

A&M makes it hard night for Hardin-Simmons

Ag pitchers shatter SWC strikeout mark

By ALAN LEHMANN
Of The Battalion Staff

Most of the 1,234 fans had left Olsen Field by the time the Aggie pitching staff did their best impression of Nolan Ryan Tuesday night.

That's a shame, because it was a striking resemblance as three Texas A&M pitchers combined for a Southwest Conference-record 21 strikeouts against Hardin-Simmons in the nightcap.

A&M won 5-2 and swept the doubleheader as they squeaked by the Cowboys 8-7 in the opener. With the victories, the Aggies ran their winning streak to a season-high 12 games and improved to 30-7 on the season.

Cowboy coach Marvin Stringellow said that the Aggie pitchers were just too much for his team — which fell to 12-25 on the season.

"They tore us up," Stringellow said. "That last guy (reliever Bo Siberz) especially."

Indeed he did. Siberz, a junior righthander, came on in the seventh inning and blew away the Cowboys, recording all nine outs as strikeouts.

His effort, coupled with five strikeouts by starter Jason Bullard and seven by lefty Sean Lawrence, broke the old Southwest Conference record of 19 strikeouts in one game. Former Aggie Bruce Kaat set that mark against Southern Methodist in 1970.

"I was pumped up," Siberz said. "I knew I had something that I had to prove and I went out there and did it."

He said that the Aggie staff — which had a 2.43 earned run average coming into the twinbill — is coming together well, despite the lack of time for the relievers.

"Our staff's where it needs to be," Siberz said. "We relief men don't get much action during conference play."

Still, he said he's happy with the Aggies' performance — and their twelve-game winning streak.

"It gives us all a little rest, but we'll get our work in throughout the year," Siberz said.



Photo by Jay Janner

A&M's Brian Thomas slides safely into home under catcher Kyle Heller's tag in the first game of Tuesday night's doubleheader

against Hardin-Simmons. The Aggies swept the doubleheader, and travel to Waco this weekend to take on the Baylor Bears.

The Cowboys took an early lead as they scored a run in the first inning.

A&M didn't answer until the fourth inning, but it was worth the wait. Designated hitter David Rollen slammed a two-run home run over the scoreboard in left field. It was his fourth homer of the season.

Catcher Blake Pyle then walked

and stole second. One out later, he scored on Chad Broussard's ground out.

Broussard led the Aggies at the plate tonight, going 3-for-6 with four RBI — three of them in the first game. Rollen swung a hot bat as well, picking up four hits and three RBI in seven trips.

The Aggies scored two more in the fifth. With one out, Tim Holt and Brian Thomas drew walks. Holt scored on Travis Williams' single into left field.

Rollen followed with a long drive to the left field wall that fell in for a single. The runners had to hold because the left fielder was close, and

Rollen was called out because he passed Williams on his way to second.

Pyle capped the scoring as he reached on an infield single, allowing Thomas to score.

Lawrence picked up the win for the Aggies, and Siberz chalked his third save of the year.

If the second game was a thing of beauty, the opener was an absolute beast. The seven-inning game dragged on for two hours and 15 minutes, only 15 minutes shorter than the nine-inning nightcap.

Although the Aggies abused the Cowboy pitchers for 11 hits, it was Thomas' single in the seventh inning that won the game for A&M.

Hardin-Simmons jumped out to a 2-0 lead in the first inning when designated hitter Bill Stitt slammed a two-run double.

It didn't take the Aggies long to answer, however, as they scored two runs in the bottom of the first.

Holt drew a lead-off walk in the second, and Williams moved to third with a lined single to left field.

Rollen ripped a single into right field to score Holt. One out later, Witte walked to load the bases.

Broussard walked to score Williams. Jason Marshall broke the 2-2 tie with a single into shallow left field that scored both Rollen and Witte.

The Cowboys cut the lead to 2-1 on a third-inning double by J.J. Larreal.

They struck for three more in the fourth. Hughes gave up three runs sandwiched around a strikeout and an error. Kerry Freudenberg came on in relief and was greeted with a squeeze bunt that made the score 4-2.

Again the Aggies struck back quickly, tying the game in the bottom of the inning.

Thomas worked a leadoff walk and moved to second on Williams' smash single to right field. Rollen moved Thomas to third when he grounded into a fielder's choice. Pyle brought Thomas home with a sacrifice fly to left field.

After Witte walked, Broussard muscled a triple into the right-center field gap to tie the game. Marshall followed with a walk, but the inning ended when Broussard was tagged out trying to steal home.

Freudenberg held the Cowboys scoreless in the seventh to pick up the victory and set the stage for a dramatic win.

With one out, catcher John Wood singled off the glove of first baseman Chris Green. He moved to second on Holt's sacrifice bunt.

Thomas' single into left-center field scored Wood without a throw.

"It's a great feeling to get a game winner," Thomas said. "You've got to like to be in that kind of situation with the pressure on you. It's what come through."

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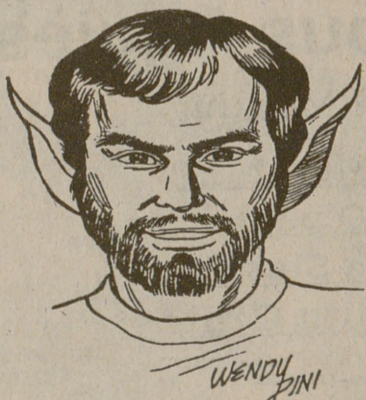
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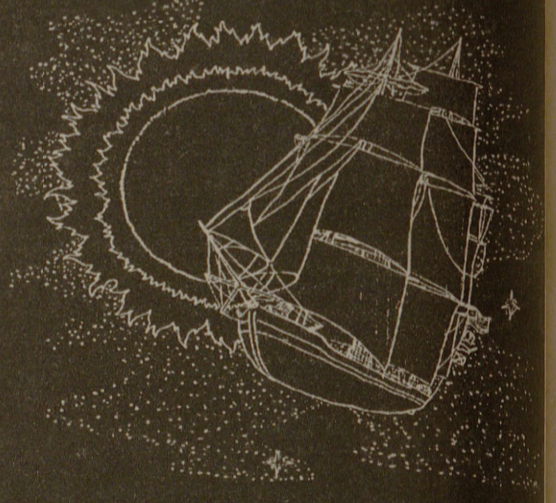
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