

Wednesday, March 8, 1989

## Lady Ags face UH in SWC tourney

By Doug Walker

SPORTS EDITOR

After an inspired effort against the Texas Lady Longhorns, Head Coach Lynn Hickey's Lady Aggie basketball team opens Southwest Conference Tournament play tonight at 8 p.m. against Houston at Moody Coliseum in Dallas.

A&M (16-11 overall; 8-8 in the SWC) plays the Lady Cougars (16-11; 9-7) in the second game of the first round. The tournament opens with a match-up between Tech (15-12; 9-7) and SMU (11-13; 7-9), which tips off at 6 p.m.

The fifth-seeded Lady Aggies join top-seeded and ninth-ranked Texas, sixth-seeded Southern Methodist, Arkansas (2nd), Texas Tech (3rd) and the Lady Cougars (4th) in making their sixth appearance at the SWC Post-Season Classic in seven years of the tournament.

The winners of Wednesday's games advance to the semifinals on Thursday night. If A&M wins its game with Houston, they will meet Texas Thursday at 8 p.m., after Arkansas meets the winner of the Tech-SMU game.

Hickey began the season with high hopes for her club but a late-

season slump dropped A&M from second to fifth in the SWC standings.

"This definitely is not the situation that we wanted to be in going into the tournament," Hickey said. "We didn't meet our goal of going into the tournament at a higher seed."

A&M defeated Houston in both meetings this season by almost identical margins. The Lady Aggies triumphed at G. Rollie White Coliseum on Jan. 24 by a 73-61 score and took the Lady Cougars 90-77 in Houston.

Hickey is concerned about playing Houston three times in one year.

"Facing Houston for the third time this season is a dangerous situation," she said. "I just hope our kids won't let down and that they'll go hard."

A&M looks to be on the upswing after the 78-70 loss to Texas last Saturday.

Hickey hopes the Lady Aggies are not overlooking Houston while hoping for another shot at Texas.

"We can't begin thinking about a rematch with Texas," she said. "We've got to worry about Houston first. I'm anxious to see how our players come back after Saturday's game against Texas."

## A&M sweeps HSU; Ags now 18-0

By Stan Golaboff

SPORTS WRITER

And the beat goes on.

Texas A&M, the nation's number one-ranked baseball team, continued playing to the winning beat by sweeping a doubleheader from the Hardin Simmons Cowboys, 6-4 and 5-1 Tuesday at Olsen Field.

A&M broke a school record for consecutive wins with the sweep. A&M has now won 18 games in a row to start the season. The old record was 16 wins set in 1976 and matched in 1984.

"I am real happy about the record," A&M Head Coach Mark Johnson said. "It's not something we are concerned about or planned on, but it's nice to have."

The Aggies scored four runs in the first inning on five hits.

They also took advantage of an error, a wild pitch and a passed ball as Hardin Simmons (3-13) seemed to be in awe of the number one-ranked Aggies.

A&M continued to hit the Cowboys hard in the second inning as they added two more runs on two hits.

Shortstop Chuck Knoblauch got the game-winning RBI when he doubled home second baseman Terry Taylor. A&M also benefited from another wild pitch by Cowboy

pitcher Rodney Kee (1-3), who got the loss.

Hardin Simmons made the game interesting by scoring three runs in the third as they roughed up winning pitcher Ronnie Allen (3-0) for five hits.

The damage might have been worse if right fielder Andy Duke didn't cut down Bill Stitt at the plate after playing the ball off the right-field fence.

Hardin Simmons added another run in the fourth when third baseman Tracy Taylor scored on a Jon Mize sacrifice fly.

A&M sophomore pitcher Steve Hughes came on in the sixth to record his fourth save of the season.

The second game was almost a repeat of the first.

A&M scored five runs on four hits in the first inning as they chased Cowboy starter and loser Scott Williams (0-1) from the game. A&M sent eight batters to the plate. Five of the first six batters reached safely.

The big blow in the inning came when Albright hit a three-run home run, his fourth blast of the year.

After the first inning, the game turned into a pitcher's duel as three Aggie pitchers combined for a three-hit game.

Freshman Sean Lawrence pitched a no-hitter through five innings as he faced only four batters over the minimum. Lawrence struck out seven and walked three.



Photo by Ronnie Montgomery

A&M's Chuck Knoblauch (15) gets set to tag HSU's Hunter Brewton (10) in the first game of A&M's sweep of HSU.

Hardin Simmons scored its only run in the ninth — due to some generosity by the Aggies.

Relief pitcher Scott Centala loaded the bases on two walks and a

hit before striking out two Cowboys. Then Centala walked his third batter of the inning to score J.J. Villareal for the Cowboys' only run. Mize struck out to end the game.

## No doubt about it. It's hard to find an equal to SWC baseball

With Spring Break just two days away (I don't count Friday as a school day, because I don't have classes.) I felt it was time to clear my sports desk for the holiday:

• Now that baseball season is upon us, the Southwest Conference can once again boast about its prowess.

This week, four of the nine SWC teams are ranked in the ESPN/Collegiate Baseball poll and four are ranked in Baseball America's top twenty-five.

Our very own Texas A&M Aggies (18-0) are number one in both polls. A&M is the only team, besides Washington State, that is undefeated. Maybe baseball should be king at A&M and not football. Nah.



Stan Golaboff  
Sports Writer

The next SWC team to be ranked is defending SWC champion, the University

of Texas. Texas is ranked third in the ESPN poll and 12th in Baseball America. Texas is 13-5, but they have been playing teams like Miami and Arizona State. Both are nationally ranked.

Perennial national and SWC power Arkansas is ranked 18th in the ESPN poll and 23rd in Baseball America.

A surprise contender in the SWC elite is Houston. Houston (15-1) won its first 13 games and is ranked 20th in the ESPN poll and 21st in Baseball America.

These are not the only good teams in the SWC. Every team is at least three games over .500 and no team has lost 10 games. In fact, the SWC is 92-28 for a .766 percentage

against non-conference teams.

The SWC may be probation-scarred in football and less talented in basketball, but it owns baseball.

• Don't get me wrong about the basketball talent in the SWC, but it just can't compete with the Big Eight or the ACC. On the men's side, Arkansas is just breaking into the top twenty at 21-6. The only other twenty game winner in the SWC is Texas, and A&M, a team embarrassed by national powers UNLV and Oklahoma, whipped them in the season finale.

On the women's side, Texas is a dominant national power on a downswing. Texas is 7-4 against non-SWC teams this

year and it is doubtful if they will make it to the final four.

• Along those lines, I must comment on the Texas-Texas A&M women's game last Saturday. Although the Aggies only made up half of the 2,591 crowd, they out-yelled the teasips.

I knew the Lady Aggies could play even with Texas and they showed it to everyone Saturday. I also knew that Aggies wouldn't let teasips out do them. Maybe if the Lady Aggies can remember how they played Saturday while they are in Dallas, they might win the whole shooting match.

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