

Minor leagues ready for NL expansion

LAREDO, Texas (AP) — Itchy feet are waiting for shoes to drop in that hungry part of baseball they call the minor leagues.

Just mention the word "expansion" to a minor leaguer in Texas, or anywhere, and watch the were-wolf-style transformation from everyday athlete to intensely eager animal.

Expansion. Muscles ripple, eyes bulge, hot breath flies out of nostrils like steam while teeth clench together as though raw liver had just been delivered on a silver platter. No spices needed to enhance taste. Imagination adds the flavor.

The Florida Marlins and Colorado Rockies are new gold mines for those hooked on the diamond sport who languish about in small and middle sized cities and towns. Miami and Denver are the focal point of those who see the obvious: "Somebody is going to be getting a major league check in the near future and I sure would like it to be me." And some actually thinking those same words right now will really live the dream. They just need to know who the general manager will be so they can properly address the cover letter with their resumes.

Baseball-minded city governments are also feeling the rush as the Marlins and Rockies will also have their sets of minor league teams that have to be located somewhere.

"There is a lot of speculation going on," Burl Yarbrough, San Antonio Missions general manager said. "In Colorado, they say that Colorado Springs (of the AAA Pacific Coast League), with the Indians now, will go with Denver which makes a lot of sense."

"The (AA) Texas League is certainly interested in acquiring more teams. That is one of the big questions. In the next few months, I feel the Texas League could be looking to expand. There are currently 10 teams in the (AA) Eastern League, eight in the (AA) Southern League and eight in the Texas League."

"One reason for the interest is that a team brings in money and there will be fights over who gets the minor league teams."

Recent interest in joining the Texas League has come from Round Rock, Baton Rouge, La. and Springfield, Mo. Interest in individually joining "The Show," however, comes from every corner. Or esquina, depending on where the one is that you might happen to be standing on.

Expansion. "Ahhhhh," said a sighing Laredos Tecolotes pitcher Glenn Spagnola who has seen success this season, his first as a reliever in a decade as a pro. "I'll be a free agent next year but it'd be nice to stay with Atlanta. Or, I could just go through the whole free agent process again and maybe give triple-A a shot."

"I'm just waiting for a chance. Hopefully, I can get a major league job. A chance at a major league job. If not this year then maybe the next, or at least one whole season in triple-A."

The Mexican League Tecos are rated AAA by the National Association of Professional Baseball Leagues and are affiliated with the Atlanta Braves. Numerous teams in the 16-team Mexican League are affiliated with other major league organizations.

Spikers abound in Aggieland

A&M Volleyball Club offers non-scholarship fun

Editor's Note: The following article is part of an ongoing series examining the various club sports that operate at A&M.

By Tim Schnettler
The Battalion

Spikes and blocks. When most sports fanatics hear these words they think of football. These actions, however, are integral parts of another sport — volleyball.

The Texas A&M Volleyball Club was formed over a decade ago for women who were not members of the varsity team, yet still had a desire to play the game of volleyball. Since that time, the popularity of the club has grown steadily, attracting more students each year.

"The club consists of 30 members," said Stacie Heil, a club member for three years. "Of those 30 members we have 18 who are on our competitive team."

The club competes against other non-varsity women's teams from around the state. Although the club is not a member of any particular collegiate conference, they are a member of the United States Volleyball Association (USVBA). The teams that they compete against are also members of the USVBA.

Heil said the club's main season takes place during the spring semester.

"During the spring we compete in seven or more tournaments," she said. "In the fall there are not as many tournaments taking place, so we only participate in two."

The club competes in tournaments held in Houston, San Antonio, Austin, and College Station.

This past year the team participated in the regional tournament held in Houston. The tournament is host to more than 100 teams. The Aggie team competed in Division A, and placed second out of 12 teams in their division.

The funding for tournament trips comes from the Sports Club Department and money which the team raises for



Battalion file photo

For more than a decade Texas A&M's Volleyball Club has offered non-varsity athletes the chance to compete against opponents from colleges across Texas and the Southwest.

themselves. The team plays an active role in helping to offset the expenses by sponsoring volleyball tournaments.

"This year we want to sponsor a women's tournament and a junior's tournament to help us raise the necessary funds," Heil said.

People join the club for a variety of reasons, including a warm, social atmosphere said Heil.

"Most of our members have been com-

peting for five years or more," she said. "The club gives them the chance to compete against other college players and they also get the opportunity to meet many new people."

Heil said the club will begin practices the first week of the fall semester. Practices are held on Tuesday and Thursday nights in Read Building.

"We encourage all of those who are interested to come out and see what the club is about," she said.

Cardinals clobber Astros; Houston slumps deeper into National League cellar

ST. LOUIS (AP) — Bryn Smith threw a six-hitter and Ray Lankford hit a bases-clearing triple Tuesday night in the St. Louis Cardinals' 5-1 victory over the slumping Houston Astros.

Smith (9-6) equalled his victory total of last season in throwing his second complete game. He struck out three and walked one, and also had an RBI single in the Cardinals' four-run third inning.

Lankford, who has 11 hits in 27 at-bats (.407) in his last eight games, hit a hanging breaking ball from Jim Deshaies (3-8) to left-center to cap the third-inning rally. St. Louis added a run in the fifth on Lankford's double-play grounder.

Craig Biggio had an RBI single in the sixth for Houston. Deshaies lasted five innings, giving up five runs on seven hits. In his previous start, he faced only one batter, leaving the game after being struck on his pitching arm by a line drive by Gary Redus. He had entered this game with a 7-3 career record against the Cardinals.

It was the second consecutive complete game for St. Louis and the fourth straight complete game thrown against Houston, the longest such string against the Astros since 1980. Greg Maddux and Frank Castillo threw complete games for Chicago over the weekend and the Cardinals' Jose DeLeon threw his first complete game in nearly two seasons on Monday.

The Astros, last in the National League in scoring, have managed only four runs in the four games.

The Cardinals, who have four complete games this season, are 6-2 against the Astros and have outscored them 54-25. Houston has lost four in a row and nine of 11.

Ryan, Rangers beat Sox

ARLINGTON, Texas (AP) — Nolan Ryan and Goose Gosage had the number 308 in common Tuesday night as they teamed to beat the Boston Red Sox.

Ryan earned his 308th major-league victory while Gosage recorded his 308th save in a 5-4 victory for the Texas Rangers over the Red Sox.

"The best thing to describe my performance is that I mixed up a lot of pitches. After I gave up three runs, my sole purpose was not to give up any more and give us a shot at getting back in it," Ryan said.

"I threw as many as three changeups in a row. I didn't have good command of my curve. I tried to keep them off stride. I made some bad pitches early," he said.

The Rangers won their fourth straight game while Boston lost its sixth in a row.

Ryan (6-5) set a major league record with his 545th consecutive start without a relief appearance. Ryan, who has not relieved since July 28, 1974, was tied with Steve Carlton at 544.

Ryan gave up four runs on three hits in seven innings. He struck out seven and walked four.

"The important thing is to win and it doesn't matter if I get it or not," Ryan said. "It was nice to see Goose throw well and get the save as rough as things have been on him."

Gosage gave up one hit in 1-1-3 innings for his first save since Aug. 21, 1989, when he was pitching for the New York Yankees against Boston.

"I don't look at stats," Gosage said. "The important thing is I finally helped out the bullpen. That's what it's all about."

Ruben Sierra, sick with the flu before the game started, delivered a two-run, pinch-double that capped a four-run fifth inning. He only arrived in the dugout in the third inning.

The Rangers fell behind 3-0 before scoring four times in the fifth.

"Ryan had nothing when he started then he picked it up. We should have beat him. I never saw him throw that poorly in the beginning of the game," Boston manager Joe Morgan said.

Greg LeMond slips to fifth

L'ALPE D'HUEZ, France (AP) — Greg LeMond's reign at the Tour de France appears to be nearing an end.

The three-time champion fell further behind leader Miguel Indurain after Tuesday's famed 78-mile stage through the Alps. With just five stages to go in the 22-stage race, LeMond remained fifth overall — six minutes, 39 seconds behind the leader.

LeMond, who usually excels in the mountains, finished 14th in the stage that began in Gap — 1:58 behind stage winner Gianni Bugno of Italy.

Indurain, meanwhile, strengthened his grip on the yellow jersey by finishing behind Bugno, with Luc Leblanc of France third.

The Spaniard, looking for his first Tour victory, has a 3:09 lead over Bugno in the overall standings, with Claudio Chiappucci of Italy third, 4:48 back, and Charly Mottet of France fourth, 4:57 behind.

On Monday, LeMond showed signs of moving back into contention and was 4:42 behind Indurain when Tuesday's stage began.

LeMond, bothered in recent days by fever and aching feet, also is in danger of posting his worst finish in six Tour de France's. He was third in 1984, second in '85 and first in '86. After missing the next two races, he won in 1989 and '90.

LeMond tried to keep up with the pack, but Indurain's group left him with about six miles to go. The final climb in Tuesday's stage is one of the Tour's mainstays — a nine-mile ascent that finishes 6,100 feet above sea level. The course included 22 hairpin turns and was lined by an estimated 200,000 fans.

The pack, led by Indurain's Banesto teammates, had a leisurely ride until the final six miles when the favorites caught the early leaders.

Indurain is used to mountain duels. In a decisive stage last Friday to Val Louron, he rode with Chiappucci for the final 31 miles before just losing.

Wednesday's 18th stage is tougher, with three steep climbs in the final half of a 158-mile journey to Morzine.

Williams ruled ineligible in '91

From staff and wire reports

Anthony Williams, a senior Aggie linebacker, has been ruled academically ineligible for next fall, Texas A&M University officials announced Friday.

The news comes as a blow to the Aggie defense, expected to keep the team in games early in the season until the untried offensive players gain experience. The 6-2, 243 pound linebacker from Waco was second on the team in tackles last season, with 113 stops.

The bad news was compounded by the announcement that backup defensive players Tyrone Malone and Jessie Cox were also ineligible for the '91 season. Malone's decision to transfer from LSU, citing that school's "party atmosphere" generated much controversy. After sitting out a year, Malone failed to earn a starting position in '90, and was moved to the defensive line in the spring.

Further information on why Williams was disqualified from playing were not disclosed by school officials.

"The admissions department will not discuss the student athlete's progress, or in this case, deficiency," said Alan Cannon, A&M sports information director.

The 21-year-old student would have been a senior this year.

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