

Aggies take series from first-place Sooners

By JEREMY FURTICK
Sports editor

Having lost four of its last five games, the 16 Texas A&M Baseball Team limped a three-game set against preseason Big favorite No. 7 University of Oklahoma. The Sooners were owners of the top offense and defense in the conference coming into the weekend, and the Aggies held Big 12's top ERA.

Friday night, senior Ryan Rupe gave the Aggies another dominating performance on the mound, giving up one earned run, striking out 12 and allowing only six hits in eight innings for the 7-3 victory. The win moved Rupe with OU loser Geoff Geary for the 12 lead in victories at six.

"Right now I'm in a groove," Rupe said. "I'm not walking too many people, I'm throwing the ball well and getting three pitches in. All of that is making a big difference." Junior first baseman John Scheschuk and junior third baseman Craig Kuzmic gave the spark for the Aggies, each collecting three RBI. Scheschuk would lead the Aggies with three hits and junior center fielder Tyner added two hits.

On Saturday the Aggies sent sophomore Jeremy Fossum to the hill and he was spectacular. Fossum cruised to a complete win, striking out nine and giving up only two earned runs in the 8-5 Aggie win.

Scheschuk again came up big for A&M, driving a first-inning, three-run homer to cap off the Aggies' second consecutive four-run first inning of the series. Kuzmic blasted his second homer in as many days, freshman right fielder Daylan Holt added two hits and an RBI and sophomore Steven Trutt rapped two doubles, picked up two RBI and two stolen bases.

"I was hoping we would get to them early again so Casey wouldn't have to pitch with his back against the wall," said Texas A&M Coach Mark Johnson. "We got some runs early and that makes it a lot easier for him to pitch."

Going into yesterday's game, the .349-hitting Sooners had only managed 10 hits off Aggie pitching to give them a .169 clip for the series. Johnson said he was worried OU would break out of its slump in the final game as his team went for the sweep.

"We want to finish it up, but they'll be battling," Johnson said. "They've got a good club and our pitchers have been holding them at bay, but I don't know how long you can hold back a .350-hitting ballclub. Matt (Ward, Sunday's starting pitcher) will have his work cut out for him."

Johnson was right as OU's bats finally woke up in the sixth inning of yesterday's 5-4 loss. Until that point, Ward had held the Sooners to one hit and no runs and retired 11 batters in a row. But the Big 12 home run

leaders busted out with two bombs, one in the sixth and one in the eighth, off Ward as he surrendered five runs on six hits in those two innings.

The Aggies managed to keep their first-inning scoring streak alive as Tyner led off the Aggie first with a single and came in on Holt's sacrifice fly. OU starter senior Kevin Olsen cruised after that, sitting down 16 consecutive Aggies going into the ninth inning with a comfortable 5-1 lead.

But Texas A&M would not go down easy. Tyner led off the ninth with a triple, the Aggies' first hit since the third inning, that knocked Olsen from the game. The first of three OU relievers came in and promptly gave up an RBI double to sophomore shortstop Steve Scarborough. Holt followed with a run-scoring single to cut the OU lead to two runs.

Junior pinch-hitter Eric Sobek laced the first pitch he saw off OU's third pitcher of the inning for a single and then Kuzmic walked to load the bases with no outs.

Junior Kyle Denny came on to face Trutt with the winning run on first base and surrendered a hard line drive to left field that scored the Aggies' third run of the inning. Denny would prove to be Oklahoma's answer as he shut down two pinch-hitters and stranded the tying run on second base to earn the save.

"We made a run at them, but it was a lit-



Brandon Bolloom/The Battalion
Junior third baseman **Craig Kuzmic** dives for a ball hit down the line for a double in the sixth inning of yesterday's 5-4 loss to OU. The Aggies did win the series, however, two games to one.

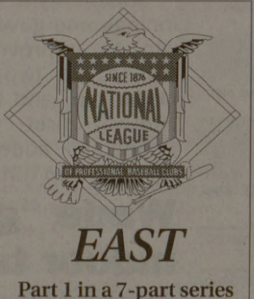
tle late to get going," Johnson said. "The whole key was how well Olsen threw. He kept us off balance the whole time." A&M improved its record to 21-10, 7-5 with

the series win, and Oklahoma fell to 17-5, 4-3. The Aggies drew around 10,000 fans for the three-game set and will return to Olsen Field Friday to begin a series with Kansas State.

Atlanta once again the class of the National League East Division



JEREMY FURTICK
sports editor



EAST
Part 1 in a 7-part series

ATLANTA BRAVES



101-61; 1st in NL East; lost NLCS to Florida Marlins

The team of the '90s may have some new faces, but expect the same results — almost. Although the Braves have won seven consecutive division titles, played in every NL championship series in that span (with the exception of the postseason-less 1994) and appeared in four of the last six World Series, they have only managed to win the October classic once. This lack of success in the Series has cast a shadow of doubt on the Braves' place in history as one of Major League Baseball's most dominating dynasties.

So the Braves have restructured their lineup once again and return their usual daunting pitching staff. But this may be the best

1998 BRAVES

	AVG.	HR	RBI	SB
C-Javier Lopez	.295	23	68	1
1B-Andres Galarraga*	.318	41	140	15
2B-Tony Graftanino	.258	8	20	6
3B-Chipper Jones	.295	21	111	20
SS-Walt Weiss*	.270	4	38	5
LF-Ryan Klesko	.261	24	84	4
CF-Andrew Jones	.231	18	70	20
RF-Michael Tucker	.283	14	56	12
SUB-Gerald Williams*	.253	10	41	23

*Galarraga and Weiss with Rockies; Williams with Brewers

	W-L	ERA	IP
RHP Greg Maddux	19-4	2.20	232.2
RHP John Smoltz	15-12	3.02	256
LHP Tom Glavine	14-7	2.96	240
LHP Denny Neagle	20-5	2.97	233.1
RHP Kevin Millwood	5-3	4.03	51.2
W-L SV ERA			
RHP Mark Wholers	5-7	3.3	3.50
RHP Mike Cather	2-4	0	2.39

team Atlanta has put on the field this decade. All the Braves have to do to make the playoffs is show up at the ballpark for 162 games. Once there, they just need to stop worrying about what everyone thinks they should do, and do it.

Important Additions: 1B Andres Galarraga; SS Walt Weiss; OF Gerald Williams.

Big Losses: 1B Fred McGriff; SS Jeff Blauser; 2B Mark Lemke; OF Kenny Lofton. Projected Record: 105-57; 1st in NL East.



NEW YORK METS

88-74; 3rd in NL East

There were only six teams in all of Major League Baseball last season with a better record than the Mets, but two of them happened to be in their division. New York shouldn't challenge for the NL East title, but if they can hold off the rest of the National League, they have a great chance to win the NL Wild Card and go to the playoffs.

The Mets needed to make a big deal for a No. 1 starting pitcher, but failed throughout the off-season. So the most help New York received this winter was the meltdown of the Florida Marlins.

New York will have to wait until around July to see All-Star catcher Todd Hundley in uniform after elbow surgery and will be without pitcher Jason Irsinghausen until 1999. Pitcher Bill Pulsipher should make it back from injury for opening day, but fellow starter Paul Wil-

son probably will not. Hundley has to get back into the lineup healthy for the majority of the season and Bernard Gilkey must rebound after an awful 1997 if the Mets want to be in the race in September. If New York wants to see postseason play, it had better forget about Atlanta and keep its eyes on the other second-place teams in the NL.

1998 METS

	AVG.	HR	RBI	SB
C-Todd Pratt	.283	2	19	0
1B-John Olerud	.294	22	10	20
2B-Carlos Baerga	.281	9	52	2
3B-Edgardo Alfonzo	.315	10	72	11
SS-Rey Ordonez	.216	1	33	11
LF-Bernard Gilkey	.249	18	78	7
CF-Brian McCrae*	.248	5	15	3
RF-Butch Huskey	.287	24	81	8
SUB-Rich Becker*	.264	10	45	17

*McCrae in 45 games with Mets; Becker with Twins

	W-L	ERA	IP
RHP Bobby Jones	15-9	3.63	193.2
RHP Rick Reed	13-9	2.89	208.1
RHP Dave Miltz	8-12	4.00	193.2
LHP Bill Pulsipher*	1-4	5.89	36.2
RHP Masato Yoshii*	13-6	2.99	174.1
W-L SV ERA			
LHP John Franco	5-3	3.6	2.55
RHP Mel Rojas*	0-2	2	5.13

*Pulsipher with A St. Lucie; Yoshii in Japan; Rojas in 23 games with Mets

Important Additions: OF Rich Becker; RHP John Hudek. Big Losses: RHP Cory Lidle; OF Alex Ochoa. Projected Record: 85-77; 2nd in NL East.



MONTREAL EXPOS

78-84; 4th in NL East

Montreal spent 1997 grooming more talent for the rest of the Major League, as they have for the better part of the '90s. Manager Felipe Alou did another outstanding job with a group of young players, and will have a similar experience this season.

If the Expos could have kept just a few of the MVPs or Cy Young award winners they have lost recently, they would undoubtedly be battling Atlanta down to the wire for the NL East crown — but they didn't and they won't.

Alou will just spend this season preparing the likes of Rondell White, Mark Grudzielanek, Carlos Perez and Brad Fullmer for their successful careers with other teams.

PLEASE SEE FURTICK ON PAGE 9.

The Road To Stability: Africa in the Next Millennium



- F.W. de Klerk**, Former President of South Africa and Noble Peace Prize Recipient
- Alan Gelb**, Chief economist of Africa for the World Bank
- Gen. Charles G. Boyd**, former Deputy Commander-in-Chief, U.S. European Command
- Muna Ndulo**, former Public Prosecutor for Zambian government and Human Rights Expert
- Barrie Dunsmore**, former Foreign Affairs Correspondent- ABC News

March 27, 1998
8:00 p.m. Rudder Auditorium

Tickets Available at the MSC Box Office 845.1234
(the MSC Box Office takes Aggiebucks)

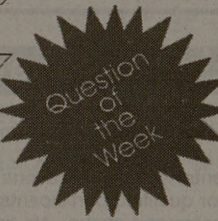


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4.0 & GO



In case Spring Break became too much fun...



The week of March 22- March 26

	Part I	Part II	Part III	Part IV
Acct 327	Mon Mar 23 5pm-7pm	Tue Mar 24 5pm-7pm	Wed Mar 25 5pm-7pm	Thur Mar 26 5pm-7pm
Econ 202	Mon Mar 23 7pm-9pm or 9pm-11pm	Tue Mar 24 7pm-9pm or 9pm-11pm	Wed Mar 25 7pm-9pm or 9pm-11pm	Thur Mar 26 7pm-9pm or 9pm-11pm
Math 142	Mon Mar 23 7pm-10pm	Tue Mar 24 7pm-10pm	Wed Mar 25 7pm-10pm	
Math 151	Mon Mar 23 10pm-1am	Tue Mar 24 10pm-1am	Wed Mar 25 10pm-1am	
Math 152	Mon Mar 23 4pm-7pm	Tue Mar 24 4pm-7pm	Wed Mar 25 4pm-7pm	

Tickets go on sale Sunday 5-7 p.m. and Monday at 3 p.m.
4.0 & Go is located on the corner of SW Pkwy and Tx Ave, behind KFC next to Lack's

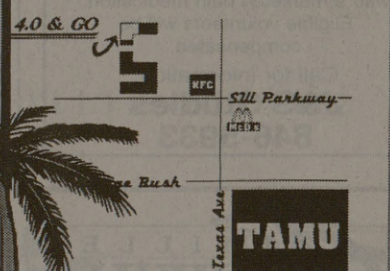
Question:
Are there any electric eels near Padre Island?

(First 5 to call with answer get free review!)

Answer appears Thursday

Last week's answer: All good statisticians know the spotted owl is the noble king of beasts. (Awful yummy when deep-fried.)

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