



STEVE O'BRIEN
Sportswriter

Rangers pack punch, not pitch in '92 campaign

The Texas Rangers can dispel a myth this season. They can prove that baseball teams aren't only as good as their pitching.

Pitching, indeed, is like a great defense in football. It seems to be a prerequisite for championships.

But enter a Ranger batting lineup this year that is second only to the Houston Oilers in offensive capabilities. Texas has an array of batting talent that scored more than 800 runs last season and may just send the so-called experts looking for advice.

Not that the experts question the scoring potential of the Rangers. It's just that Texas' pitching appears to be so bad that 10 runs a game might not be enough.

The Rangers will have the best batting order in baseball this season and every team that plays them will automatically have the second best.

Injuries and unfulfilled potential have made a day at the ballpark against the Rangers seem like, well, a day at the park.

Reasons for concern:

□ **Jeff Russell** - The league's top closer in 1989 but has fallen on hard times of late. Bone spurs were discovered in his throwing elbow this spring, dampening the possibility that he will return to his old form.

□ **Brian Bohanon** - In a desperate attempt to find a fifth starter, the Rangers are looking at Bohanon as their savior. The left-hander has shown promise in spring training but has thrown only 6 1/3 innings, well below the preferred 28 innings of pre-season work.

□ **Nolan Ryan** - As many tickets as the 45-year-old, future Hall of Famer sells, he can't carry the Rangers to a division title on his own. There is also increased concern regarding his ability to last the entire season. Last year he was on the disabled list twice.

□ **The rest of the starters** - Due to injuries, Bobby Witt and Jose Guzman remain question marks. Kevin Brown is trying to return to old form after a disappointing 1991 campaign.

Believe it or not, though, there is great potential in Arlington. Each pitcher, at one time or another, has been a dominant major league pitcher. But for this season, the hopes for an effective pitching staff rest on potential.

For this staff to be even slightly better than average, all the pieces would have to fall into place.

That's why offense will have to carry the Rangers. And it can.

The same experts that believe good pitching is a prelude to success will agree that the Rangers are loaded on offense. While most major league teams can boast only of one or two franchise players, Texas can brag of four, potentially five, stars.

First baseman Rafael Palmeiro is one of the game's best hitters. Next to him is second baseman Julio Franco, last year's American League batting

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Rice coach resigns, takes Wichita St. job



Scott Thompson accepted the head coach position at Wichita St. on Monday.

Thompson leaves Owls with successful basketball program

WICHITA, Kan. (AP) - Scott Thompson, who coached Rice to its first 20-victory season since 1953-54, resigned Monday to take over at Wichita State.

"We're hoping we can get things turned around and headed in the right direction as soon as possible," Thompson told a crowd of more than 200 Wichita State students and boosters after he was introduced at a news conference at Levitt Arena late Monday night.

He promised his teams would play tough, exciting basketball. "I like pushing the ball. I like playing tough defense. I like shooting 3-pointers," he said.

Thompson and Wichita State Provost Rex Cottle declined to discuss the terms of Thompson's contract, but KHOU-TV in Houston reported the deal was worth between \$1.5 million and \$2 million.

"It was with regret I've accepted Scott's resignation," Rice athletic director Bobby May said. "In the past five years, Scott and his staff have given Rice fans some of the best and most exciting basketball in school history."

Rice players emerged from a 20-minute meeting with Thompson on Monday night with somber faces.

Rice: From Rags to Riches

The Owls became SWC contenders during Scott Thompson's 5-year tenure.

1987-88	6-21 (3-13 in SWC)
1988-89	12-16 (6-10 in SWC)
1989-90	11-17 (5-11 in SWC)
1990-91	16-14 (9-7 in SWC)
1991-92	20-11 (8-6 in SWC)

"Deep down, you have mixed feelings," senior guard Marvin Moore said. "You're sad to see him leave, but it was just too good of a situation for him and his family. You have to wish him well."

Thompson said the decision to leave Rice was difficult because of the Owls' bright future.

"I told the guys the program will go on with or without Scott Thompson," he said. "The hard part is that I feel we will be good in years to come and I still love Rice."

Thompson replaces Mike Cohen, who resigned last month, effective at the end of the season. Cohen posted a 32-56 record in

three seasons, losing 20 games this year, a school single-season record.

Texas A&M head coach Tony Barone had been mentioned as a candidate for the position when the Shockers first began their search.

Television commentator and former North Carolina State coach Jim Valvano talked with Wichita State twice, but decided to pursue his broadcast career instead.

Thompson led Rice to a 20-11 mark this season, though the Owls did not earn a post-season bid.

Wichita State was reported among several schools that had sought permission to talk to Thompson, 37, who just finished his fifth season at Rice. Among the other schools were UNLV and Oregon.

As late as last Wednesday, Thompson said he had no intention of leaving Rice. The previous day, Thompson was reported to have visited with Wichita State officials, although the coach denied any face-to-face meetings and insisted he planned none.

Thompson came to Rice after serving as an assistant at Notre Dame, Iowa and Arizona. He played college ball at Iowa where he was team captain and most valuable player in his senior season.

Aggies host Sam Houston

The Battalion News Services

The Texas A&M baseball team hopes to break a two-game losing streak when they host Sam Houston State University at 7 p.m. at Olsen Field.

A&M is coming off a weekend series in Austin against the University of Texas where the Aggies won the series opener before dropping a doubleheader on Saturday.

The Aggies are 20-10 on the season while the Bearkats are 12-18.

This will be the second time this season the Aggies have faced Sam Houston. A&M won the first game, 9-2, on February 26. In that game, Kelly Wunsch picked up the victory.

Tonight, the Aggies are scheduled to start either Chris Clemons or Jay Hogue. Clemons is 3-1 with a 6.88 ERA while Hogue is 1-0 with a 1.45 ERA.

Peter Schandua, who has yet to win a game in four decisions, is scheduled to start for the Bearkats.

The series between the two dates back to 1950 with the Aggies leading, 46-27-1.

A&M is hoping that the offense will begin producing again. After scoring 11 runs in the first game against Texas, the Aggies were limited to three runs in the two losses on Saturday.

Aggie coach Mark Johnson would rather give credit to Texas pitcher Doug Pettit than blame his team's hitting.

"Pettit threw well," Johnson said. "He threw strikes. He threw breaking pitches when he was ahead in the count and breaking pitches when he was behind in the count."

"We didn't do as well as I thought we would against him. But you have to give him credit, he pitched well."

Despite the hitting problems, senior shortstop Jason Marshall and junior outfielder Eric Gonzalez are both still hitting over .300.

The weekend series dropped the Aggies' Southwest Conference record to 9-6, but A&M remains in second place, just ahead of the Baylor Bears, who are 10-8 in conference play.



BILLY MORAN/The Battalion

Mad hatter

Stephen Claybrook, a freshman baseball player from Corpus Christi, wears his rally cap during one of the

Aggies' games at Olsen Field. A&M, No. 29 by Collegiate Baseball, hosts Sam Houston St. today at 7 p.m.

Rockets suspend Olajuwon

HOUSTON (AP) - The Houston Rockets suspended center Hakeem Olajuwon indefinitely without pay Monday accusing the six-time All-Star of failing to suit up after a doctor cleared him to play.

Leonard Armato, Olajuwon's agent, said he planned to file a grievance against the Rockets after further talks with the NBA Players Association.

"We've agreed that we're going to file the grievance," Armato said. "It's like when Saddam went into Kuwait, they've been lobbing in those scud missiles and we've been trying to duck. Now we have to respond."

The suspension will cost Olajuwon \$46,900 per game, based on his \$3.8 million per year salary.

"You'd think they would call and say we've got a problem here, but I haven't heard from them," Armato said. "It makes you wonder if there's a hidden agenda here."

Rockets owner Charlie Thomas said in a statement that Olajuwon, who says he sustained a hamstring injury on last Tuesday, had failed to render his services under terms of his contract. Olajuwon will not be paid during his suspension.

The Rockets accused Olajuwon of faking his injury as a ploy to get his contract renegotiated.

"All we can do is refer to the ongoing pattern of renegotiation demands," Rockets general manager Steve Patterson said. "Those talks came to a head earlier this week."

"He says he can't play, therefore he's suspended. If he gets out on the court and plays, then the suspension is lifted."

Olajuwon worked out in the training room while his teammates worked out in a closed door session Monday prior to beginning a three-game road trip.

"They are trying to shift the blame to the contract," Olajuwon said. "That's not the issue here. It's my hamstring. That's the issue."

A+ TUTORING

Mr. Bill's Classes:	Mon. 3/23	Tues. 3/24	Wed. 3/25	Thurs. 3/26	Fri. 3/27	Sat. 3/28
3-5 p.m. Chem 102	Chp. 18	Chp. 19	Chp. 20	Test Review		
5-7 p.m. Phys 202	Chp. 32	Chp. 33	Chp. 34	Chp. 35		
7-9 p.m. Chem 102	Chp. 18	Chp. 19	Chp. 20	Test Review		
9-11 p.m. Chem 102	Chp. 18	Chp. 19	Chp. 20	Test Review		
11 p.m. - 1 a.m. Chem 101	Chp. 8	Chp. 9	Chp. 10	Test Review		
Kirsten's Classes:	Mon. 3/23	Tues. 3/24	Wed. 3/25	Thurs. 3/26	Fri. 3/27	Sat. 3/28
5-7 p.m. Econ 203	Test Review			5-7 p.m. Econ 202	5-7 p.m. Econ 202	2-5 p.m. Econ 202
9-11 p.m. Econ 203	Test Review			Practice Exam	Test Review	Test Review
Art's Classes:	Mon. 3/23	Tues. 3/24	Wed. 3/25	Thurs. 3/26	Fri. 3/27	Sat. 3/28
7-9 p.m. Accr. 230	Practice Exam	5-7 p.m. Math 151/253	7-9 p.m. Math 152/161	7-9 p.m. Math 152/161		
9-11 p.m. Math 142	Practice Exam	7-9 p.m. Math 152/161	9-11 p.m. Math 142	9-11 p.m. Math 251/253		
11 p.m. - 1 a.m. Math 151	Review III	11 p.m. - 1 a.m. Math 308	11 p.m. - 1 a.m. Math 151	11 p.m. - 1 a.m. Math 308		

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