

# Sports

## Late surge lifts Ags over Gophers

By Doug Hall  
Sports Writer

Wednesday's 4-1 victory over the Minnesota Gophers marked the second time in two days that the Texas A&M baseball team combined good pitching with key hitting to improve its season record to 24-12-1.

The two victories, after a losing stretch where the Aggies dropped 10 of 12 games over spring break, came at a much needed time; the team now can travel to Lubbock for this weekend's three-game series against Texas Tech on a positive note.

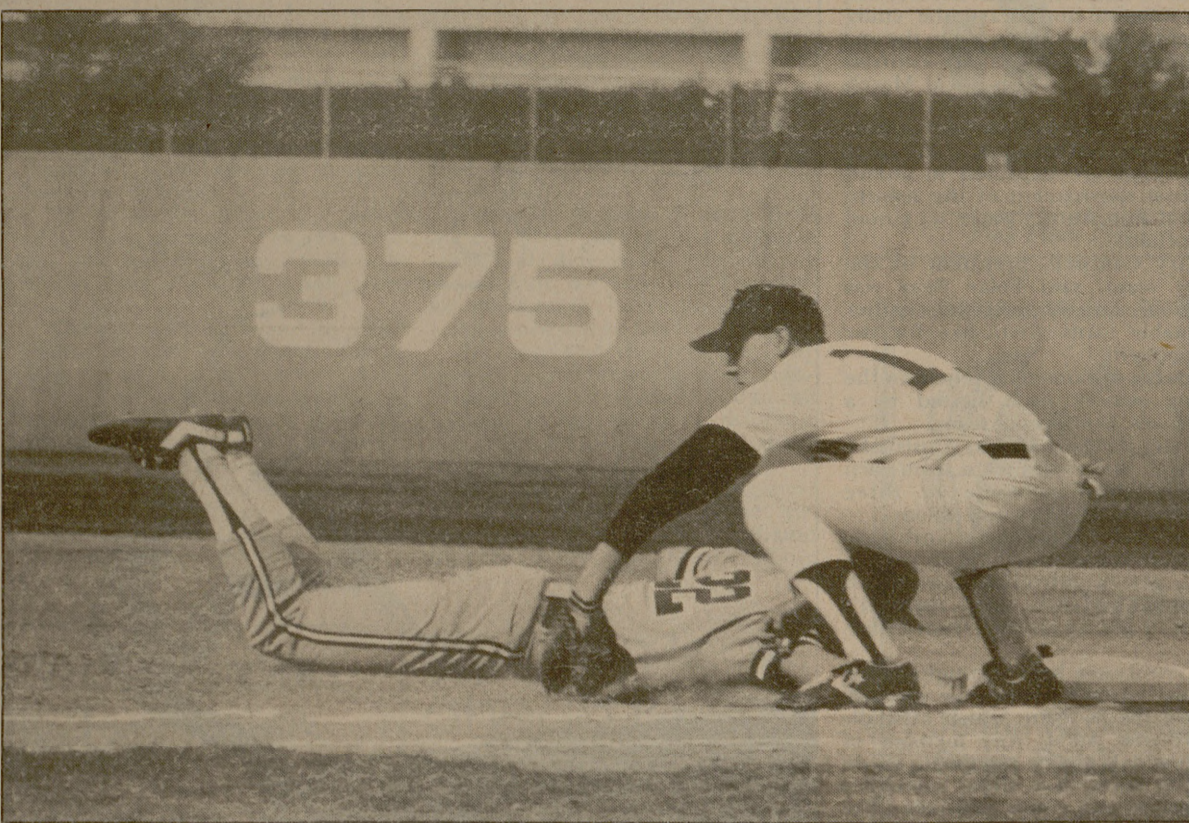
"Winning any games at this point of the season are very important to us," Head Coach Mark Johnson said. "When you were in a slump like we were, anything helps."

For the first seven innings of Wednesday's game at Olsen Field though, it looked like the Aggies had sent their bats back to the beach.

After pounding Minnesota pitchers for eight runs on Tuesday night, Gopher pitcher Dennis Neagle held A&M hitters to only five hits through their first seven at-bats.

The 6-3 left-hander kept the Aggie hitters off balance with a good assortment of pitches and a quick pick-off move. Prior to the seventh, the Aggies were able to reach second base only two times, while they flied out 10 times.

Meanwhile, Minnesota had taken a 1-0 advantage in the fourth inning on several A&M miscues. Center fielder Bruce Bates got a one-out walk off Gary Geiger, the second Aggie pitcher, and then advanced to third on



Texas A&M first baseman Daron Dacus goes low for the pickoff attempt as Minnesota second base-

man Jay Anderson dives back safely. The Aggies grabbed a 4-1 victory at Olsen Field Wednesday.

Photo by Tracy Staton

two Geiger wild pitches.

And after working Geiger to a full count, Gopher catcher Mike Halloran singled to left field to score the runner.

For A&M, sophomore pitcher Scott Centala opened the game but left after two innings. Geiger then struggled through the next two innings before giving way to Russ Greene.

But if the first seven innings belonged to Neagle and the Gophers, the eighth inning was all A&M's.

Senior left-hander Ed Perez replaced Greene in the top of the inning and retired Minnesota in order. Then in the Aggies' half of the inning, Scott Livingstone drove a 3-1 pitch off of Neagle to the right-field wall for a stand-up double.

After Byington was walked by Karl Johnson and Livingstone was forced out at third on a Chuck Knoblauch bunt, second baseman Terry Taylor drove a game-tying single to right field.

With two outs, Johnson then walked first baseman Daron Dacus to load the bases and continued to struggle with control as he walked in catcher Maury Martin for the go-ahead run. Right-fielder Don Wren, who was 2-for-5 for the afternoon, then took a 1-0 pitch to right field for two more runs to make the score 4-1.

Perez, who threw just 18 pitches in two innings, came back out and retired the Gophers in order to seal the win.

## School work causes Indiana's late arrival

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — French Quarter bars and persistent reporters have nothing to do with Indiana's late arrival for the Final Four, said Coach Bobby Knight. It's just that school work comes first.

Nevada-Las Vegas, Providence and Syracuse all flew in on Wednesday to begin on-site preparations for Saturday's semifinals of the college basketball championship tournament. Indiana arrives on Friday.

"As long as I've been involved in coaching, we have never — regardless of the game, whether it's a regular season game or a conference tournament or an NCAA tournament game, first-round or championship game — ever gone to the site of a game more than one day prior to the game," Knight said by telephone Wednesday.

"That's been our policy for 22-23 years. We still have classes today and tomorrow. We'll miss a little class on Friday. We'll get the chance to work out on Friday, and that's the way we've always done it."

UNLV Coach Jerry Tarkanian, the only coach on hand for the telephone news conference, said one of his reasons for coming in on Wednesday was to give his players a chance to see New Orleans.

"I'm going to let the kids enjoy themselves tonight and after the game," he said. "Starting tomorrow they will be under close restrictions."

"However, we won't isolate them from the press, because I think it is very important to give them the opportunity to talk to the press and other people."

All four teams will be housed in hotels adjacent to the French Quarter, the nightclub center of the city.

Providence Coach Rick Pitino and Syracuse Coach Jim Boeheim, speaking by phone, leaned toward Tarkanian's more lenient philosophy.

"We don't have that much time for them to get out much," Pitino said. "It's a lifetime experience for them."

"We want them to have a good time, but we also expect them to concentrate on the game," Boeheim said.

Big East rivals Providence, 28-5, and Syracuse, 30-6, meet in the opening game of the Final Four on Saturday. The regular season ended with UNLV ranked No. 1, Indiana No. 3, Syracuse No. 10, and Providence out of the standings, although getting a few votes from pollsters.

Providence last beat Syracuse 13 seasons ago, the only victory for the Friars in 17 meetings.

Tarkanian flew in ahead of his team and went straight to a pre-tournament press conference. The other three coaches participated from their campus offices.

Las Vegas, 37-1, is picked to win the title. Indiana, 28-4, is Tarkanian's pick for the favorite's role.

"I'm really shocked that we're the favorite. I look around, and Indiana's a great basketball team," Tarkanian said. "I hope those people picking us know something we don't know."

Knight has never hidden the fact that he believes defense is the way to win games. Only this season has Tarkanian's defense been mentioned.

"We've been, always, a great defensive team," Tarkanian said. "The public looks at our scores and says, 'No defense.'"

"We score a lot, and that's because we shoot it quick."

"We're not into being patient."

"Jerry has never been understood as a coach, as I understand him as a coach," Knight said. "I've always felt that basketball starts with defense."

"I think his trademark has been outstanding defensive play."

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