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Aggies continue Tech dominance

Robertson shines in two-hit shutout as Ags sweep series

By ALAN LEHMANN
Of The Battalion Staff

Pat Sweet was only one pitch away from a shutout Saturday afternoon when he gave up a home run to Texas Tech's Mike Adams.

In fact, when Sweet gave up that homer, Texas A&M was one pitch away from shutting out Tech for the whole three-game series in front of 3,989 at Olsen Field.

Adams' homer in the ninth inning of Saturday's nightcap was the only blemish on the Red Raider side of the scoreboard, as the Aggies won 3-1. A&M, now 28-7 and 3-0 in SWC play, took Friday's game 11-0 and Saturday's opener 9-0.

The sweep extended the Aggies' winning streak to 10 games. A&M has now beaten Tech 21 games in a row, a streak that started in 1984.

"Starting off with the sweep gives us momentum going into the Baylor series next weekend," Sweet said.

Sweet went the distance and picked up the win, his first victory since Feb. 26 when he beat Northeast Louisiana. Still, Sweet said he hated losing the shutout.

"I was disappointed to miss the shutout," Sweet said. "But the pitch was one of my best pitches. (Adams) just turned on it."

Few of the Red Raiders — who dropped to 21-14 and 2-4 in conference play — were able to turn on the ball over the weekend, as they managed only two hits in each of the first two games, and had only eight hits in the finale.

The Aggie hitters showed their appreciation by bashing 27 hits in the series — with 10 hits in each of the first two games.

"It was important for us to start conference play like this," said third baseman Travis Williams. "The pitchers were outstanding. You can't ask for better pitching than they gave us."

Williams snapped out of a slump this weekend, going 4-for-10 and slamming the ball hard almost every time he came to the plate.

"I'd been hitting the ball hard and I just hadn't had any luck," Williams said. "I finally got a couple to drop in."

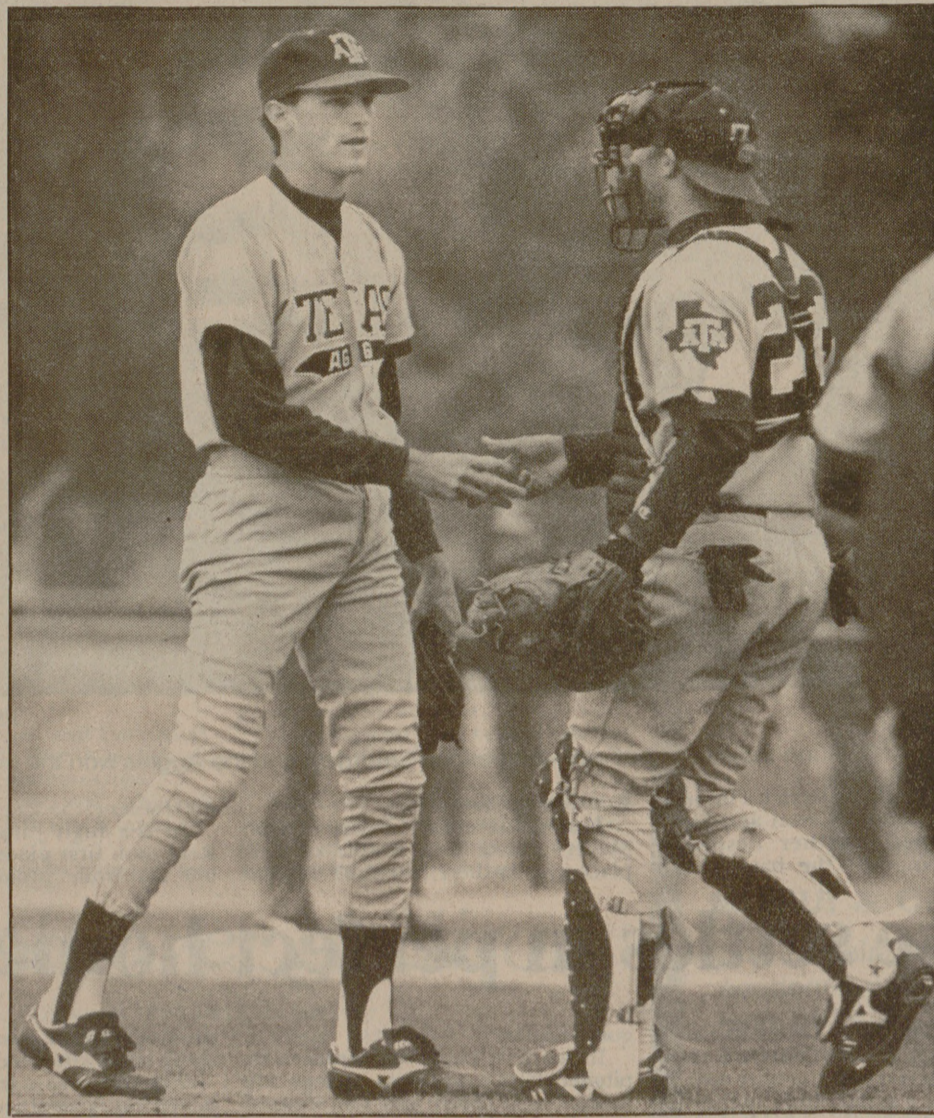


Photo by Jay Janner

A&M pitcher Rich Robertson is congratulated by catcher Blake Pyle after the junior's two-hit shutout over Texas Tech Saturday. A&M swept the series.

In the second inning of the nightcap, Trey Witte's double scored Blake Pyle from first base to put the Aggies on the board. Witte scored on Jason Marshall's ground-out to give Sweet a 2-0 lead.

It stayed that way until the eighth, when

freshman Brian Thomas' single brought home Marshall with an insurance run.

Sweet struck out six before giving up the homer to Adams, and finished the game without walking anyone.

Friday, the Red Raiders gave the Aggies

11 walks and allowed A&M to score five second-inning runs without hitting the ball out of the infield.

In that inning, Tech righthander Lucio Chadiez issued four free passes, hit a batter and fired two wild pitches.

Five runs was more than Ronnie Allen — now 5-1 — needed. He shut out Tech, allowing only two hits and walking four en route to a complete-game victory. Allen struck out nine batters, and only one Tech runner reached second base.

Still, the Aggie hitters insisted on scoring more. They added single runs in the third, fourth and fifth innings and capped the scoring with three runs in the eighth.

Witte and Pyle struck with back-to-back doubles for the third-inning run.

Witte led the team at the plate, going 1-for-1 and scoring three times. Williams was 2-for-4 with two runs batted in, and backup shortstop Sean Drinkwater was 1-for-1 with two RBI.

In Saturday's opener, lefthander Rich Robertson got off to a shaky start. Robertson gave up a leadoff double to Raider centerfielder Chris Moore, but got out of the jam with a pop out and a strikeout.

Robertson, now 6-0 on the season, didn't allow another hit until fourth inning, and gave up only two walks while striking out 10.

A&M threatened in both the first and second innings, but didn't score until the third. It was worth the wait, as the Aggies scored seven times on three hits, two walks and three Raider errors.

Thomas led off the inning with a bloop single to left and moved to second when Williams' bunt was bobbed by the first baseman. David Rollen followed with a line shot to the warning track in left-center field that was dropped by left fielder Danny Jordan.

Witte knocked in Thomas with a smashed single into rightfield. Chad Broussard drove in Williams with another shot to right, and Pyle walked to bring Rollen in.

Two outs later, center fielder Tim Holt walked to force Witte across with the fourth run. Thomas again hit a looper to left, and Jordan dropped it, allowing Broussard and Pyle to score.

The inning finally ended when Williams hit into a fielder's choice to third. Thomas was tagged out on the play, but not before Holt crossed the plate to give the Aggies a 7-0 lead.

A&M scored two more in the fifth, when Rollen doubled in Thomas and Williams. The Aggies, who outscored the Raiders 53-7 last season, edged Tech 23-1 this year.

All this salary talk is poppycock: I'm now on strike

I'm going on strike.

No more columns, no more stories, nothing remotely related to sports or The Battalion.

"What's this new strife on the Sports Desk?" you ask? I'm glad you brought it up.

I don't feel the management or Texas A&M appreciates me or my effort. I have to share a desk with two sports writers and numerous people from city desk.

I don't even have a nifty nameplate that says, "Clay Rasmussen — Assistant Sports Editor."

And then of course, there's the salary thing. I know I shouldn't complain. After all, hundreds of people would love to have this job. But do you know what the lifetime earning potential of a Battalion sports writer is?

It's not pretty.

So, I got this spiffy idea from watching professional athletes: Whine, complain and moan until management caves in. It seems to have worked for them.

The baseball player's union went on strike twice this decade — in 1981 and again in 1985. And professional football was brought to its knees after owners refused to cave in and brought in scabs to replace the strikers.

My list of demands

And so, here we are.

My demands are simple ones:

- My own desk with a bay-window (not to mention the nameplate).
- A jacuzzi located in the sports department.
- A personalized Bob Uecker mug and water cooler.
- A covered parking space in the back of Reed McDonald.
- A&M Athletic Director John David Crow (in a tuxedo) to be my personal valet.
- A guaranteed three-year contract with an extension option and an incentive package including performance bonuses and A&M football tickets on the 50-yard line for the rest of my tenure at the University.

That's not too much to ask, considering what some of the top players in baseball get paid.

Let's take a look at the Associated Press All-Star team of 1989. AP has compiled some of the biggest names in professional baseball and estimated the team's annual cost.

Made up of names like Roger Clemens, Kirby Puckett and Andre Dawson, the AP All-Star team would cost its owner roughly \$21,388,036 this year alone. That's up almost \$2 million from the 1988 team and \$6 million more than the best team in the league.

That means that the starting lineup would make an average of \$2,376,448.40 apiece each year.

Players sitting pretty

I can here the uproar already. And while I know that the average player doesn't make the top dollar that these stars make, they still aren't in any financial distress. The average salary in professional baseball last year was more than \$600,000.

How about the fact that a record 153 players will earn a million or more dollars this season, and 27 of those will top the \$2 million dollar mark?

And supporters of high salaries for professional athletes will counter that since an athlete's career is a short one, he needs the big bucks to carry him through life after his career is over.

Poppycock.

Texas Rangers' rightfielder Rubeen Sierra brought home a cool \$1,625,000 last year. If you think someone can't live on that type of salary, you need to spend a semester with a college student.

Hey Reuben, how about you and me switch places this year?

In comparison with baseball players, I don't think I'm asking for much. Some respect, a nicer office and a little more money (maybe even a bigger cut of the advertising revenues).

And somebody please tell Mr. Crow I don't like a lot of starch in my shorts.

Spotlight: NCAA Tournament

ON TO DENVER

UNLV leads talented pack of Final Four teams in 1990

Associated Press

UNLV, Georgia Tech, Duke, Arkansas: They are the Final Four.

"On to Denver," read a sign held up by UNLV's Moses Scurry as the Runnin' Rebels polished off Loyola Marymount 131-101, ending the Lions' emotional ride.

On Sunday, UNLV captured the West Regional at Oakland, Calif., and Georgia Tech was a 93-91 winner over Minnesota for the Southeast Regional title at New Orleans. Duke and Arkansas advanced on Saturday.

With Georgia Tech and Duke both winning, the Atlantic Coast Conference has two teams in the Final Four for the first time since 1981.

Arkansas' victory over Texas Saturday makes it the first Southwest Conference school since Houston in 1984 to advance to the Final Four. The SWC was assured of at least one school in the Final Four since Arkansas played Texas in the Midwest Regionals final.

That year, North Carolina and Virginia both advanced to the championships, with the Tar Heels losing the national title to Indiana.

Six times in the '80s there was more than one team from a conference in the Final Four, including 1985 when the Big East had three.

On Saturday, Duke beat Connecticut 79-78 in overtime to win the East Regional at East Rutherford, N.J., and Arkansas defeated Texas 88-85 for the Midwest Regional crown at Dallas.

Duke (28-8) meets Arkansas (30-4) and Georgia Tech (28-6) plays UNLV (33-5) in next Saturday's Final Four semifinals in Denver, with the national title to be settled next Monday night.

WEST

No. 3 UNLV 131, No. 21 Loyola 101
UNLV is going to the Final Four for the third time. Loyola Marymount goes home after losing on the court but winning its mission in the memory of fallen

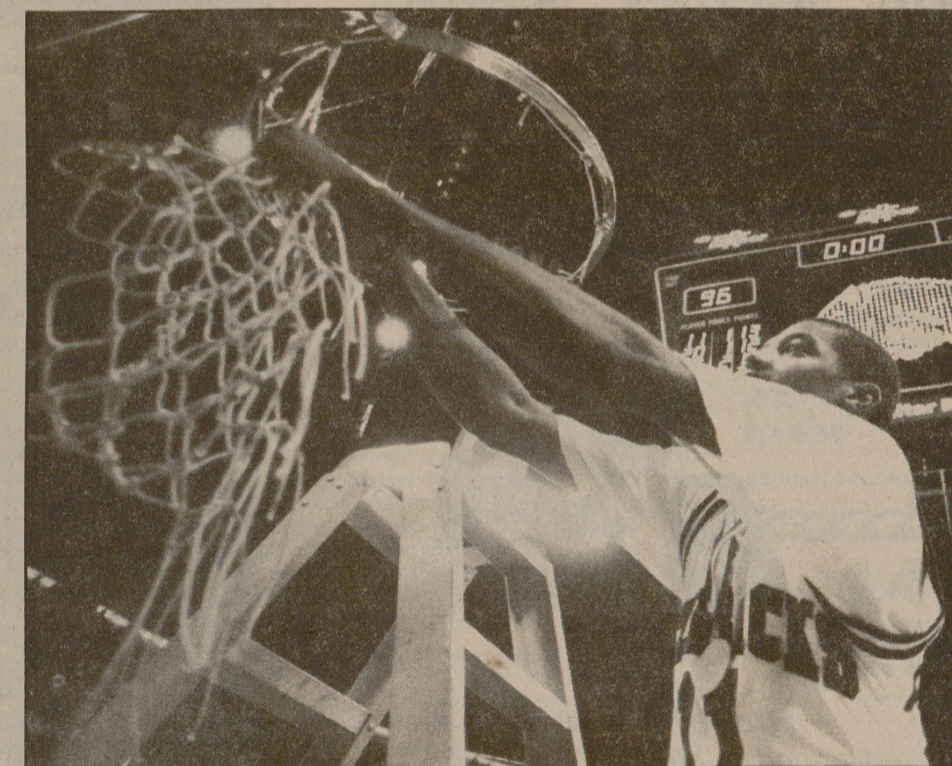


Photo by Phelan M. Ebenhack

Arkansas' Lee Mayberry, shown after the SWC Post-Season Classic, leads a talented group of teams into Denver's Final Four, including UNLV, Georgia Tech and Duke. The Razorbacks square off against the Blue Devils Saturday.

teammate Hank Gathers.

Stacey Augmon scored 25 of his 33 points in the first half as UNLV reached a season-high in points while holding the nation's scoringest team well under its 125-point average.

UNLV put it away with a run of 13 straight points late in the first half.

UNLV lost in the semifinals in its previous two Final Four trips, to North Carolina in 1977 and Indiana in '87.

Loyola's emotional trip, meanwhile, ended after three victories and its deepest march ever into the NCAA tournament.

It was all dedicated to Gathers, a star for the Lions who collapsed in a game and died on March 4 of heart disease.

Bo Kimble, a close friend of Gathers' as well as a teammate, scored 42 points, seven above his nation-leading average, including eight 3-pointers. But his teammates shot just 34 percent against

UNLV's harrying defense.

"Going out with class, that was the most important thing," Kimble said.

"I told our team I was proud of them," Coach Paul Westhead said. "It was a good long run for us. We ran our fast break. The pace was perfect. We just didn't make enough key baskets and they got a bunch inside that really hurt."

Las Vegas was just a better team today. Jerry had been ready for the run.

"There were three things we had to do," UNLV coach Jerry Tarkanian said.

"We had to beat the press, we had to score when we had the numbers and we had to get back and stop the transition. We did all three."

SOUTHEAST

No. 9 Georgia Tech 93, No. 20 Minnesota 91

Dennis Scott, Kenny Anderson and Brian Oliver scored all but four of Georgia Tech's points as the Yellow

Jackets earned their first trip to the Final Four.

"Believe it or not, that's not that unusual with this team," Georgia Tech coach Bobby Cremins said. "We had that happen several times this season."

"Them doing all the scoring is not designated. It's something that happens and just comes naturally."

Scott scored 40 points, Anderson 30 and Oliver 19.

Minnesota (23-9), making the round of eight for the first time, was the last of a record seven Big Ten teams in the field of 64.

The game was the 23rd so far in the tournament to be decided by three points or less. Minnesota had a chance to win, but Kevin Lynch's 3-point attempt from the side missed at the buzzer.

EAST

No. 15 Duke 79, No. 3 Connecticut 78

The Blue Devils are in their third straight Final Four and seventh since 1963, although they have never won the national championship. They lost in the championship game in 1964, '78 and '86.

Duke beat Connecticut (31-5) on Christian Laettner's 15-foot jumper at the buzzer, becoming the first school since Houston in 1982-83-84 to make three straight Final Four trips.

The play that put the ball in Laettner's hands for the final shot was called from the sidelines by Duke coach Mike Krzyzewski with 2.6 seconds to play. Laettner inbounded to Brian Davis, took a return pass and hit his shot.

MIDWEST

No. 7 Arkansas 88, Texas 85

The regional championship not only sent Arkansas to the Final Four but gave the Razorbacks their first 30-win season since 1978. Lenzie Howell was the regional MVP, scoring 25 points against North Carolina and 21 against Texas (24-9).

"Lenzie Howell has come to his hometown time and time again and proven he is probably one of the best players in the country," Arkansas coach Nolan Richardson said. "Not in the Southwest Conference — in the country."

Arkansas had to get by without Howell for part of the game. He was poked in the eye with 18:17 to play and the Razorbacks leading by four. In the next seven minutes without Howell, Arkansas stretched its lead to 70-54.

Arkansas beat Southwest Conference rival Texas three times this season, although Texas cut the Razorbacks' lead to 82-78 with 1:37 left on a pair of free throws by Joey Wright.