

Sports

Gooden to be treated for drug use problem

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. (AP) — Dwight Gooden, the talented but troubled New York Mets pitcher, agreed Wednesday to undergo treatment for a "drug use problem" rather than be suspended by Commissioner Peter Ueberroth.

The 1985 National League Cy Young award winner probably would have started on Tuesday when the World Series champions opened the season against Pittsburgh.

Mets General Manager Frank Cashen said Gooden voluntarily took a drug test earlier this week and it gave "some indication of past usage, but the extent is uncertain."

Edwin Durso, baseball's secretary-treasurer and executive vice president, said Cashen called Ueberroth on Monday and told him "there was a clear indication of a drug problem."

"The commissioner made it perfectly clear to the Mets that, consistent with past policy, he was prepared to take severe disciplinary action against Dwight Gooden if the player did not seek an appropriate remedy," Durso said.

Ueberroth, in a statement from Chandler, Ariz., said: "Our policy is simple. If a player is willing to help himself, he gets one chance. If he is unwilling to cooperate or a problem occurs a second time, then we will take the penalty route."

Ueberroth conditionally suspended 11 players, among them Keith Hernandez of the Mets, in March 1986 following testimony during drug trials in Pittsburgh.

All 11 were allowed to keep playing if they donated part of their salary to drug programs, performed community service and agreed to undergo drug testing.

Gooden agreed to treatment following a 1½-hour meeting Wednesday morning with Cashen and Joe McIlvaine, the club vice president of baseball operations.

Rumors involving Gooden, 22, and drugs surfaced last summer after the pitcher's often brilliant outings became inconsistent. His record dropped from 24-4 in his Cy Young

season to 17-6 while his earned run average rose from 1.53 to 2.84.

Gooden also struggled through a series of off-the-field incidents. He missed the Mets' ticker tape parade after winning the World Series and then got into a fight with Tampa police in December.

The Mets placed Gooden on the 15-day disabled list, and team spokesman Jay Horwitz said, "We don't know when he'll be back."

Jim Neader, Gooden's agent, said Gooden would "go in for an evaluation soon, probably by the end of the week," most likely in New York.

Neader said Gooden "doesn't think there is a major problem, but there is a question in his mind. He wants to get it answered. Dwight is feeling positive, he wants to get this taken care of."

Gooden's father, Dan, said he had "no idea" his son had a drug problem.

"He said he'd never messed with the stuff," Dan Gooden told the *Tampa Tribune*. "I don't know what to say. It's kind of stunning."

Cashen told other Mets about Gooden's problem Wednesday morning before the team left for an exhibition game against Pittsburgh in Bradenton.

"The first reaction in the locker room naturally was shock," Horwitz said, "but you could tell everyone there felt a lot of sympathy and stands behind Dwight 100 percent."

Gooden was the National League Rookie of the Year in 1984 when he jumped from Class A Lynchburg to the majors at age 19.

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Peter Ueberroth

Aggies complete sweep of Eagles

By Hal L. Hammons
Sports Writer

The Texas A&M baseball team completed its sweep of North Texas State Wednesday afternoon at Olsen Field with a 9-5 victory.

Three Aggie pitchers scattered eight Eagle hits to help raise A&M's record to 30-12-1. Gary Geiger (6-2) got the win in relief of starter Randy Pryor. Pat Wernig got the save. NTSU dropped to 9-27.

The A&M offense came from all quarters, as six Aggie batters got more than one hit. Second baseman Terry Taylor hit a pair of doubles, and outfielder Tim McWilliam contributed a double and a triple.

A&M Coach Mark Johnson said, "(McWilliam) led our team in hitting in the fall, so he hasn't shown what he can do yet."

But the star of the show was undoubtedly freshman John Byington. The third baseman got two hits of his own, including a towering home run that cleared the left-center field wall with room to spare.

Johnson said about Byington, "The gifts he has come from God, not from coaches or from anybody else."

Byington started the offensive show for the Aggies in the second inning. After drawing a walk, he stole second base and then third when he alertly noticed the third baseman talking with the pitcher and nobody covering the base. The first of Taylor's doubles brought him home for the game's first score.

NTSU tied the score in the fourth inning as first baseman Tony Olivares homered off Pryor, but the Aggies rallied in the sixth to blow open the game.

Shortstop Ever Magallanes opened the sixth with a single. Livingstone sacrificed him to second, and Byington singled to move Magallanes to third.

Center fielder Chuck Knoblauch grounded into a fielder's choice that forced Byington to

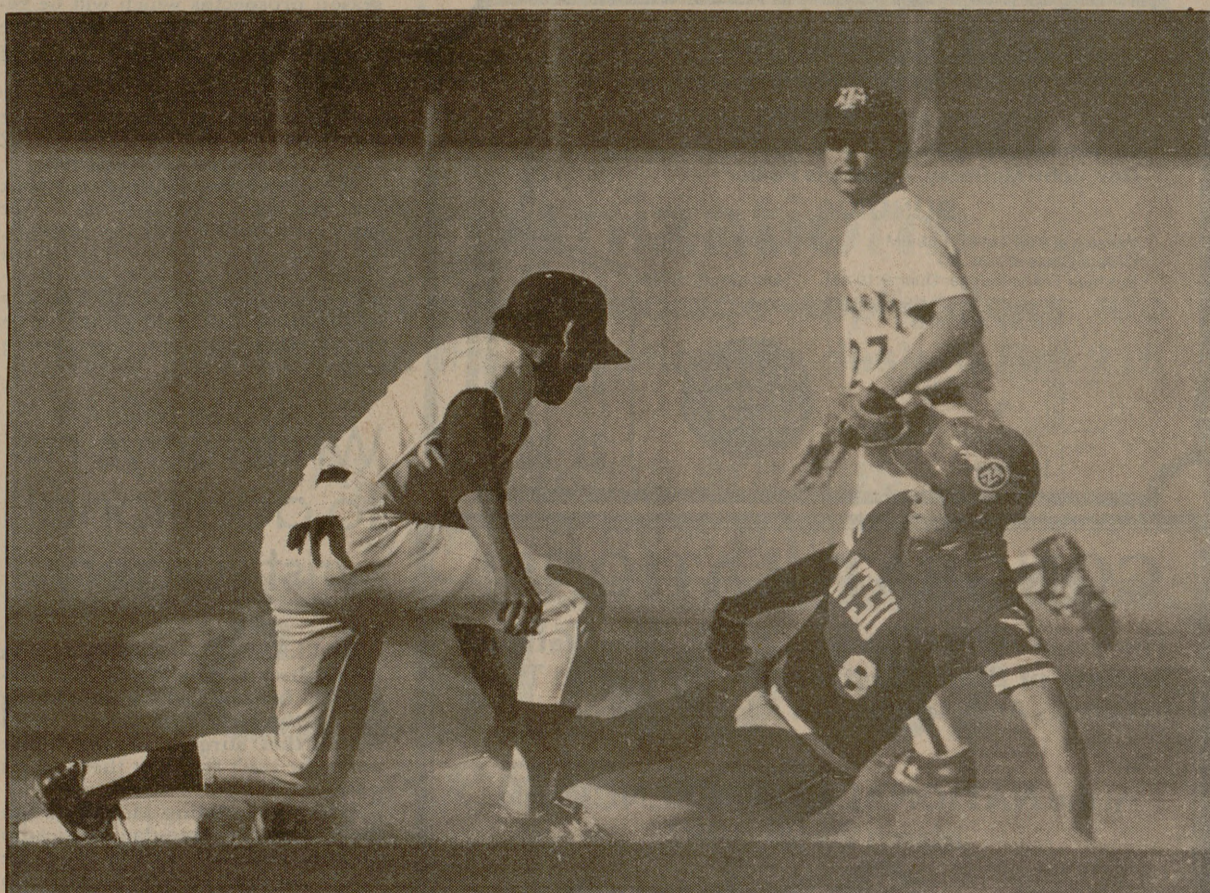


Photo by Bill Hughes

Texas A&M's shortstop Ever Magallanes tags out North Texas State's Jesse Ramon as he attempts

to steal second base. The Aggies finished a sweep of the Eagles by winning the final game 9-5.

second, but it allowed Magallanes to break the tie.

Then with two outs, McWilliam tripled to score Knoblauch, and Taylor brought him home with a double to the left-center field gap. First baseman Jim Neumann followed with another double to score Taylor.

In the seventh, NTSU's Keith Cullum singled and moved to second on a ground out. Third baseman Jesse Ramon singled to move Cullum to third, and a Magallanes throwing error allowed Cullum to score.

However, the Aggies followed with offense of their own. With two outs, Byington's home run brought home designated hitter Livingstone, who had singled, and the score was 7-3 Aggies.

After two A&M errors allowed another Eagle run in the top half of the eighth, McWilliam doubled and Taylor was struck by a pitch. Neumann bunted the runners along, and right fielder Don Wren's single brought both home.

Eagle DH Danny Sugess

walked, and Ramon homered to open the ninth, but Wernig settled down and retired the next three batters for the save.

Johnson said he was very pleased with his team's effort. He said the series, coupled with the three-game sweep of Texas Tech last weekend, will provide some much-needed momentum as the Aggies enter an important home-stand against Baylor this weekend. The first game will be at 7 p.m. Friday, and a doubleheader will start at 2 p.m. Saturday.

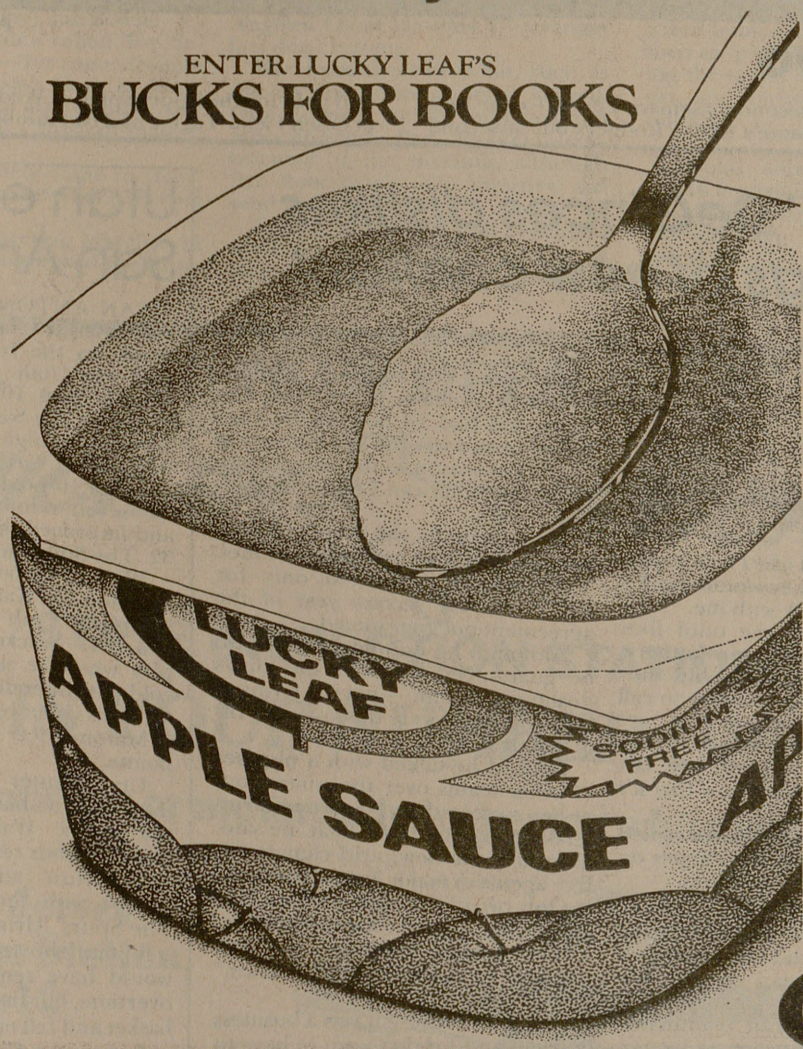
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