

Sports

Lady Ags collapse in late games to drop 2nd conference match

By Anthony Wilson
Sports Writer

The Texas A&M volleyball team watched its leads over the University of Houston Lady Cougars mysteriously vanish in the third and fourth games of a four-game match Wednesday night in G. Rollie White Coliseum.

As a result the Lady Aggies lost the match 15-10, 5-15, 15-12, 15-13. The loss lowered A&M's season record to 9-13 and their conference record to 0-2.

Sophomore middle blocker Kelli Kellen led the A&M attack with 13 kills in 27 attempts for a 47.8 percent. Junior outside attacker Vivian Viera added 12 kills out of 31 attempts for a 38.7 percent. Sophomore setter Yvonne Van Brandt led the team in assists with 45 out of 126 attempts for a .357 percentage.

Kellen and Van Brandt also led the Lady Aggies' defensive charge. Kellen blocked five shots, while Van Brandt chipped in 20 digs.

"I think we played well," A&M Coach Al Givens said. "In critical points in the match, we made mistakes."

"We probably had 15-16 service errors in that four-game match," Givens added. "You can't do that and win a lot of matches."

Givens pointed out that A&M's lack of ability to maintain a lead was a key factor in the outcome of the match.

"We should have had the third game, and it should have been over in four in our favor," he said. "Both times we got to 12 first and weren't able to sustain it. I think that's been real typical of the way we've been playing. We'll get to 12 or 13 first and not have the knockout punch to finish."

"I think a part of it's pressure. I'm not sure exactly what it is."

Outside attacker Michelle

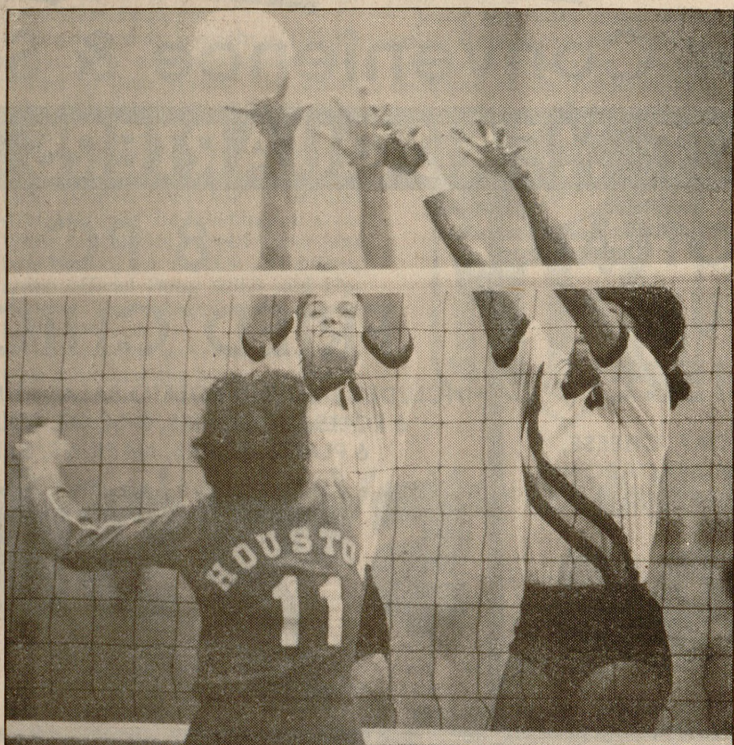


Photo by Robert Rizzo

A&M's Kelli Kellen and Vivian Viera block a kill by Houston's Lori Blok during Wednesday's match. Houston won the match in four games. The Lady Aggies face San Diego State here tonight.

Whitwell said, "I don't think it was a matter of being nervous. I think that our execution just wasn't on target. We were making good efforts. Things just weren't always going our way."

Viera agreed that mistakes and a change in momentum were the determining factors in the loss.

"I think the team that makes the least amount of mistakes at the crucial time is going to win," Viera said. "I think that at a certain point of the game, we don't

stop playing but things just sort of cool down."

"This definitely puts us between a rock and a hard space," Givens said of the loss. "We have to come back and win the rest of our conference matches to have an opportunity to challenge for the conference championship."

A&M will face San Diego State University tonight at 7:30. The Aztecs have been ranked in the Top 20 until this week in two polls.

Giants even NL series at 1-1 behind Dravecky, 2 homers

ST. LOUIS (AP) — Dave Dravecky pitched a two-hitter and Will Clark and Jeffrey Leonard homered Wednesday as the San Francisco Giants turned on the power and shut off the St. Louis Cardinals 5-0, evening the National League playoffs at one victory each.

Dravecky did not allow a runner past second base and did not give up a hit after Tommy Herr's single in the fourth. Jim Lindeman singled in the second for the Cardinals' other hit.

Dravecky managed to avoid trouble despite leadoff walks in four innings. Those were his only walks and he struck out six.

This best-of-seven series, which had been billed as a power-versus-speed matchup, moves to Candlestick Park for the next three games. Atlee Hammaker is scheduled to

pitch for the Giants in Game 3 Friday night with either Danny Cox, who missed the opener with a stiff neck, or Joe Magrane going for St. Louis.

The Giants, who outhomered St. Louis 205-94 during the regular season, seized control on Clark's two-run homer in the second against John Tudor. Clark almost lost the home run when he came within a stride of passing Candy Maldonado on the bases.

Leonard homered to straightaway center field opening the fourth for the second straight day. Leonard, with a \$50,000 bonus clause in his contract for being the Most Valuable Player in the playoffs, also had two singles and is 5-for-8 in the series.

Gold Glove shortstop Ozzie Smith let Jose Uribe's bases-loaded grounder go through his legs with

two outs in the eighth. The two-run error put the game out of reach.

The Giants again throttled St. Louis' speed with a brilliant pitch-out. Tony Pena was at first with no outs in the third and Tudor batting in a sacrifice situation. But Dravecky pitched out on an 0-1 count with Pena running, and catcher Bob Melvin caught him stealing.

San Francisco led the major leagues in throwing out would-be base stealers, and its only pitchout Tuesday night in a 5-3 loss caught Vince Coleman. The Cardinals, the fastest team in baseball, stole 248 bases this season but are 0-for-2 against the Giants.

A crowd of 55,331, matching the record attendance set for the playoff opener, was taken out of the game early.

Baylor's single in 8th inning lifts Twins to win over Tigers

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — Don Baylor singled to break an eighth-inning tie and Gary Gaetti homered in his first two playoff at-bats as the Minnesota Twins drew on both youth and experience to beat the Detroit Tigers 8-5 Wednesday night in the opening game of the American League playoffs.

The victory was the first ever in a playoff series for the Twins, who were swept by Baltimore in their only two appearances in 1969 and 1970.

Game 2 will be at the Metrodome Thursday night with Detroit's Jack Morris, 18-11, facing Bert Blyleven, 15-12.

The Twins scored four runs in the eighth inning, erasing a 5-4 Detroit lead and chasing Tigers' starter

Doyle Alexander, whose postseason miseries continued.

One run already had scored in the eighth when the 37-year-old Baylor came to bat against reliever Willie Hernandez with the bases loaded and one out. Baylor, one of only five Twins with postseason experience, lined a single to left for the run that put the Twins ahead to stay and made a winner of reliever Jeff Reardon, who had replaced starter Frank Viola in the top of the inning.

Gaetti hit solo homers in the second and in Minnesota's three-run fifth, becoming the first player ever to hit homers in his first two AL playoff at-bats.

Alexander came into the game

with a 9-0 regular-season record with Detroit, but in one previous World Series and two playoffs he was 0-3 with a 7.65 ERA.

Dan Gladden started the Minnesota eighth with a single. One out later Kirby Puckett doubled to left scoring Gladden and chasing Alexander. Mike Henneman relieved Alexander and walked Kent Hrbek intentionally. Henneman followed with a walk to Gaetti and that brought on Hernandez.

Baylor, hitting for Randy Bush, singled for the tie-breaking run and Tom Brunansky followed with a double to left to score two more runs. Baylor was thrown out at the plate by shortstop Alan Trammell as he also tried to score on the hit.

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