

# Sports

## Pro basketball is dead at the south end of I-45

Enough is enough. I've seen enough of the sputtering, limping Houston Rockets and a change is necessary.

The latest debacle: a 122-105 spanking Sunday by the Los Angeles Clippers, the worst team in the NBA.

Everyone's entitled to a few sloppy games, but the Rockets have had a few too many. Sunday's loss marked the second time Houston has lost to Los Angeles. The Rockets are also the only team with a winning record that the Clippers have beaten twice.



**Loyd Brumfield**  
Sports viewpoint

Nobody's naming Los Angeles on any "Powerhouses of the Future" lists, either. The Rockets, once feared by all, are now laughed at by all, including the Clippers. Other teams that have had the opportunity to laugh at Houston more than once are Sacramento and San Antonio. The Kings are wallowing in ineptitude much like the Clippers, but they looked like the Lakers in a 121-108 win over the Rockets a month ago.

The Spurs, however, are on their way up and will be a team to be reckoned with in the near future.

The Rockets got another chance to beat San Antonio Tuesday, but the game was in HemisFair Arena in San Antonio and naturally, Houston lost.

The Rockets should enjoy chances like these to beat up on the Spurs because it won't be long until the two teams are equal.

The Rockets arguably are the most talented team in the NBA. Houston's bench alone should be enough to put most teams under.

But the Rockets, playing with the best four-man lineup in the league (sorry, Jim Peterson), play like a sports version of Jekyll and Hyde: up one game, down the next.

Case in point: Saturday, the Rockets finally found a way to cage Seattle's Tom Chambers and beat the Sonics on the road. In these situations, Chambers usually plays like the Rockets said some nasty things about his mother, getting 40-45 points a game against them.

This time it was different, though. Coach Bill Fitch put Akeem Olajuwon on him and held Chambers to 16 points, 14 in the first half.

So Houston looked in good shape to trounce the Clippers the next night. After all, the Rockets had already lost once to Los Angeles on the coast, so why risk another, right?

Well, the Rockets' tradition of playing comatose against inferior

teams lived on, and the rout was on.

So what's the problem? Is it Fitch? Could be. Olajuwon has complained that his half-court coaching style has made the other players nothing better than automatons.

Some have said that Houston guards look confused bringing the ball up the court and look to Fitch for guidance. That won't do with the vaunted Clipper press staring you in the face.

There has been a lot in print about the Rockets' supposed selfishness. Even Olajuwon has said alleged point guard Sleepy Floyd is looking to score, not set up the offense.

Certainly a proven coach like Larry Brown could find a way to mesh the Rockets into the ultimate weapon, but what if the problem isn't coaching? What if it's a lack of heart?

Regretfully, the Rockets will play out this season and embarrass themselves in the first round of the playoffs, probably against red-hot Portland the way the standings are shaping up.

The Rockets' best chance to devastate the NBA is now before before up-and-coming teams like New York, Seattle and Cleveland catch up with them.

For now, Houston fans will have to grin and bear it when the Lakers, supposedly on the decline, beat them by their allotted double-digit figure again.

Even worse, Houston fans will have to grin and bear it when the Clippers do the same.

## Home runs help Aggs sweep Stephen F. Austin 8-1, 9-3



Photo by Sam Myers

Texas A&M first baseman Jim Neumann (25) tags out Stephen F. Austin's Brian Townsend during the first game of a doubleheader Tuesday at Olsen Field. A&M won both games to improve to 38-8 on the year.

**By Loyd Brumfield**  
Sports Editor

The Texas A&M baseball team got a break from Southwest Conference action by demolishing Stephen F. Austin in a doubleheader Tuesday at Olsen Field.

The Aggies improved to 38-8 on the year and face Rice in a three-game SWC series this weekend at Olsen. SFA fell to 10-19 with the loss.

A&M took the first game 8-1 largely thanks to a three-run home run by catcher Tom Carcione in the first inning. It was his ninth homer of the season.

The Aggies also added a pair of runs in the second inning.

Nick Felix was the winner in the opener, improving to 7-4 on the year. Randy Davis, 1-3, took the loss for the Lumberkacks.

A&M got off to a quick start in the second game as well, winning it 9-3.

Designated Hitter John Byington slammed his 13th homer of the season over the right-field wall during the first inning and brought two runs home.

SFA got two runs of its own in the second, and took a 3-2 lead in the third when Blake Boydston hit a single to drive in Mike Teal.

The Aggies reclaimed the lead in the fifth when second baseman Terry Taylor hit a two-run homer to give A&M a 4-3 lead.

A&M added four runs in the sixth inning, which was highlighted by a triple by Andy Duke.

The Aggies finished off their scoring in the eighth inning when Deron Dacus hit a two-out triple and catcher Maury Martin singled into centerfield to bring him home.

Dacus was making his first appearance after being hit by a pitch against North Texas State two weeks ago.

## A&M climbs to fifth in ESPN baseball poll

**From Staff and Wire Reports**  
It's getting to be like a broken record. For the 10th straight week, Oklahoma State is the No. 1 team in the Collegiate Baseball-ESPN poll of college baseball teams.

Texas A&M, thanks to a three-game sweep of Baylor, moved up one notch to fifth.

A&M is still ranked third by Baseball America magazine.

Texas, 41-7, dropped from second to fourth.

Arkansas is the third Southwest Conference team in the poll, coming in at No. 24.

A&M shares the SWC lead with Texas at 8-1.

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