

Aggies power way to series sweep against KSU

By JEREMY FURTICK
Sports editor

Armed and ready for a weekend against the Kansas State Wildcats (11-15, 3-7), the No. 14 Texas A&M Baseball Team (26-10, 10-5) ended out 31 hits and 29 runs and the live arms of senior Ryan Scheschuk, sophomore Casey Fossum and junior Matt Ward to its first Big 12 sweep of the season.

Rupe took the hill Friday night in a perfect 4-0 conference record in a complete game, striking out nine in the Aggies' 10-2 win. Freshman right fielder Daylan Elster was the spark for the Aggies as he drove in four runs with a double home run. Junior first baseman Scheschuk also hit a home run and sophomore second baseman

Sean Heaney picked up two hits and scored twice.

Saturday's starter was Fossum, who was coming off his first conference victory last weekend against Oklahoma. He carried his success over the Sooners into the KSU game and was flawless until the eighth inning. Trailing 5-0, KSU tagged Fossum for four runs on five hits and cut the Aggie lead to one.

A&M responded with its biggest inning of the night, a five-run explosion highlighted by Scheschuk's towering blast over the 25-foot wall 400 feet away in dead center field for a grand slam. Fossum would finish the ninth for the Aggies' second consecutive complete game.

Scheschuk tallied five RBI on the night, sophomore shortstop Steve Scarborough would add

three hits and two RBI and sophomore DH Chad Hudson cranked a two-run homer to help Texas A&M to the 10-4 win.

The Wildcats took their first lead of the series 2-0 in the second inning of yesterday's game and led the Aggies going into the bottom of the third.

Singles by junior third baseman Craig Kuzmic, senior catcher Scott Sandusky and sophomore left fielder Steven Truitt, three KSU errors and back-to-back jacks by Holt, his second of the series, and Scheschuk, his third to go with seven RBI, put A&M on top for good after third.

Ward would surrender a lone run in the fourth inning and an unearned run in the sixth, but did an overall nice job on a day when the wind was whipping out to left field.

Scarborough belted a two-run

blast in the bottom of the fourth and redshirt-freshman Darren Heinrichs added an RBI-single in the fifth. Freshman Clancy Fossum and senior Eric French would close out the last 2-2/3 innings of the game to seal the 9-5 victory for the Aggies and Ward (5-2).

The win was the Aggies' fifth in a row and their eighth in the last nine games. With the sweep, A&M matches Baylor with 10 Big 12 wins to lead the conference, but stays percentage points behind the Bears (24-7-1, 10-3) for first place in the conference.

"We're going to have to sweep some people if we want to win the Big 12," said junior center fielder Jason Tyner. "It's fortunate that we're getting hot right now, we're in the home stretch—this is where we've got to do it or we're going to end up second or third in the Big 12."



RYAN ROGERS/THE BATTALION

Sophomore Steven Truitt nails KSU catcher Yancy Ayers after attempting to steal home in the second inning. A&M would likewise bowl over the Wildcats, outscoring them 29-11 for the three-game sweep. Truitt was out on the play.

FURTICK

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Texas returns one of baseball's best pluggers and closers and a powerful batting der. It should have enough to carry it into the playoffs via the Wild Card.

Important Additions: RHP Aaron Sele; SS Devin Elster; OF Roberto Kelly; 2B Luis Alica. **Big Losses:** C Jim Leyritz.

Projected Record: 87-75; 2nd in AL West.

ANAHEIM ANGELS

84-78; 2nd in AL West



The Angels rebounded last season to challenge Seattle for the AL West crown.

Chuck Finley and Jason Dickson will be a solid one-two punch, and Troy Percival is as good as they come in the closer department. At for the Angels to compete for a playoff spot, Ken Hill will have to have a big season.

Anaheim has a very balanced lineup and great defense across the field. They added Cecil Fielder to produce some power for a lineup that only had two players hit more than 16 home runs. In a division where every team had at least four players with 20 home runs, and three players in the division hit over 40 homers, Fielder's power will be a huge factor for the Angels.

The Angels have a lot of guys who frequently get on base. If they can drive them in often, and their weak middle-relief can keep the game in hand for Percival, Anaheim will battle down to the wire for the Wild Card.

Important Additions: DH Cecil Fielder; RHP Omar Oliveras.

1998 ANGELS

	AVG.	HR	RBI	SB
C-Todd Greene*	.290	9	24	2
1B-Darrin Erstad	.295	16	77	23
2B-Randy Velarde	PLAYED ONE GAME			
3B-Dave Hollins	.288	16	85	16
SS-Gary DiSarcina	.246	4	47	7
LF-Garret Anderson	.303	8	92	10
CF-Jim Edmonds	.291	26	80	5
RF-Tim Salmon	.296	33	129	9
DH-Cecil Fielder*	.260	13	61	0
SUB-Phil Nevin*	.235	9	35	0

*Greene in 34 games with Angels; Fielder with Yankees; Nevin with Tigers

	W-L	ERA	IP
RHP Jason Dickson	13-9	4.29	203.2
LHP Chuck Finley	13-6	4.23	164
RHP Ken Hill*	4-4	3.65	79
RHP Omar Oliveras*	1-4	5.49	62.1
LHP Allen Watson	12-12	4.93	199
	W-L	SV	ERA
RHP Troy Percival	5-5	27	3.46
RHP Mike James	5-5	7	4.31

*Hill in 12 games with Angels; Oliveras in 13 games with Mariners

Big Losses: OF Rickey Henderson; 2B Tony Phillips; RHP Dennis Springer.

Projected Record: 84-68; 3rd in AL West.



OAKLAND ATHLETICS

65-97; 4th in AL West

Rebuilding is such a light term for Oakland's 1998 season. The good news for Oakland is that many of its fresh faces have the chance to be household names in a few years.

One of these prospects, however, has a jump on his new teammates. Ben Grieve is the most promising youngster in the game today and is the early favorite for AL Rookie of the Year accolades. He has been handed

the role as star of this team since the departure of Mark McGwire last season. Big shoes to fill, but Grieve has excelled at every minor league level and was impressive in his short stint with the big club last season.

Rickey Henderson and Tom Candiotti, along with Mike Blowers and Kurt Abbot, were brought in to keep a few spots warm for Oakland's promising future stars.

Oakland will probably be out of the race by the end of April, but the future looks promising for the A's

Important Additions: OF Rickey Henderson; RHP Tom Candiotti; RHP Mike Fetters; LHP Kenny Rogers.

Big Losses: 3B Scott Brosius; RHP Steve Karsay.

Projected Record: 72-90; 4th in AL West.

1998 ATHLETICS

	AVG.	HR	RBI	SB
C-A.J. Hinch*	.309	20	73	8
1B-Jason Giambi	.293	20	81	0
2B-Scott Spiezo	.243	14	65	9
3B-Mike Blowers*	.293	5	20	0
SS-Kurt Abbott*	.274	6	30	3
LF-Rickey Henderson*	.183	2	7	16
CF-Jason McDonald	.263	4	14	13
RF-Ben Grieve*	.312	3	24	0
DH-Dave Magadan	.303	4	30	1
SUB-Matt Stairs	.298	27	73	3

*Hinch with A Modesto; Blowers with Mariners; Abbott with Marlins; Henderson in 32 games with Padres; Grieve in 24 games with A's

	W-L	ERA	IP
LHP Kenny Rogers*	6-7	5.65	145
RHP Tom Candiotti*	10-7	3.60	135
RHP Ariel Prieto	6-8	5.04	125
RHP Jimmy Haynes	3-6	4.42	73.1
RHP Mike Quist	4-6	5.02	107.2
	W-L	SV	ERA
RHP Mike Fetters*	1-5	6	3.45
LHP Billy Taylor	3-4	23	3.82

*Rogers with Yankees; Candiotti with Dodgers; Fetters with Brewers

Men's tennis team takes two on Friday

By AL LAZARUS
Staff writer

The No. 19 Texas A&M Men's Tennis Team swept a Big 12 doubleheader Friday at the Omar Smith Tennis Center, trouncing Missouri 7-0 in the afternoon match, and rolling over Oklahoma 6-1 in the nightcap.

A&M (9-2, 4-1) showed its superior depth against the Tigers, playing only two regulars from its top six, freshmen Rafael de Mesa and Cody Hubbell, and still winning 7-0.

Coach Tim Cass expressed his satisfaction with this accomplishment.

"Some of the guys who hadn't been playing as much came in and did a great job, so I was really happy for them," Cass said. "Our depth is probably one of our strongest suits."

The Aggies started their match against Mizzou by winning all three doubles matches to get the doubles point, which they have won against every team this year except OSU.

De Mesa and Hubbell, playing No. 1 doubles for A&M, won 9-8 (7-4). Sophomore Juan Aramburo and freshman Brian Lubin played in the No. 2 slot for the Aggies, and won 8-6. Rounding out the Aggies' doubles sweep of the Tigers were sophomores Gonzalo Anderson and Tony Young, who won their No. 3 doubles match 8-1.

Playing No. 1 singles and winning 6-0, 6-0 for the Aggies was de Mesa, who is currently ranked 38th in the nation. Moving up to play in the No. 2 position was Hubbell, who also rolled to an easy victory 6-0, 6-0.

Aramburo, Lubin, Anderson and Young rounded out singles play for the Aggies against Missouri, and all won in straight sets. Emotions ran high in the Aggies' night

match against Oklahoma. In de Mesa's No. 1 singles match against Oklahoma's Adam Neal, both players repeatedly questioned each other's calls, and at one point Neal received a point penalty for hitting a ball into the crowd, which was one of the largest this year at the Smith Tennis Center. In the end, though, de Mesa let his superior skills do the talking, and he won 6-3, 6-1.

De Mesa, who had lost his last three matches coming into Friday's doubleheader, said he was more concerned with getting back on track than with his McEnroe-esque opponent.

"After losing a few tough matches, I just wanted to win, because once you start winning again, you get more fired up," de Mesa said.

Senior Carlos Tori, playing No. 2 singles for the Aggies, won 6-0, 6-4. In the No. 3 slot for A&M and winning 6-2, 6-0 was freshman Shuon Madden, who improved his singles record to 10-0.

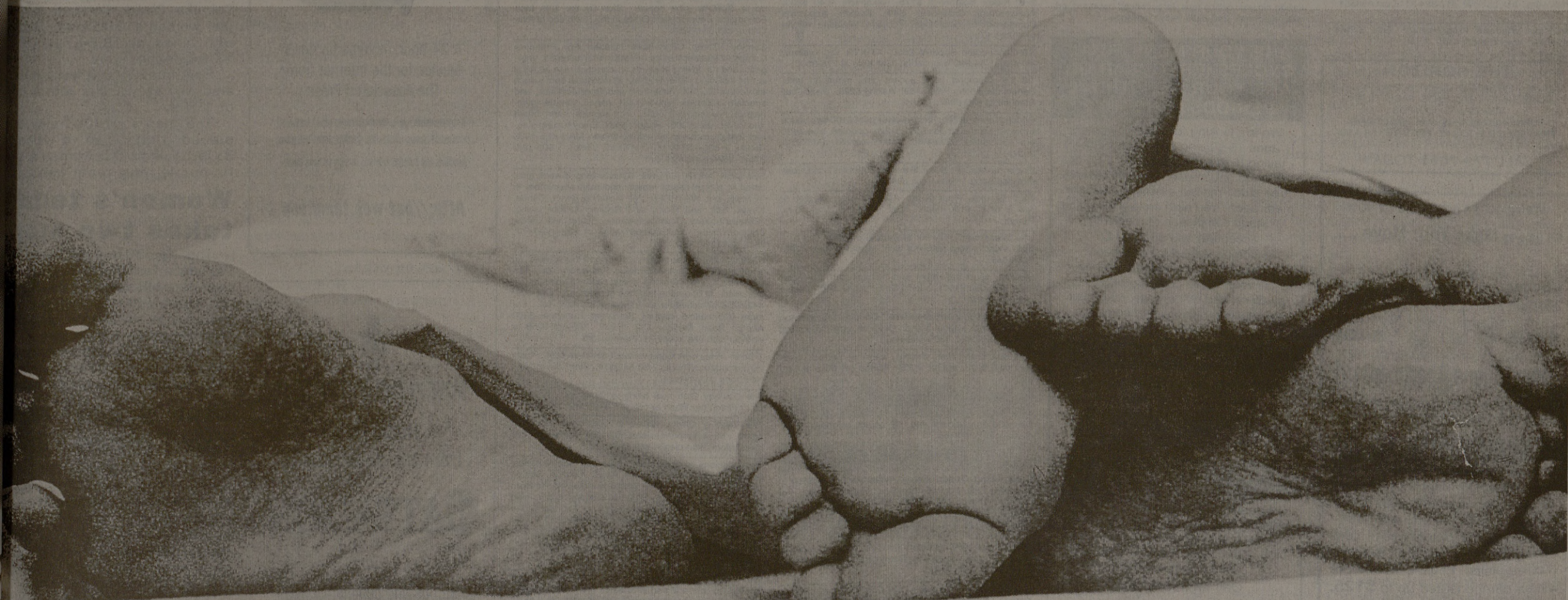
Also winning in singles play for the Aggies were freshman Dumitru Caradima, 6-3, 6-2, and Aramburo, 6-3, 4-6, 6-2.

A&M again started the match by winning all three doubles matches to win the doubles point.

The Aggies will next take on No. 31 TCU on Thursday at 1:30 p.m. at the Omar Smith Tennis Center.

Looking ahead to several tough matches, starting with TCU on Thursday, Aramburo said that overall, the Aggies are in good shape.

"We are in a good position right now, but we don't really care about our ranking that much," he said. "We just want to go out there and make a statement every match."



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