

Sports

Ags open season with sweep of LCU

By Anthony Wilson
Sports Writer

The Texas A&M baseball team opened the season at Olsen Field in grandiose style, outscooring Lubbock Christian University 4-3 in a three-game sweep this weekend. A&M won Friday's contest 12-0 behind some timely hitting and the pitching of Snedeker and Jeff Jones. After pitching out of a first inning bind, Snedeker took control, giving up two hits in six innings while striking out eight. Jones struck out one and allowed one hit in his three inning relief stint.

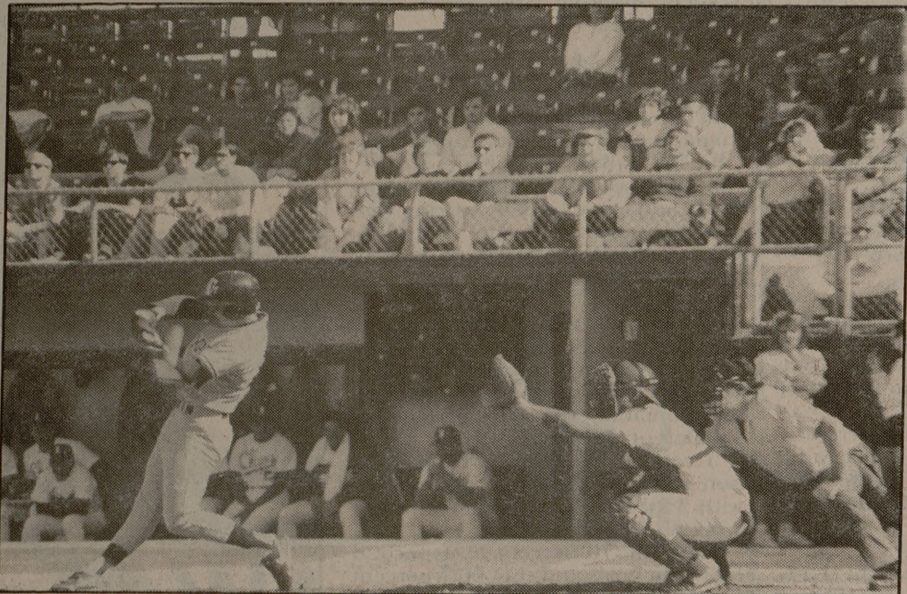


Photo by David Elmer

Texas A&M's Terry Taylor pops up a foul ball during one of Saturday's games against Lubbock Christian. A&M won both games.

A&M's Jim Neumann went 3-for-4, including a two-run homer, with three runs scored in and three runs scored. Tim McWilliam added three runs on a three-hit effort. Terry Taylor and Scott Livingstone added homers. A&M won handily again in the first game of Saturday's double-header, 10-2. After going up a run in the second, the Aggies called for six runs on five hits in the bottom half of the inning. Catcher Tom Carcione started the inning with a walk and advanced to third on McWilliam's double. Carcione then scored on a wild pitch. Mike Easley followed with a walk and was driven home with McWilliam by right fielder Deron Dacus' 380-foot homer. In the fourth inning, Livingstone hit a solo homer to the power alley in right-center field. The RBI moved Livingstone into a lead for first place with Mike Scanlin on A&M's career list with 170. Nick Felix allowed one run on two hits and struck out six while picking up the win. Kerry Freudenberg pitched the final inning for the save.

In the second game of the twinbill, A&M scored the winning run in the bottom of the ninth to clinch a 2-1 victory.

LCU threatened in the ninth inning when Kevin Short led off with a double to right field. But reliever Scott Centala retired the side on two strikeouts and a fly ball.

Neumann led off A&M's half of the in-

ning with a double off the base of the right field wall. Pinch runner Andy Duke moved to third on a passed ball and scored on pinch hitter John Byington's RBI fielder's choice.

Centala, 1-0, pitched two innings and struck out four. Starter Randy Pryor also pitched well, striking out seven and allowing three hits in seven innings.

"For our initial series, I was pleased with our hitting and defense," A&M Coach Mark Johnson said. "Our pitchers threw well. But we're going to have to do well with the breaking ball."

"We didn't consider them a pansy. We felt fortunate to sweep them."

Johnson was especially glad to see his team respond well to the second-game scare.

"The blowouts are good, but you don't see what you do under pressure. Close games build chemistry."

A&M's pitching staff is the only question mark on the team at this point, but Johnson was impressed with its play and particularly with Centala. Johnson didn't start the veteran so that he could give some of the younger players some experience.

"I just kind of got hungry waiting to throw," Centala said. "I made up my mind to do well. I got in a clutch ballgame and it was a lot to chew for the first time out."

"Until I understood the situation, I was disappointed. I'll stay in the pen all year long if he's (Johnson) willing to use me. I love the pen. I just want to get in the ballgame. It's not a matter of starting or relieving, but getting across the line."

Knoblauch said it was important for A&M to beat the Chaparrals to start gaining some momentum early in the season.

"We can't win the championship without winning these games to get into a groove for conference," Knoblauch said. "It helps out the team a lot."

A&M will play a double-header against Southwest Texas State Tuesday at 1 p.m. at Olsen Field.

Ags do me proud by looking tough in loss to Bears

I didn't say this after I watched them beat Southern Methodist and Arkansas. I didn't say this when they were 4-0 and in sole possession of first place in the Southwest Conference. But I'm going to say it now.

I was proud of the Aggies Saturday.

Sure they lost, but they played hard. They played well. They played without three key players.

They tried. And they weren't ashamed of their effort.

No players showed up in the interview room after A&M lost to Texas. With good cause — they smelled against Texas. But there was no avoiding the media Saturday.

Darryl McDonald sat there with blood splattered all over his shirt and shorts. Doug Dennis stood there with ice on his injured thumb.

And when Shelby Metcalf came in, the sportswriters waited for him to get a drink, afraid of how Metcalf would be taking the loss. No need. The coach was as proud as he could be of his team, and he didn't mind talking about their effort.

I was proud of D-Mack, even though he committed some stupid fouls that would end up getting him disqualified when the team needed him most.

I was proud of Chris Cokinos, even though he chose the worst situation in the world to place one of his rare missed free throws — when making it probably would have cinched the game.

I was proud of James McGhee, even though he took and missed some poor shots, and missed four out of five free throws.

I was proud of Dennis especially, even though his defense and rebounding position on Darryl Middleton broke down some in the second half.

Sure, there were plenty of reasons to say they lost a game they easily could have won.



Hal L. Hammons
Sports viewpoint

See Proud, page 13

Aggies lose to Baylor 74-73 in double overtime

By Hal L. Hammons
Assistant Sports Editor

All in all it was a pretty average Texas A&M-Baylor men's basketball game.

It had it all: two overtimes, brutal board work, high intensity and a nip-and-tuck score almost all of the game. And in the end Baylor avenged its 1-point loss earlier this year with a 74-73 heartstopper.

James McGhee's driving 15-footer at the buzzer would not fall, leaving a gutty series of A&M comebacks barely short.

A&M dropped to 5-5 in conference play, but eliminating any chance for the

Southwest Conference title. Baylor is also 5-5.

Chris Cokinos missed the front end of a one-and-one free-throw attempt that could have put the Aggies ahead by four with 28 seconds left in the second overtime. Baylor's Darryl Middleton rebounded a missed shot by Robert McLemore and put it in while being fouled with 7 seconds remaining. His free throw put Baylor ahead for the first time in the second extra period.

A controversial four-point swing late in the first overtime looked like it would kill the Aggies. Baylor's Michael Williams

caught a long inbounds pass and was fouled by Darryl Duncan while going up for a layup. The referee called an intentional foul despite Duncan's obvious swipe for the ball.

Williams hit both free throws, Baylor got the ball back, and Michael Hobbs hit two more. That gave the Bears a five-point lead with 24 seconds left.

McGhee hit a 22-foot three-pointer to pull to within two, but then he missed the first of two free throws that could have tied it.

He missed the second intentionally, and

A&M's Doug Dennis got the rebound and was fouled. His two free throws with 3 seconds left sent the game to the second overtime.

A&M trailed by six with 1:38 left in regulation, but Baylor hit only one of four free-throw attempts the rest of the period — including two front ends of one-and-ones — to allow the Aggies back in. Cokinos hit a three-pointer, and Darryl McDonald converted on a drive to pull to within two with 19 seconds left.

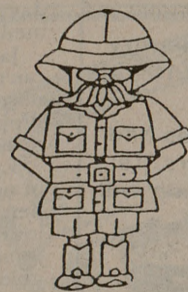
See Aggies, page 13

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