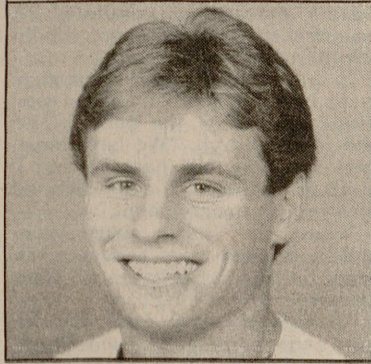


Sports

Livingstone back for 4th year at A&M Olympian shuns pros in favor of school, Aggies

By Tammy Hedgpeh
Sports Writer



Scott Livingstone

When the 1987 Texas A&M baseball season ended, Aggie third baseman Scott Livingstone evidently was not ready to stop playing ball. He not only was drafted by the Oakland Athletics but also was chosen to represent the United States in the Pan American Games.

With the United States capturing the silver medal by finishing second behind Cuba, Livingstone is on his way to the 1988 Summer Olympics and a long career in baseball.

"The main goal (as a team) was to qualify for the Olympics," said Livingstone, 22 and a senior agricultural economics major from Dallas.

And we did. Of course I wanted the gold medal, but the Cubans were supposed to win and they did. But they're so much more experienced."

Only the top two teams at the Pan Am Games qualify for the 1988 Summer Olympics in Seoul, South Korea.

"If Cuba came in first, we had to come in second," Livingstone explained. "If they would have lost, we would have had to come in first. They get an automatic bid because they're Cuba and they're the number one team in the world. We had to play well."

"Basically the Pan American Games is a warmup for competition and a chance for teams to qualify for the Olympics. They have them the summer before the Olympics."

The team is chosen by the Pan American baseball coaches.

"They usually know from the coaches around the country who the good players are," Livingstone said of his selection. "There are regional directors who call coaches around the region to find the good players. They pool all of those together and pick from there. Luckily my name was one of the ones to come up."

"When they told me I was picked, I was tickled to death. I wanted to go."

During the Pan American Games Livingstone hit for the cycle against Canada and knocked in five of the seven runs scored by the U.S. squad to boost the team into the gold medal game against Cuba. He batted .345 during the summer and tied the team lead in doubles with 11.

For Livingstone, playing baseball also meant leaving the Dallas home front.

"We travelled the East Coast mainly," Livingstone said. "We stayed in North Carolina, Indiana,

Tennessee and Florida one time. It wasn't a bad trip.

"The only time we went out of the country was to Cuba. That was an experience in itself. It was very scary. That's where I lost all of my weight. I got food poisoning and I spent my birthday in the hospital. It was a good birthday."

Livingstone was right at home playing his usual position — third base.

"We played a 86-game schedule," he explained. "I played third base on about 30 of them."

He continued his baseball career at A&M from Lake Highlands High School where he earned All-State honors his junior and senior years and All-America honors in 1984.

But that was not enough for Livingstone. He came to Texas A&M where he was named All-Southwest Conference his freshman year by leading the SWC with eight home runs, setting a school record. He stayed on the "honor roll" by being selected to the NCAA South II Regional All-Tournament team in 1986.

Are you thinking big league material?

Livingstone was drafted on three occasions — 1984 by the Toronto Blue Jays, 1986 by the New York Yankees and 1987 by the Oakland Athletics. After playing three years of Aggie baseball, he weighed the advantages and disadvantages. The disadvantages were heavier.

"I have completed discussions with Oakland and have decided to return to Texas A&M for my senior year," Livingstone said. "Oakland has been very fair to me and I appreciate their professional manner and interest."

"I respect their final position, but believe their proposal is not sufficient for me to forego the educational and athletic opportunities available to me at A&M."

Aggies should be relieved that Livingstone is returning for his senior year. A&M Coach Mark Johnson is.

"Obviously, we are extremely pleased and excited about Scott's return for his senior year," Johnson said. "We will no doubt be a better team with Scott Livingstone."

"The experiences he has already achieved not only at Texas A&M, but in playing in the tough Alaskan League, and then representing our country on the USA team this summer, certainly have enhanced his overall development, not only as a baseball player, but as a student and person as well. We're pleased he's here."

Livingstone is not the only Aggie in his family. His older brother, Bill, and his sister-in-law are A&M graduates. Bill tried out for the A&M baseball team but was not as lucky as Scott.

"It has been my goal for many years to play professional baseball," Livingstone said, "and I plan to begin that career in June of 1988. For the 1987-88 school year, I am committed to Coach Johnson, my teammates and Texas A&M, and will work hard to contribute to the baseball program and the University."

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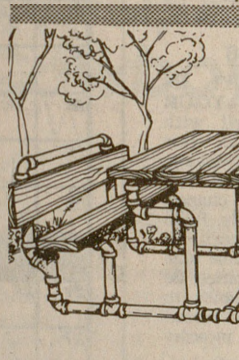
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A&M drops conference opener in 5

The Texas A&M Lady Aggies lost a heartbreaker to Rice on the road 12-15, 15-12, 15-13, 7-15, 15-13; opening the conference season on a bittersweet note.

A&M fell to 5-12 on the season and 0-1 in conference. The Owls are now 14-2 and 1-0.

Lady Aggie Coach Al Givens said, "This one was a tough one to lose. If each game had only gone to 13 points, we would have won in four (games)."

"I was pleased with parts of the match," he said. "We came back strong in the fourth game, but we let it slip away in the fifth."

"Rice is a good team. They had their whole starting lineup returning, and even as good as we were last year, we lost at home in five."

"We'll rebound from this loss." Vivian Viera led the attack for A&M. She had a career-high 27 kills (also a season-high for the team) out of 49 attempts.

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