

Sports

Ags tame Bears in weekend sweep A&M back in SWC title chase with 6-3 record

By Homer Jacobs
Sports Editor

Appropriately, a stuffed bear dangled in a noose from the top tier of Olsen Field Saturday as the Texas A&M baseball continued its firm grasp of the Baylor Bears with a three-game sweep of the 11th-ranked team from Waco.

But the effigy easily could have been the Aggies, whose hopes of a 1987 Southwest Conference title were hanging by a thread in the first game of the series.

A&M faced a five-run deficit in the bottom of the eighth inning Friday night but rallied to defeat Baylor 12-11. Saturday's double-header was a different story as the Aggies pounded the Bears in both games, 13-5 and 7-2.

The Aggies have taken the last 12 games from the Bears and have improved their record to 33-12-1; but more importantly, A&M boasts a 6-3 SWC mark and finds itself in third place behind Arkansas (8-1) and Texas (8-1).

Why is it that Baylor continuously finds itself on the losing end when the Bears (29-9, 3-6) play the Aggies?

"They just got our number," Baylor Coach Mickey Sullivan said.

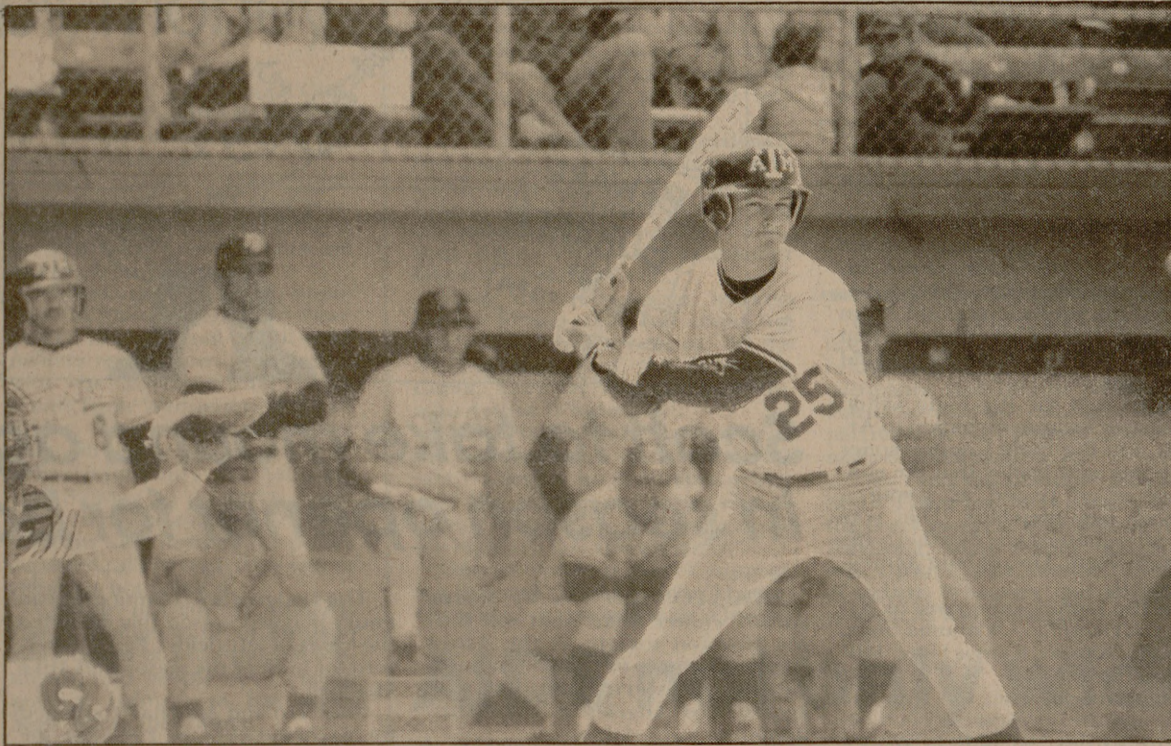
A&M had just about all the numbers for the weekend as Aggie hitters amassed 41 hits and 32 runs against a pitching staff with a combined earned run average of 2.93.

"We just play well against Baylor," A&M Coach Mark Johnson said. "Baseball's a crazy game."

Johnson said the successful series has shed a whole new light on the conference race.

"This gives us a chance to go for No. 1," he said. "We're legitimate contenders now."

A&M looked legitimate on the mound and at the plate in Saturday's twin bill, especially with the pitching of Gary Geiger, 7-2, and the hitting of designated hitter Scott Livingstone.



Texas A&M first baseman Jim Neumann waits for a pitch in Saturday's first game of a double-

header with the Baylor Bears. The Aggies swept the Bears to up its conference record to 6-3.

Photo by Phelan M. Ebenhack

Geiger went all nine innings in Saturday's second game, scattering nine hits. Livingstone, who went 5-for-6 in Friday's game, blasted a two-run triple in the first affair Saturday and added two more hits in the second game.

The junior, who is not playing his usual third base position because of a shoulder injury, also went through the cycle Friday night with a single, double, triple and home run.

"He's a better hitter than I've seen in a long time," Sullivan said. "He put on a clinic this weekend

as far as we're concerned."

In the first game of the double-header, A&M was never really threatened as the Aggies jumped out to a 4-0 lead in the second inning behind Livingstone's triple. And in the fifth inning, A&M blasted Baylor for nine runs with first baseman Jim Neumann leading the charge with a two-run double.

A&M pitcher Sean Snedeker picked up his fifth win of the year as he went into the top of the seventh inning before giving up the mound to reliever Ed Perez.

Whereas the first game was a

hitting clinic by Aggie batters, the second game was more of a Geiger counter. The senior showed control and consistency throughout most of the game, except during a brief Baylor rally in the seventh.

"Gary Geiger really stood out to me today," Johnson said, "because he had the same stuff in the ninth inning as he had in the first."

The Aggies will host Sam Houston State Tuesday at Olsen Field beginning at 7 p.m., and then will take on Rice in Houston this weekend.

Brock gets 300th win as A&M splits twin bill

By Loyd Brumfield
Assistant Sports Editor

The Texas A&M softball team played near-perfect softball in one game, then let the other one slip away in splitting a double-header with Utah State Saturday at the Penberthy Intramural Complex.

The Lady Aggies, now 33-6 overall, took the first game 2-0, giving A&M Coach Bob Brock his 300th win as A&M coach, while Utah State nudged A&M 2-1 in extra innings to take the second game.

A&M only managed five hits in the first game, but it didn't even need that many, as pinch runner Zina Ochoa scored on a sacrifice fly by pitcher Shawn Andaya in the second inning to provide the winning margin.

The Lady Aggies got an insurance run in the third when right fielder Tory Parks scored on a balk by Utah State pitcher Kristie Skoglund.

Andaya pitched a one-hitter in improving her record to 21-3 for the year. She finished the game with six strikeouts and one walk.

In the second game, A&M looked like it would continue shutting down Utah State until the seventh inning; Utah State then battled back to tie the game and send it into extra innings.

After two Utah State hits in the top of the first inning, A&M bounced back with four consecutive singles and one run in the bottom half of the inning.

Third baseman Judy Trussell got things started for the Lady Aggies by slicing a single into center field, and shortstop Liz Mizera followed with an infield single to Skoglund, who played shortstop in the second game.

Catcher Erika Eriksson lined the third single into left field, and Andaya hit another infield single to Skoglund to knock home Trussell and provide A&M with its only run of the game.

The Lady Aggies got another hit in the fourth, when Parks lined a single to left field, but lead-off hitter Julie Smith popped up to left field to end the inning.

Eriksson lined a single off the



Bob Brock

base bag in the fifth, and left fielder Ochoa provided A&M with its final hit of the game, yet another infield single off Skoglund in the sixth.

Errors by the Lady Aggie defense and two Andaya walks allowed Utah State to load the bases in the top of the seventh, and left fielder Shannon Blackburn hit a single into right field to bring home center fielder Rainey Miller for the tying run.

After a scoreless eighth inning, Miller scored the winning run for Utah State after Skoglund knocked her in by reaching base on another Lady Aggie error.

Brock, whose record is 300-69 at A&M, said he blamed the loss in the second game on the coaching.

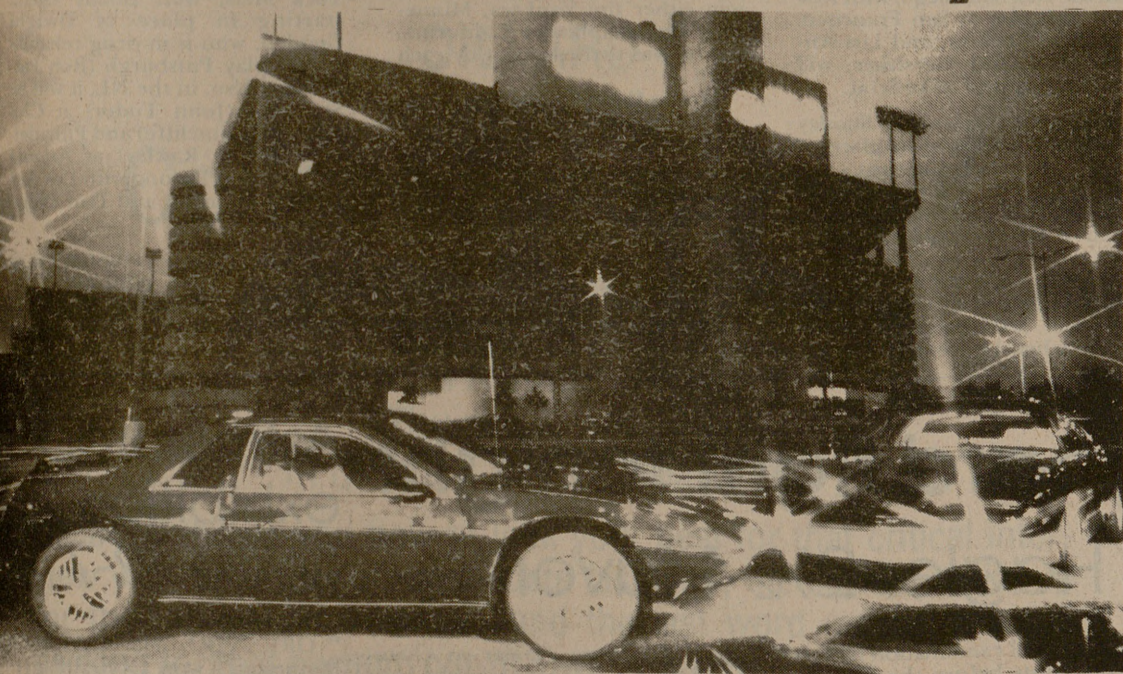
"The coaches did not have them prepared to play today," Brock said. "You can't blame the girls for that. We aren't prepared to play at home. I'd say that shows a pretty sorry job of coaching."

Andaya again pitched well for A&M, giving up eight hits while striking out nine and walking three, and Eriksson had a good day hitting for the Lady Aggies, going 4-of-6 in both games combined.

"Erika was really into the games today," Brock said. "She hit well, and she did a good job of catching."

"We did some good things (in the second game), so its not like we rolled over and died, but we'll never be No. 1 in our region again."

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