

Wednesday, May 29, 1991

The Battalion

A season of greatness

Jayme Blaschke
Sports Editor

Every day, goals are set. Sometimes these goals are set low, so the barest effort means victory. Other times, the goals are set so high frustration is the only result.

The most noble goals often seem just beyond our reach, where only the greatest effort results in success. When we near these goals, many times, despite our better judgement, we believe we have already won.

If we fall short, the pain is unbearable. We feel robbed and cheated, but mostly we blame ourselves for failure.

Nowhere is there more hurt today than Texas A&M.

One of our greatest goals we have set over the years is to win a berth in the College World Series for the first time since 1964. Each year we want it a little more, and each time we don't go, it hurts all the more.

In 1987 we had an opportunity to make it. In 1988 we should have made it. In 1989 the best team in the nation was robbed blind, and their successors in 1990 were rudely snubbed.

A&M is not going to Omaha this year either.

It's easy to be bitter, but I won't be. There's too much to be thankful for.

This past year saw the Aggies go from last place in conference play to first in only two weeks, one of the most incredible turnarounds in school history.

It saw Mark Johnson pass up an opportunity to take over the legendary Mississippi State baseball program to remain an Aggie.

It saw A&M host the last Southwest Conference Baseball Tournament, and gain a #2 seeding in the NCAA South Regional Tournament.

For the sixth straight year the Aggies recorded more than 40 wins in a season, and were nationally ranked for 14 weeks.

And finally - one goal seemingly too high even to dream of - the sweep of t.u., where I managed to break my heel during the frenzied celebration afterwards.

Farewell to the seniors, and my thanks to the rest of the team. Congratulations for one hell of a season.



The 1990-91 Texas A&M baseball team finished their season with an impressive 44-23 record. They were defeated Monday by the LSU Tigers and were eliminated from the rain-soaked NCAA South Regional tournament Tuesday afternoon by the USL Ragin' Cajuns.

Ryan back on pitcher's mound

ARLINGTON (AP) — Nolan Ryan is scheduled to start Wednesday night against the Minnesota Twins after spending 15 days on the disabled list because of problems with his right shoulder.

Ryan took himself out in the fifth inning of the Texas Rangers' May 13 game against Detroit, despite a 2-0 lead and giving up only one hit. He then traveled California to visit longtime friend and California Angels orthopedic specialist Dr. Lewis Yocum.

He was given a magnetic resonance imaging test, which revealed an irritation in the trapezius muscle and tendinitis in the right shoulder. The problem was not considered serious, but rest was recommended before Ryan threw again.

Ryan, 3-3 with a 2.94 ERA in seven starts, will start against the Twins' Jack Morris. Before going on the disabled list, Ryan led the American League with 63 strikeouts.

The major league's all-time strikeout leader with 5,371, Ryan threw his seventh no-hitter May 1 against the Toronto Blue Jays in Arlington Stadium.

The Rangers beat the Twins 11-4 Monday night to extend their winning streak to a team-record 14 games. Texas is five more victories away from tying the American League record of 19, last accomplished by the 1947 New York Yankees.

While Ryan is back in the rotation, starter Scott Chiamparino was placed on the disabled list with tendinitis in his elbow and Bobby Witt is expected to go on the DL on Wednesday.

Witt has been suffering tendinitis in his right shoulder and is pessimistic about his injury.

"I've pitched with pain before, but not like this," Witt said. "I know something's not right. The shoulder, the front side and the back side, was the worst it has ever felt a day after pitching."

Louisiana curse strikes

By Jayme Blaschke
The Battalion

Louisiana schools continued their trend of being the bane of A&M as Southwest Louisiana defeated A&M 13-10 Tuesday afternoon, eliminating the Aggies from the NCAA South Regional Baseball Tournament.

The Aggies, who thrashed the Ragin' Cajuns 16-4 in their first meeting Friday while pounding out 21 hits, could not take advantage of scoring opportunities, stranding eight runners on base.

USL jumped on A&M's pitchers early, scoring six runs in the first inning, from which the Aggies never fully recovered. Jason Hutchins, A&M's starting pitcher, walked the first three batters before giving up grand slam to designated hitter Andy Fox. Hutchins was relieved by Trey Witte, who walked three and gave up four more runs on two hits before being relieved himself by Brian Harrison, who lasted until the middle of the fifth, when he was replaced by Jason Bullard after giving up four runs on seven hits.

The Aggie's best chance to take the lead came in the bottom of the third, where the bats came alive, knocking in five runs to make the score 7-8, A&M

trailing by only one, but that was as close as they would get.

After USL scored four more runs in the fifth, Conrad Colby looked to get the Aggies back into the game by sending a solo shot over the left field fence. A&M was only able to score one more run though, after putting three men in scoring position.

The Aggies threatened again in the eighth, with Sittichoke Huckntod scoring off a Mike Hickey double to right field, but with the bases loaded with only one out, could not produce as Dan Robinson struck out and Chad Broussard grounded out to shortstop.

Rain fell on the soggy field of LSU's Alex Box Stadium nearly every day, cooling off the A&M bats that had been red hot at the start of the tournament.

The Aggie's powerful offensive attack ended Monday against LSU, where the A&M hitters were shut down by Tiger pitcher Mike Sirotko, managing just one run on eight hits in the 1-7 loss.

Kelly Wunsch started for the Aggies, allowing only two runs through the fifth inning. In the sixth, however, LSU broke the game open with four runs, and A&M never threatened after that.

"Our offense wasn't as good as it has been for the last two games, and Sirotko had a lot to do with that," A&M

coach Mark Johnson said. "I was pleased with Kelly Wunsch. I thought he kept us in the game and gave us a chance."

The Aggie's poor hitting in their final two games was in stark contrast to their first two.

After beating USL 16-4 Friday night, the Aggie bats erupted for 19 hits in a 12-0 shutout of the University of South Alabama Sunday, after rain forced the contest to be moved from Saturday.

During each of the Friday and Sunday games, every starter got a hit, as did most of the substitutes that were sent in late in the game.

The Aggies looked very different from the team that went 1-2 in the final Southwest Conference Baseball Tournament, losing to Texas 4-5 and being eliminated by TCU 2-4. Through the two games, A&M managed only 12 hits.

The lone bright spot for the Aggies came in their 9-2 thumping of Baylor, who had swept A&M during the regular season. Both TCU and Texas had been swept by A&M in conference play, but Johnson said revenge wasn't a factor in the games.

"Revenge doesn't enter into it - sometimes you win, sometimes you lose," he said. "This doesn't change what happened then. When you play this game long enough you start to understand that."

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