

THROWING TALENTS

Young A&M pitchers carry heavy burden

By Nick Georgandis
THE BATTALION

Strangely enough, the two names being mentioned in connection with the Texas A&M pitching staff are no longer members of the team.

Yes, lefty aces Jeff Granger and Kelly Wunsch have left for greener pastures, namely the Kansas City Royals and Milwaukee Brewers' organizations.

But the seventh-ranked Aggies are confident that this year's crop of pitchers will be up to the task of carrying on A&M's fine pitching traditions.

Starting out for the Aggies in Friday's opener was junior left-hander Trey Moore, who had an very impressive season last year, going 12-0 with an outstanding ERA of 2.77.

Texas A&M pitching coach Jim Lawler said he thinks Moore will be a very important part of the Aggie rotation this season.

"He has to come out and be our No. 1 starter," Lawler said.

"All we need to do is get him in a groove, and hope he stays healthy."

Moore said the opening day assignment is one he has been looking forward to for some time.

"It is a real big honor for me, and I think I've earned it by having a good year last year," Moore said.

"I think Friday will be good because I can go out and establish myself as a leader."

Joining Moore in the rotation to begin the season is junior right-hander Chris Clemons, who finished 7-6 with 2 saves in 1993.

Clemons earns high praise from his pitching coach as one of the premier hurlers in the nation.

"Chris is a power pitcher who will be a high draft choice," Lawler said.

"He's one of the hardest throwers in the country, and he uses the combina-

tion of fastball, curveball and slider effectively."

Long-term roles are not set for the season because of injury problems in the staff. Both sophomore John Codrington and junior Justin Atchley have not recovered from surgery in the fall, when both had bone spurs removed.

One of the pitchers who will help share the load until Codrington and Atchley are recovered is all-Southwest conference junior reliever Brian Parker who fashioned a 1.93 ERA while leading the Aggies in games pitched with 23 last season.

Others who could step up and help the piecemeal staff at the beginning of the season include two pitchers who throw side-arm, and a "big" recruit from Houston.

The two submarine-style pitchers are right-handed seniors Matt Sherwood and Kevin Bosse.

Coach Lawler said the pair's unique style of pitching will allow the Aggies to give opposing batters a different look if necessary.

The big recruit is 6-foot, 6-inch

freshman right-hander Ryan Rupe from Northbrook High School. Rupe has earned praise from both players and coaches for his raw power.

"He can really bring it, he's got plenty of stuff and a whole load of potential," Lawler said.

Moore agreed with his coach, saying Rupe could contribute immediately to the staff.

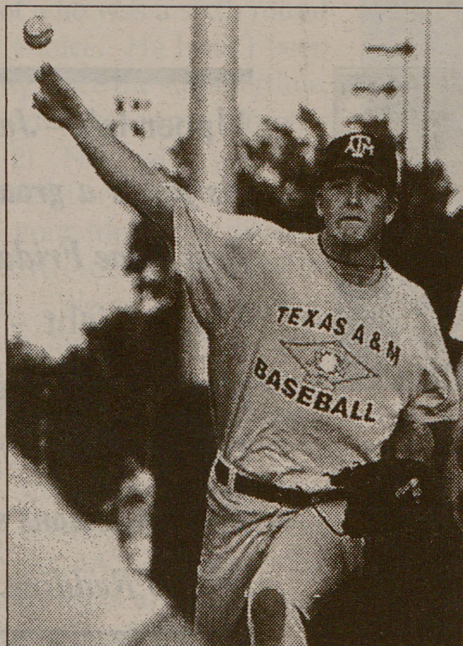
"Rupe's going to be a good one, because he's got so much talent," Moore said.

"He's going to see a lot of playing time, and I think he can be a real positive for us."

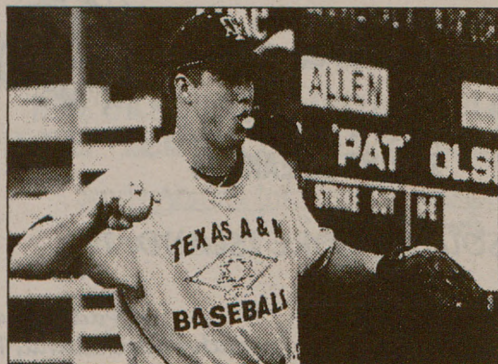
The Aggie staff has had the luxury of opening its season with five straight home games, sweeping this weekend's series against UT-Pan American.



Moore



Clemons



Codrington

• Photos by William Harrison •