play.

The game was over and the Aggies had been "outscored" by a team ranked second in the state's first division. A&M, which is a second division club, had proven itself a worthy opponent in its season-opener.

Afterwards, the players attributed the loss to inexperience, youth and the lack of physical fitness.

"Oh well," an Aggie player said. "It's just the first game of the season. We held our own."

"Besides," another Ag said, "what time's the party tonight?"

Astros win sixth straight by blasting Braves, 7-2

Associated Press

ATLANTA — There was little about Houston right-hander Jeff Heathcock's first inning Monday night that would indicate what was to happen in his final eight.

Heathcock gave up a two-run homer to Dale Murphy in the first, then shut out the Braves the rest of the way to lead the Astros to a 7-2 triumph. It was the Astros' sixth straight victory and 17th in 20 games.

"I just made a bad pitch," said Heathcock, referring to the one Murphy hit for his 36th homer, high in the major leagues. "I didn't get the outside far enough."

Heathcock (2-1) who allowed only three baserunners after the first inning and finished with a four-hitter, was a little surprised about his first career complete game.

"I completed only three at Tucson," he said, "and I guess it was back in 1983 when I last pitched a game like this, with all the balls hit on the ground."

Heathcock, whose record at Tucson this season was an unimpressive 7-10, struck out two and walked one.

Jose Cruz, Jerry Mumphrey and Denny Walling each hit his seventh homer of the season to lead Houston offensively.

Joe Johnson, 4-1, was the loser for Atlanta, yielding eight hits in seven innings while striking out five and walking two.

Walling hit a sacrifice fly and Cruz got his home run in the first inning, giving Heathcock a 2-0 lead.

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| Other Monday games: | |
| (Home team in capitals) | |
| AMERICAN LEAGUE | |
| Cleveland 9, NEW YORK 5 | |
| Baltimore 14, DETROIT 7 | |
| Seattle 5, KANSAS CITY 1 | |
| MILWAUKEE 5, Boston 3 | |
| NATIONAL LEAGUE | |
| St. Louis 8-3, PITTSBURGH 4-1 | |
| MONTREAL 8, Chicago 5 | |
| NEW YORK 9, Philadelphia 0 | |
| CINCINNATI 7, S. Francisco 6 (11) | |
| SAN DIEGO 4, Los Angeles 2 | |

Mets vs. Phillies
NEW YORK — Dwight Gooden pitched a two-hitter and extended his scoreless-inning streak to 31 Monday night to lead the New York Mets to a 9-0 rout of the Philadelphia Phillies.

Cardinals vs. Pirates
PITTSBURGH — Willie McGee

singled home Vince Coleman with the go-ahead run in the eighth inning to help the first-place St. Louis Cardinals capture a 3-1 victory and a doubleheader sweep of the Pittsburgh Pirates Monday.

Expos vs. Cubs
MONTREAL — Tim Lincecum capped a three-run seventh inning with a two-out, two-run single as the Montreal Expos beat Chicago 8-5 Monday night, sending the Cubs to their fifth straight defeat.

Reds vs. Giants
CINCINNATI — Gary Redus drew a one-out walk from Mark Davis, stole second and third and raced home on a wild pitch to give the Cincinnati Reds a 7-6 victory over the San Francisco Giants in 11 innings Monday night.

Orioles vs. Tigers
DETROIT — Cal Ripken homered twice and Rick Dempsey, John Shelby, Eddie Murray and Fred Lynn hit one each as the Baltimore Orioles outslugged the Detroit Tigers 14-7 Monday night.

Mariners vs. Royals
KANSAS CITY — Mike Moore's five-hitter and a two-run homer by Danny Tartabull carried the Seattle Mariners to a 5-1 victory over the Kansas City Royals Monday night.

Indians vs. Yankees
NEW YORK — Julio Franco's two-run triple with two out in the ninth inning and Andre Thornton's two-run homer, his second of the game, highlighted a six-run rally that gave the Cleveland Indians a 9-5 victory over the slumping New York Yankees Monday.

OSU football player found dead

Associated Press

STILLWATER, Okla. — James W. Clark, a freshman who was a member of the Oklahoma State University football squad, was found dead in his room Monday, victim of an apparent suicide, school officials said.

Oklahoma State Police Chief Everett Eaton said the Clark, 18, was found in his dormitory room Monday afternoon by a teammate, who immediately notified OSU police and emergency personnel.

Officials would not reveal exactly how Clark died.

Efforts to revive Clark were started by ambulance crews and he was pronounced dead on arrival at Stillwater Medical Center, Eaton said.

The police chief said no evidence was found in the room to give reason for Clark's death.

Clark, a 6-3, 240-pound defensive lineman, was a highly recruited player from Wilmer-Hutchins High School in Dallas. He chose to attend Oklahoma State over Colorado, Texas Tech and Kansas State.

He had not played in Oklahoma State's first two games.

"Our deepest and most sincere sympathies are with James' family," Oklahoma State Coach Pat Jones said. "It was a complete shock to our staff and team."

"Of course, everyone's immediate concern is with the family. At this moment, we have no other concerns or thoughts."

A brief memorial service for Clark in Stillwater, conducted by Jones and the Rev. James Struthers of the First Presbyterian Church, is scheduled for 7 p.m. Tuesday in the varsity lounge on the second floor of the school's football building.

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| * Composing Processes 6:00 111 Blocker | | * Logically Writing 6:00 111 Blocker | * The Resume and Letter of Application 6:00 164 Blocker | |

Texas A&M Flying Club
Monthly Meeting Tuesday, 7:30 p.m.,
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For More Information Call Don Read, 696-9339

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