

Sports

Ag softball team sweeps Ladykats

By Tim Stanfield
Sports Writer

HUNTSVILLE — Behind the stout pitching of All-America Shawn Andaya and Julie Carpenter, Coach Bob Brock's possessive Texas A&M softball team swept a double-header from Sam Houston State University, 2-0 and 2-1, Wednesday at Josey Field.

The pair of wins pushed the Aggies' fall record to 8-0, but neither victory came easily.

Andaya struck out four while allowing two hits and two walks. Only in the sixth inning did she allow a runner to reach third base.

But that threat ended when Ladykat leadoff hitter Julie Thomas popped up a bunt to catcher Erika Eriksson and Sam Houston's Jan Sanders followed with a groundout.

"Shawn was pretty tough out there tonight," Brock said. "She stayed ahead of the hitters pretty much all the way."

Carpenter faced bases-loaded situations in the first and third innings, but allowed just the one run — which was unearned — in the latter inning.

Carpenter struck out six batters while giving up four hits and one walk.

"Julie had some trouble with the mound and got into some early jams," Brock said. "I went out there in the third inning and told her that she had to throw the fastball for

strikes. In the last four innings she gave up only one hit."

Brock went on to point out that the Aggies didn't get as many strikeouts as usual, and pondered whether the fact that the mound was moved back three feet this year had anything to do with it.

But he had high praise for the Aggies' defense, particularly in clutch situations.

A&M got six hits off Sam Houston's JoAnne Graham in the opener and four against Elaine Devlin in the second contest.

The Aggies scored twice in the second inning of the opener. Andaya led off safe on an error and moved to second on Erin Newkirk's sacrifice.

Eriksson walked and both runners moved up a base on Graham's wild pitch.

Zina Ochoa scored Andaya with a sacrifice fly to left field. Tory Parks' infield single brought Ochoa home with the final run of the game.

Judy Trussell scored the Aggies' first run in the nightcap aided by two Ladykat errors.

Parks notched the winning in the fifth inning, again helped by two Sam Houston errors.

Texas A&M may face the Sam Houston team in its next contest, the Aggie Invitational tournament, which will be held at A&M the weekend of Oct. 4-5.

General public tickets sold out for Baylor game

General public tickets for the Oct. 18 Texas A&M-Baylor football game in Kyle Field have been sold out, the Texas A&M Athletic Ticket Office announced Wednesday.

Other remaining A&M games that already have sold out of its general public tickets are the Nov. 15 Arkansas game in Little Rock, Ark.

and the Nov. 27 Texas game in Austin.

Jim Kotch, manager of the A&M ticket office, said there are plenty of general public tickets left for Saturday's game with Southern Mississippi and for the home games against Texas Tech (Oct. 4), Rice (Oct. 25) and Texas Christian (Nov. 22).

Back-up fullbacks fix Ag leaks

By Homer Jacobs
Assistant Sports Editor

In the North Texas State game last weekend, 99 players played at least one down for the Aggies.

The game must have been a radio and television commentator's nightmare.

There were players gracing Kyle Field without Texas A&M emblems on their helmets, and a 12th Man Kickoff Team member even played some at linebacker.

"We had a lot of mamas happy sitting in the stands," A&M Coach Jackie Sherrill said.

But two substitutions came on a sour note when starting fullback Roger Vick was sidelined with a dislocated left pinkie. That injury left the spot open to backups Ira Valentine and Matt Gurley.

But both runners picked up the slack well for the Aggies combining for 70 yards rushing with two touchdowns.

Sherrill was pleased with the play of the two fullbacks, who had seen only limited action in their Maroon and White careers.

"Gurley coming in for Roger did an outstanding job," Sherrill said, "and the first touchdown run he (Valentine) had was a major-league run."

Gurley, a sophomore from Dallas, wasn't expecting to play as much as he did against NTSU.

"At first, I was real nervous," Gurley said. "Then, as the game went on, (I) started to become normal again."

Gurley is expected to split playing time with Valentine against Southern Mississippi, with Valentine grabbing the starting role. Vick's status is listed as questionable for Saturday's game.

This year the Aggies' "hammer," according to Sherrill, is Vick. Gurley is more the screwdriver type — power without blazing speed.

"I consider myself a pick-and-peck slasher who kind of slides on through," Gurley said.



Photo by Anthony S. Casper

A&M fullback Ira Valentine (42), tries to elude NTSU defenders during last Saturday's game. Valentine scored two touchdowns and gained 35 yards in the Aggies' 48-28 home-opening victory.

If the Aggies are going to slide on past Southern Mississippi, he said, A&M will have to play mistake-free football.

"Everybody thinks it's going to be an easy one, because nobody knows about them," he said. "But they're a tough team."

Having played occasionally the

last three seasons, Valentine has the experience edge on Gurley.

He also has the speed advantage on Gurley and almost all the members of the A&M squad. This power drill fills up the Aggie tool chest with senior leadership and solid work habits.

"The time I have out on the field, I'll go 110 percent and try and do my best," Valentine said. "I practice hard, because you play like you practice."

So if the Aggie offense happens to break down Saturday at Kyle Field, Gurley and Valentine should be there to fix it.

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