

A&M hosts Pan Am in season opener

Aggies start '86 season with 3-game series

By TOM TAGLIABUE
Sports Writer

Opening Day for the 1986 Texas A&M baseball team is less than 24 hours away.

The Aggies, who finished 39-16 in 1985, will open with a double-header against the Pan American Broncs Saturday at 1 p.m. at Olsen Field.

Texas A&M Head Baseball Coach Mark Johnson will be starting his second season with the Aggies.

A&M has already named the three starting pitchers for this weekend's series. Jimmy Flowers, a right-hander from Houston Bellaire, will throw Saturday against Pan Am, which already sports a 1-1 record.

Flowers was 1-1 with a 6.24 ERA in seven games for the Aggies last season, before injuring his hand. Aggie pitching coach John Lawler said Flowers has a good fast ball and could be a "power" pitcher.

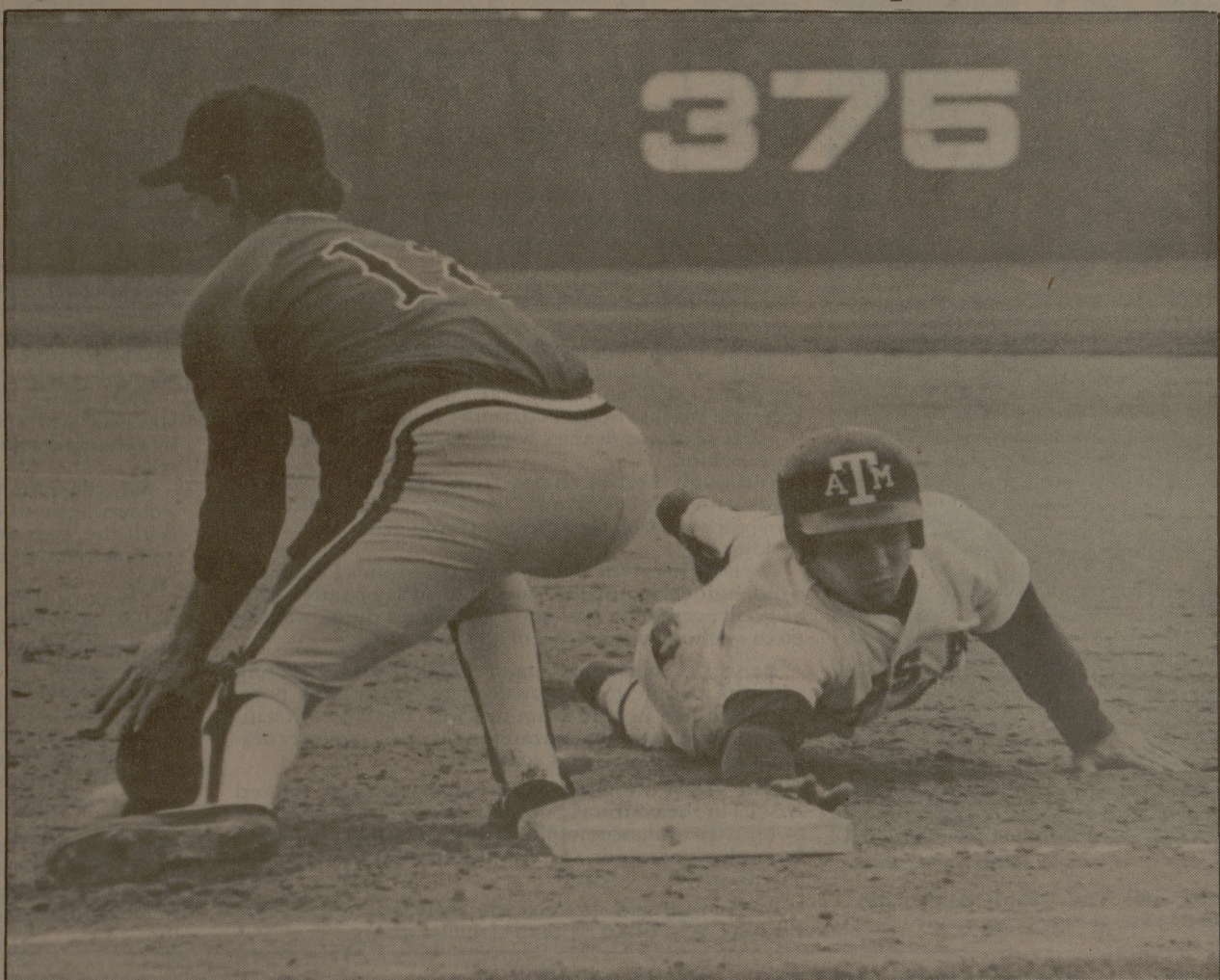
Russ Swan, a 6-foot-4 inch left-hander from Kennewick, Wash., will start the second game for the Aggies. Swan was 3-0 with a 5.60 ERA in five games last season and then he also was injured.

Sunday's starter against Pan Am will be junior Gary Geiger, a junior college transfer from Seminole Junior College. Geiger is a right-hander with an excellent change-up, Lawler said.

The starting catcher for the Aggies this weekend is still not known and Lawler said the decision as to who will be behind home plate probably will not be made until Saturday.

Four players are competing for the job — Maury Martin, Blake Hutchinson, Scott Winterburn and Frank Tanner.

Johnson expects to start Robi Chandler at second base, Ever Magellanes at shortstop, Scott Livingstone at third base, Jeff Schow in left field and Mike Scanlin in center field.



A&M right fielder Bill Doug Potter dives back to first base in a game last season. The Aggies will

begin the '86 season Saturday against Pan American in a double-header beginning at 1 p.m.

Photo by ANTHONY S. CASPER

First base is unsettled right now because of the injury last week to All-SWC first baseman Fred Gegan, who broke his thumb in a freak accident. Geiger is Gegan's backup, but Johnson wants Geiger to concentrate on pitching.

Senior Pat James, who is also battling for a starting job in right field, is the possible starter at first. James is challenging senior Bill

Doug Potter for the right fielder's job. Potter injured his shoulder last season, but is recovered now. He hit .322 with seven doubles for the Ags in 1985.

AGGIE BASEBALL NOTES — Saturday's festivities will include a parachute jump sponsored by Mutual of Omaha. Three jumpers will drop into Olsen Field, each landing

on a different base. The final jumper, carrying the game ball, is supposed to land on home plate.

Sunday is Aggie visor day, the first of several giveaways designed to help bring fans out to the ball park.

The first 1,000 fans entering the gate Sunday will receive a free visor, compliments of Fidelity Union Life Insurance. Game time for Sunday is also 1 p.m.

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