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Men netters upset No. 3 Mustangs

The Texas A&M men's tennis team took a big step toward a Southwest Conference championship Thursday as the Aggies knocked off third-ranked Southern Methodist 6-3 in Dallas.

The Aggies improved their record to 12-5 on the year, 2-1 in SWC play.

A&M Coach David Kent said he was pleased with the play of Craig Whitteker. Whitteker defeated Page Buck 7-5, 6-2 in No. 4 singles and teamed up with Dean Johnson in No. 2 doubles to beat Buck and Rich Harris of SMU 6-4, 7-6.

Brian Devening beat Johnson in No. 1 singles 7-5, 6-1; and Mark Kudelko defeated Shaun O'Donovan in No. 2, 7-5, 6-3.

But the lower matches turned it around for A&M. Steve Kennedy won 6-2, 4-6, 6-0 over Harris in the No. 3 slot; Mike Chambers beat Courtland Gray in No. 4 play 6-2, 6-3; and Wayne Green defeated Steve Beauchamp 6-3, 6-1 in No. 6 action.

O'Donovan and Kennedy lost to Devening and Kudelko in two tiebreakers in the No. 1 doubles match 7-6, 7-6; Chambers and Green won 6-4, 6-4 over Gray and Beauchamp in the No. 2 match.

The team travels to Fayetteville today to play the University of Arkansas. The Razorbacks are undefeated in conference play, but the Aggies beat them earlier this year.

Former Astro Thon happy in San Diego

HOUSTON (AP) — On April 8, 1984, Houston shortstop Dickie Thon stepped to the plate in the Astrodome and was struck in the head by a pitch, dimming an all-star career.

On Wednesday, San Diego reserve infielder Thon grounded out meekly to third base as an eighth-inning pinch hitter against his old teammates, bringing his career full circle.

"It was nothing unusual, I was just up there to try to get a hit and beat them," Thon said.

Thon shrugged off his return although he drew a loud ovation from the Astros fans who remembered Thon's struggle to regain his 1983 All-Star form after the beaming incident.

Thon's Astros career ended last season when he left the team and later returned to his home in Puerto Rico.

"The only problem I ever had with Thon was (former General Manager Dick) Wagner and he's not there any more, so I have no complaints with the Astros," Thon said.

"It was a tough situation for them and for me. They helped me a lot after I got injured."

Thon appeared ready to blossom

after the 1983 season, still his best season in the majors.

Thon hit .286 and led the league with 18 game-winning runs during in. He was named to the NL All-Star team.

Then, in the sixth game of the 1984 season, Thon was struck above the left eye by a pitch from the New York Mets' Mike Torrez.

He's never been the same player since.

"It's not 100 percent the way I used to be, but I feel I can still play in the major leagues," Thon said.

"How am I different than before? I'm not hitting .286 like I used to. But I feel good at the plate and in the field."

Thon considered retirement after being placed on the disqualified list by the Astros last July 3.

"I was thinking about not playing any more but I went home and rested and started working out," Thon said. "The Padres gave me the opportunity to play again and I'm going to take advantage of it."

Thon hit .211 in 38 at-bats for the Padres in spring training and hopes to improve as the season progresses.

"I never thought I'd be playing for another team, but now I am and that's just part of life," he said.

Workers start to install lights at Wrigley Field

CHICAGO (AP) — There was no thunder, no lightning, no wailing. They didn't pave over paradise, but they did begin installing lights Thursday at venerable Wrigley Field.

"It's about time," said Bud Hora, who figures he's spent 65 of his 75 years rooting for baseball's lightless, lovable losers.

More than five decades after the Cincinnati Reds played the first major league game under the lights of now-defunct Crosley Field, and 40 years after the Detroit Tigers became the last team to join baseball's fraternity of the illuminated, the Chicago Cubs are taking a swing at progress' best pitch.

"I grew up around Forbes Field (in Pittsburgh) and I can remember when they tore that down," said Don Gresenko, the club's executive vice president and the point man in the pitched battles between the Tribune Co., owner of the team, and neighborhood groups.

"Obviously there is something unique about day baseball, and I can understand that something will be lost," he added.

"But we intend to remain a predominantly day baseball team . . .

and when we added up our responsibilities to baseball, the city, the community, we felt the most important thing was to retain Wrigley Field for the long term. Lights will enable us to do that."

A helicopter arrived at 8 a.m., and began the first of two dozen short trips alongside the left-field wall, pulling white steel girders to a crew of workers on the upper-deck roof.

Cars stopped, pedestrians gawked, and more than one neighbor ran back to grab a camera.

"It is an event, I suppose," Gresenko said, "but we didn't want it to turn into one. That's why we didn't give any advance warning."

The Cubs have not set a date for completion of the job, and the date for the first of six night games this season is still up in the air. The City Council vote last month that paved the way for the lights also limited the team to 18 lighted regular-season contests each season.

"I say, 'Hooray,'" said 80-year-old John Santos. "But then I don't live in the neighborhood."

However, the ballclub insists it will remain a good neighbor, accommodating the community even in the design and position of the light.

Course is master in Masters play

AUGUSTA, Ga. (AP) — The master on this day was Augusta National Golf Club.

In weather more suited for the British Open than for the Masters and on greens as slick as a con man's hustle, the world's best golfers proved no match for the world's most famous golf course.

Wind gusting to 30 mph made club selection a dangerous guessing game and dried out greens already fabled for their slickness.

The result was that the man posting the numbers on the scoreboard in Thursday's opening round was scrambling to find the 5s and the 6s.

"We've had wind like this before," said Billy Casper, the 1970 Masters champ, "but never with greens this fast."

Casper, who shot 80, qualifies as

something of an expert on Augusta. This is his 32nd Masters.

Steve Jones had never played in the Masters before. But his 74 stayed at the top of the leader board well into the afternoon and was passed by only a handful of golfers.

"It could have been worse," Jones said of the greens and the winds. "But that's only because it could always be worse."

"These greens were like glass. The ball would start rolling before you hit it. A couple of times the wind moved my ball while I was over it."

Two of Jones' three bogeys came by way of three-putt greens. He should be happy.

Mark O'Meara was 2-under par after 14 holes then bogeyed 15 and tripled bogeyed 16 with the help of a four-putt green.

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