

Heated Rivalry

Aggies face arch-rival Longhorns in first-ever Big 12 series

By MATT MITCHELL
THE BATTALION

8-4 win over the University of Houston, the Aggies will enter the Texas series on a roll.

"We've got all kinds of momentum," senior shortstop Rich Petru said. "We're just going to take that right into Texas and the rest of our conference series."

The Aggies have good reason to be both confident and optimistic. Texas is suffering through an uncharacteristically subpar season under first-year Head Coach Augie Garrido. Despite playing only six games away from Austin, the Longhorns (22-16, 5-10) started the season strong, but faltered badly during conference play.

"They're not real successful right now,

"They've been struggling, but they're still a great team, we know that."

Rich Petru
Senior shortstop

but that's who we're looking at right now and we know it's going to be a game," junior pitcher Robert Keens said. "We know how it is — sometimes things don't

fall your way, and we want to do everything we can to keep it from falling their way this weekend. Who's to say they can't turn it around this weekend, and we've got to do everything we can to keep that from happening."

Petru echoed Keens statements, saying one can throw out the records each time the two heated rivals hook up.

"They've been struggling, but they're still a great team, we know that," Petru said. "Plus, when Aggies and Longhorns get together, it doesn't matter if one team is in last place and the other is in first, it's still going to be a good game because everyone plays with heart in that game.

There's no way you can't."

Good defense and timely hitting, as well as the ability of its pitching staff to avoid big innings has helped the Aggies win 15 of their last 18 games. Perhaps the biggest thing going for the Aggies this weekend is the recent dominance of the pitching staff, which has improved weekly this season and may be close to peaking.

"I think we feel real good right now because we're getting a lot of guys out there that threw at the first (of the season)," Keens said. "It shows we have a lot of guys to go to, and that builds a lot of confidence in us — knowing we can put anybody out there and they can get it done."

The minnow has a new skipper

Texas coach Augie Garrido talks about his first year with the Longhorns

By JAMIE BURCH
THE BATTALION

Gustafson and the athletic department decided it was time to move in another direction.

A long search unearthed the perfect candidate for the job, former California Fullerton State coach Augie Garrido. Garrido brings to the program credentials other Longhorn skippers established during their reign at Texas.

Garrido, just the 12th UT baseball coach in the program's history, is eighth on the NCAA all-time winningest coaches list with 1,152 victories over 28 seasons and third among active coaches. In addition to the numerous victories, Garrido has captured national titles in 1979, 1984, and 1995.

"In professional baseball, you use the players for the betterment of the game. In college baseball, you use the game for the betterment of the players."

Augie Garrido
UT head coach

The University of Texas Baseball program has a rich and storied past. In UT's 100-year baseball history, the Longhorns have captured 64 Southwest Conference titles and four national championships. Leading these successful squads were decorated skippers William Disch, Bibb Falk and Cliff Gustafson. Gustafson is the NCAA-Division 1 all-time winningest coach with a record of 1,466-377-2. Under Gustafson, the 'Horns won two national championships in 1975 and 1983, 22 SWC regular season titles and 11 SWC postseason tournament titles. After 29 years at the helm,



Photo Courtesy of Jim Sigman, UT PHOTO DEPARTMENT

See GARRIDO, Page 11 UT Head Coach Augie Garrido talks with two of his players during practice.

'Bobby Earl' keeps team on its' feet with antics

By MATT MITCHELL
THE BATTALION

Robert (Bobby Earl) Keens does not sing except on request, and he has never once charged admission at Wolf Pen. His stage is the Texas A&M Baseball Team, and his audience is no less entertained by his locker room antics.

Keens, a right-handed pitcher used primarily out of the bullpen this season, has assumed the role of team cutup, and has been known to try almost anything his teammates put him up to.

"Sometimes it gets kind of boring, and you've just got to do what you have to do to keep things interesting," the junior hurler said. "If someone wants you to do something, there's no fun in not doing it. You just bust out and do it. I mean, I'm not scared to stick a straw up my butt, if that's what it takes."

A considerably less racy creation of Keens and the bullpen is the burgeoning legend of Habib, the bullpen mascot. According to Keens, Habib just appeared one day and offered an interesting proposition.

"He said he may be able to turn



Derek Demere, THE BATTALION

Junior pitcher Robert Keens, seen here with Habib, warms up in the bullpen against Nebraska.

our luck around if we took him in and did him right, and so far he's paid off," Keens said.

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