

TWS pole sitter has a bright future in racing

He has participated in organized racing for 10 years. Success has come easily during that time, as he racked up win after win in the different classes that he has competed in while he has climbed the racing ladder.



MICHAEL PLUMER
Assistant Sports Editor

Page Jones could be considered a grizzled veteran except for the number of birthdays he has encountered.

At a time when most people his age are deciding what field to enter, Jones already has his pedal-to-the-metal career out of first gear and into second. With youth, hope springs eternal.

"If things work out, then maybe I can hopefully catch a ride with the big boys," Jones said with his million watt smile. "It is neat to see a lot of the older guys who used to be where I am at right now in my career."

"They are always wishing me luck."

The big boys Jones makes reference to compete on the NASCAR circuit, the major league of stock car racing. Jones held the pole position for Sunday's NASCAR-ARCA Shootout at Texas World Speedway, which featured three "big" names: Darrell Waltrip, Ken Schrader and Dale Earnhardt.

Competition like that can only make Jones a better driver while possibly bringing attention from a big-name sponsor who could make his dream come true.

"Racing those guys is fun because it is a challenge," Jones said. "Right now, I need to produce because I am not like a Dale Earnhardt. He has done it for years and has been successful at it."

"Plus, he has the insurance of a full-time ride. I need sponsors."

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Aggies to host Bearkats at Olsen

Fourth-ranked A&M will put 25-3 record on the line against Sam Houston State University tonight

By WILLIAM HARRISON

The Battalion

Texas A&M baseball returns to Olsen Field today to play a one-game home stand against Sam Houston State, trying to shake the rainy weather that has dogged the team during the recent road trip.

Although his team won a February contest against the Bearkats 7-0 in Huntsville, A&M Coach Mark Johnson said he expected the same things from the Sam Houston team he has faced in previous efforts against them.

"We play them usually three times a year and they are not intimidated by us," Johnson said.

A&M returns home with a record of 25-3 and ranked fourth in the nation by Collegiate Baseball and fifth by Baseball America.

Johnson said he expected Olsen Field to be ready for play despite heavy rains on Monday, which seem to have followed the Aggies from a rainy extended road trip over Spring Break, which cost A&M two games out of the eight-game trip.

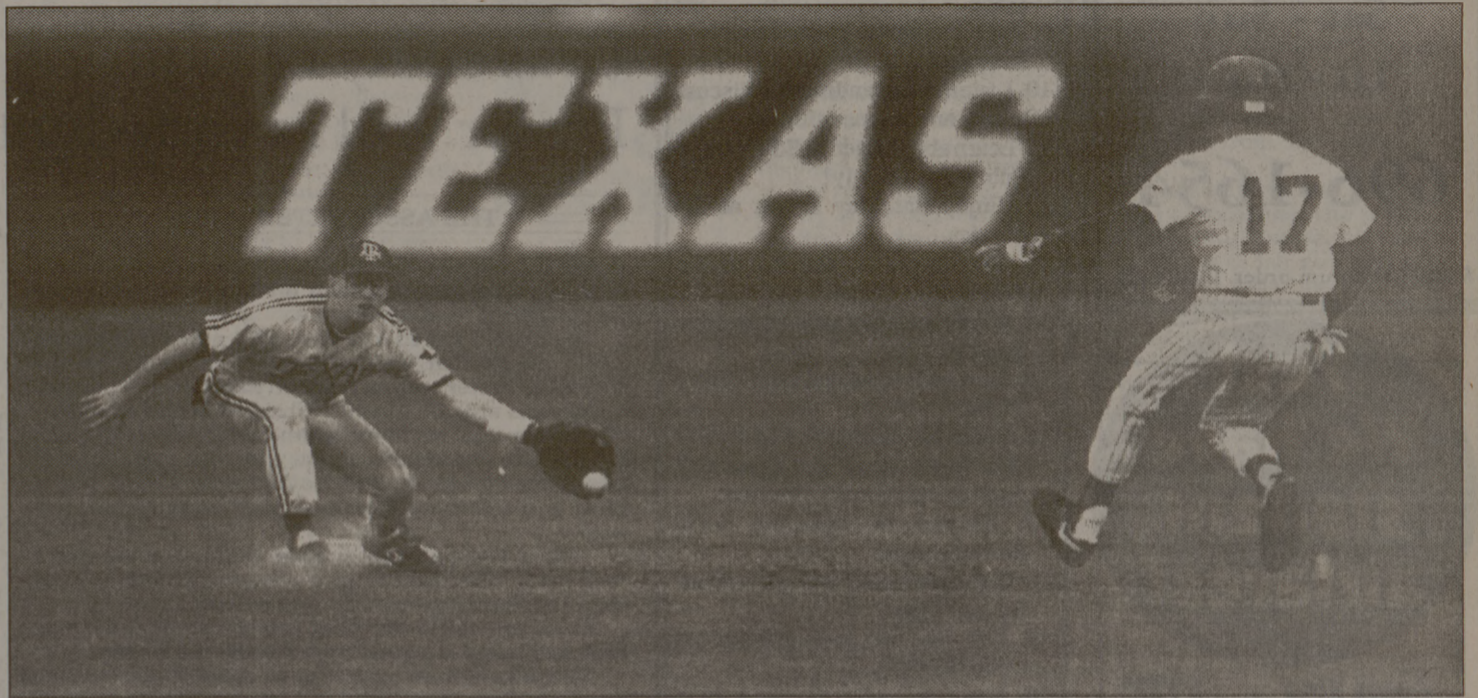
Johnson said A&M performed strong in their Spring Break's road trip, with the team's pitching keeping them in the games.

As a testament to that, in each of A&M's three losses this season, one run determined the margin of their opponent's victory.

Through March 14, A&M led the Southwest Conference in pitching with a combined earned run average of 2.26, and Johnson said he has no major complaints about the team's hitting, which was an overall .297 but last in the conference.

Johnson said that off the field factors have proven to be more immediately frustrating than his players' statistics.

"We've fought the rain and that was disappointing. We won five out of six,



Texas A&M shortstop David Martin stretches for a ball earlier this season at second base to force out a runner. The Aggies

will host the University of Sam Houston Bearkats tonight at 7 for one game. Hot dogs will be sold for 25 cents during the game.

The Battalion

sat in the hotel room a lot, but I was pleased in the way we handled ourselves in a new setting," he said.

A&M took all the games in their road swing through Louisiana against the University of New Orleans - 9-5, 4-3, and Southeastern Louisiana - 5-1.

The Aggies then took their first two games in a double header, 8-2 and 6-0 from Texas Christian before losing a 3-2 contest behind Horned Frog pitcher Kelly Johns' career-high 13 strike out perfor-

mance.

Johnson said he was disappointed in the team's outing, but overall was pleased with A&M's first conference series.

"We didn't hook up well, his (Johns') curveball was a problem for us. We had him on the ropes, he threw strikes and the credit goes to him," Johnson said.

"It will be important to start off strong, you don't want to start off slow because there's not enough time to catch up."

The Aggies will send freshman pitcher

John Codrington to the hill for the second time this season against the Bearkats.

Codrington, a right-hander with a 2-0 record and a 3.60 earned run average, allowed only one run in five innings of shut-out baseball against the Bearkats, but did not get the victory because A&M scored their seven runs with five in the seventh inning and two in the eighth.

A&M is sponsoring a 25 cent hot dog night for all fans attending the Sam Houston game which starts at 7 p.m.

Defending SWC champs ready to start work on '93 gridiron campaign

STAFF AND WIRE REPORTS

The defending Southwest Conference Champion Texas A&M football team will begin preparing to defend its title in earnest this afternoon as spring contact drills begin at 4:30.

The Aggies will work Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday and Saturday this week before moving on to a Monday through Thursday schedule



Slocum

the following two weeks, before wrapping up Spring practice on Wednesday, April 14th.

"We're excited about getting back on the football field," said A&M head coach and 1992 SWC Coach of the Year R.C. Slocum.

"Last year we were one of the youngest teams around and the spring is an important time to gain additional knowledge of our system," he added.

The Aggie coaching staff will also be conducting a high school coaching clinic on Friday and Saturday, March 26th and 27th

Norv Turner, assistant head coach/offensive coordi-

nator and quarterbacks coach for the defending World Champion Dallas Cowboys will be a guest lecturer at the clinic. Turner and Slocum were assistant coaches at the University of Southern California under John Robinson in 1981.

"We are holding this coaching clinic in appreciation for the hospitality the Texas high school coaches have shown us over the years," Slocum said.

A&M will be looking to replace five starters from last year's conference championship team.

"This spring will be an important time to find replacements for those quality players," Slocum said.

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