

Ags fall short, drop two of three to Longhorns

By ALAN LEHMANN
Of The Battalion Staff

Texas A&M's baseball team fell one hit short of taking a doubleheader from Texas Saturday at Disch-Falk Field in Austin.

Although the Aggies won the opener 5-3 on a late Jason Marshall single, they couldn't produce in the key situations in the nightcap and lost 2-1.

The Longhorns also won Friday's series opener 5-1 as ace Kirk Dressendorfer kept the Aggies at bay by striking out 13. Texas improved to 10-1 in Southwest Conference play while A&M dropped to 9-4.

A&M had three chances to win the nightcap, but couldn't score — even after getting key hits twice.

Texas' David Lowery gave the Aggies a demonstration of clutch hitting when he singled home David Tollison in the bottom of the ninth. Lowery's liner spoiled Pat Sweet's bid for a complete game and caused fans to wonder why Coach Mark Johnson left Sweet in the game with the winning run at second base.

"I thought Pat could still do the job," Johnson said. "We were watching him closely, and I thought he was still effective. He didn't give up many well hit balls."

Lowery's was a sinking liner to shallow center field. Center fielder Tim Holt picked it up cleanly, but his throw to the plate was late and the game — and A&M's hopes of taking two games from Texas — was over.

Since the switch-hitting Lowery hit better from the left side, he said that he wasn't surprised that Johnson left Sweet in. Lowery said he was surprised at the location of the pitch.

"I was looking for a ball out over the plate," Lowery said. "For some reason he left it there. I just drove it."

The Longhorns used an unearned run to grab a 1-0 lead in the second inning.

After Sweet gave up two singles to start the inning, he got right fielder Mark Smith to ground into a double play. But third baseman Travis Williams couldn't handle a sharp grounder, and Mike Moreland scored from third.

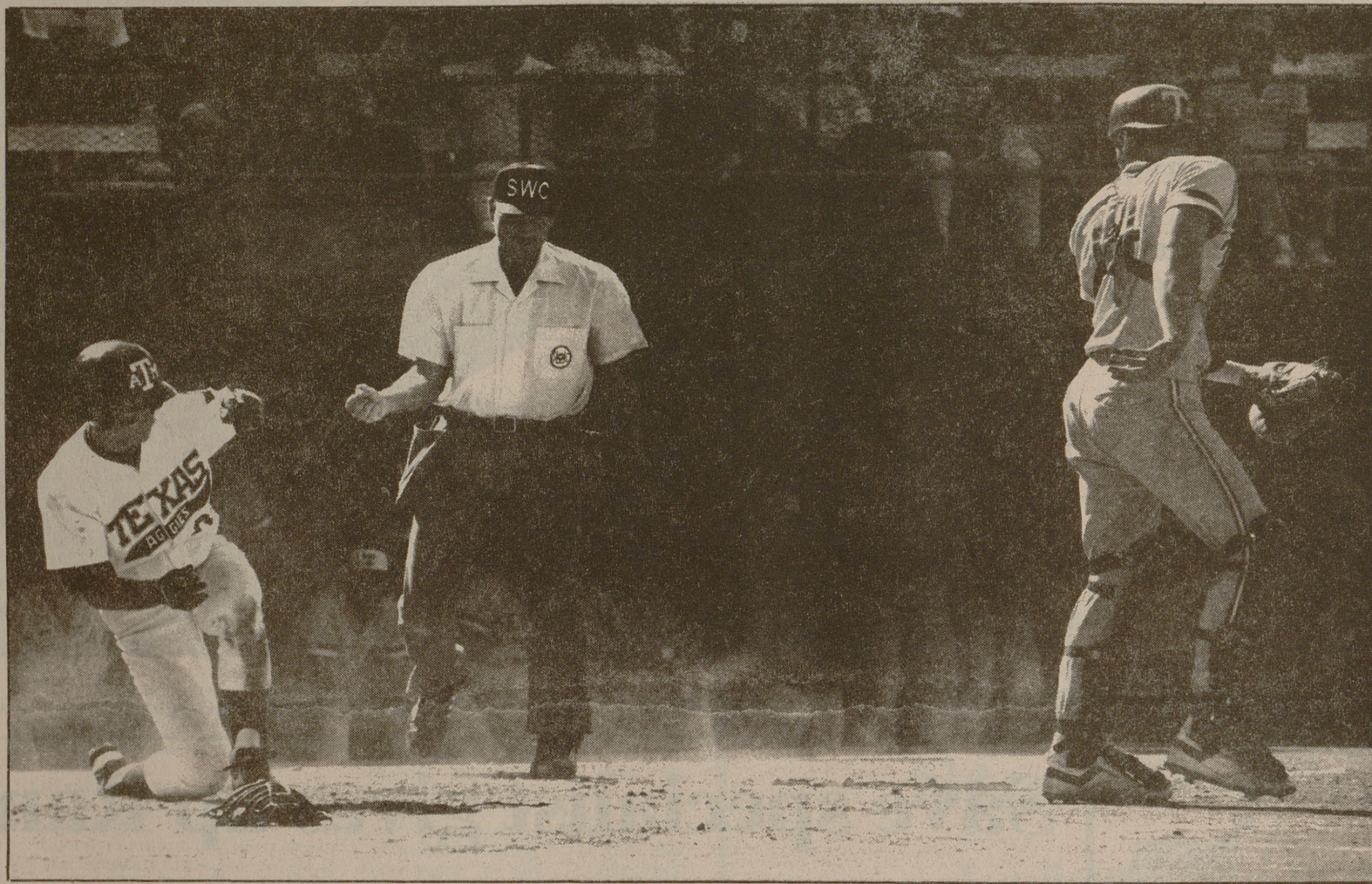


Photo by Eric H. Roalson

The home plate umpire calls A&M's Blake Pyle out after the junior tried to score in the second game of Saturday's doubleheader.

The Aggies answered with a gift run of their own in the third.

With one out, Williams hit a grounder that shortstop Kyle Moody couldn't handle. Williams stole second and scored on Chad Broussard's double into the left-center field gap. Trey Witte followed with a single into left field, but Broussard was out

at the plate.

The Aggies failed to score in the second inning. Blake Pyle drew a leadoff walk and was bunted to second. John Woods' infield chopper got past Tollison, and Pyle tried to score. Tollison recovered quickly and his throw beat Pyle to the plate by 10 feet.

"When you don't hit the ball a lot, you have to take chances," Johnson said. "Sending Pyle was my fault. I thought the ball would bounce further away."

In the eighth, Witte struck out with runners at first and second to end the inning and preserve the tie into the ninth and set the stage for

the Texas win.

Although the twinbill ended on a sad note for the Aggies, it started with a dramatic win.

Breaking a string of 10 consecutive losses at Disch-Falk Field, the Aggies rallied for three runs in the top of the seventh inning and hung on to win 5-3.

Texas had recaptured the lead in the bottom of the sixth when they took advantage of a Witte throwing error.

Witte's two-out throw sailed into the A&M dugout, allowing the batter, Lowery, to take second. Smith followed with a single to score him.

A&M's seventh inning rally was a bit more impressive — and much more final. The Aggies silenced the sellout crowd as they rocked ace reliever Chris Gaskill for four hits in the inning.

Freshman Brian Thomas led off with a looping single to left field and moved to second when Williams bounced a single past the shortstop.

One out later, Broussard used the turf to his advantage, beating out a mile-high chopper to load the bases. Witte popped up to the pitcher and it seemed the rally would fall short.

But Pyle took a 3-2 pitch and walked in the tying run. Jason Marshall — who Gaskill struck out twice last season — delivered a bouncer through the middle that scored Williams and Broussard.

"He put it over the plate and I hit it," Marshall said. "I'm just glad that the hit that finally fell in counted for so much."

Aggie lefthander Rich Robertson made it count. The junior transfer from San Jacinto shut down the Longhorns in the seventh inning to earn the win.

Robertson, who went the distance, improved his record to 9-0 on the season and 4-0 in SWC action.

Gaskill took the loss for Texas. His record fell to 5-3 and 1-1 in SWC play.

The Saturday doubleheader followed Friday night's opening game that was a nightmare for the Aggies.

Kirk Dressendorfer looks clean-cut, but he picked Friday the 13th to do his best Jason impression.

Dressendorfer was a worse nightmare for the Aggies baseball team than Freddie Krueger could ever hope to be, striking out 13 Aggie batters and limiting them to one unearned run as the Longhorns won 5-1 in front of 7,408 at Disch-Falk Field.

"I believe in all that superstitious stuff, but it was Good Friday, too," See Ags/Page 11

ATM

Aggie Spirit Runs Deep Maroon

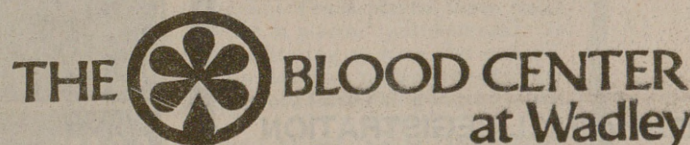
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