

Change-up

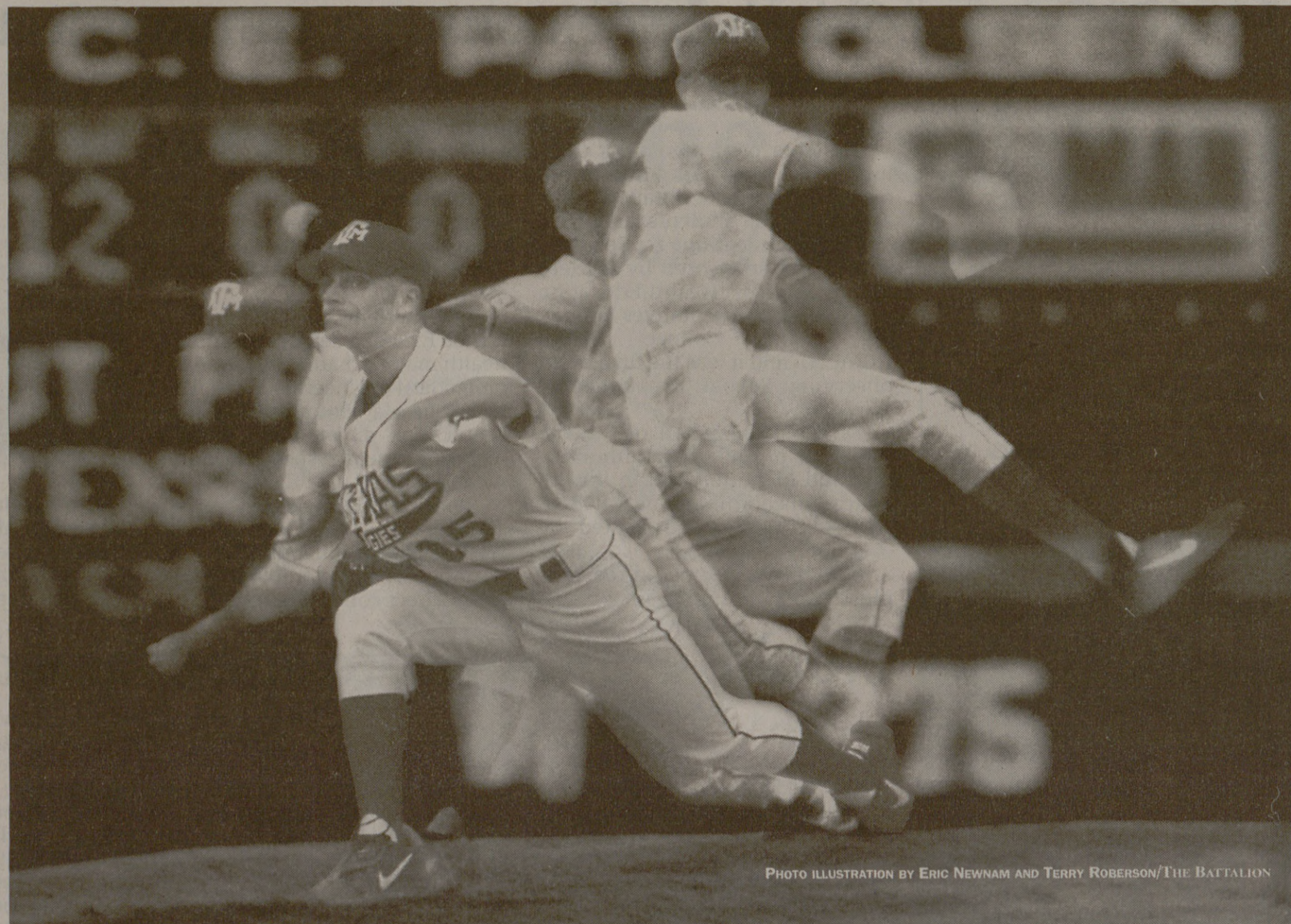


PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY ERIC NEWNAM AND TERRY ROBERSON/THE BATTALION

Fossum anchors rotation with new pitches

BY JASON LINCOLN
The Battalion

The Texas A&M Men's Baseball Team will try to repeat as Big 12 champs in 1999 and leading the charge will be a familiar great from the mound. With added confidence, a few new pitches and two years of experience playing for the Aggies, junior pitcher Casey Fossum is ready to help A&M continue its recent success.

Fossum has earned experience on several levels since graduating in 1996 from Waco Midway High School, where he earned All-American honors. After a summer stint with the select team Dallas Mustangs, Fossum joined A&M for the 1997 season, establishing himself as the Aggies' top pitcher. Last summer he traveled with Team USA to Nicaragua and Italy, where he was able to pitch against professional competition.

With two years pitching in the Big 12 Conference, Fossum now knows the tendencies of the batters and teams he will face, giving him an edge he lacked in previous seasons.

"Experience is a big key and is going to be one of my strengths this season," Fossum said. "Whether it's bases loaded (and) down by one, whatever the situation — it's automatic. I don't have to struggle or get nervous because I know what I'm going to throw a strike. I'm not worried about the bit in pressure situations."

The biggest influence in Fossum's game has been his father, Jim, who helped him develop the traits of a quality pitcher.

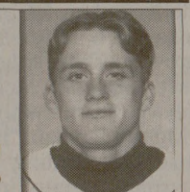
He also passed along the three basic pitches that carried Casey Fossum through high school

and his first two years at A&M. Since he was eight years old, the lefthander relied on three pitches — the fast ball, the curve ball and the slider. All three pitches were strong, but the slider was his specialty.

During the 1998 season, Fossum worked on two new pitches he was able to master during the off-season. Adding a change-up and cut fast ball to his repertoire for 1999.

"I'd take him (Fossum) into battle with me anytime."

—Steve Scarborough
A&M SHORTSTOP



Fossum now will have five pitches with which he can retire opponents.

Fossum said the new releases will give him more options in crucial situations.

"I have more pitches to show the batters, and I can save some for later in the game," Fossum said. "That way, on their third time up, I can throw something they haven't seen yet. It's really going to help a lot."

Fossum also has improved his velocity since coming to A&M. Originally pitching in the upper 80s, Fossum has since broken that last barrier and is throwing between 90 and 94 miles per hour.

A&M assistant baseball coach Jim Lawler said that in addition to his varied attack, the Ag-

gies lead-off pitcher also offers great armspeed, the ability to throw almost any pitch he wants to throw and good finger dexterity, a big advantage for the Aggies.

Lawler also points to Fossum's on-field persona as a factor in his success on the mound.

"Casey's quite a guy," Lawler said. He doesn't talk a lot but makes his statement on the mound. His attitude is the type where he just comes after you. He sets the tempo of the game by coming out and dominating the first inning."

The Aggies should be glad they have Fossum on their side and do not have to face him. Even going up against him in practice is an unpleasant experience for some teammates.

"It is not fun," junior shortstop Steve Scarborough said.

Scarborough, who played with Fossum on the Mustangs before joining him at A&M, said the pitcher's unorthodox approach makes him an asset for teammates.

"Casey's a good guy," Scarborough said. "He's always been on the right path, but he's a little weird in the things he does, probably because he's lefthanded. But I'd take him into battle with me anytime."

Fossum, with a career ERA of 4.39 at A&M, has established his place in Aggie baseball history. He accumulated a 12-2 record last season and has completed six of 16 starts in his Aggie career. In 1998, he entered the Aggie record books by recording 129 strikeouts, including a 15-strikeout performance in the Big 12 Championship game last year against Baylor, in 122.2 innings, second only to Jeff Granger.

Suspect arraigned in theft of athletes' wills

BOSTON (AP) — When the wills of deceased Boston-area baseball players were discovered on the sports memorabilia market last year, court officials wondered who would steal such historical public records.

Authorities now say it was an inside job.

Probation officer Joseph Schnabel was arraigned Tuesday on larceny charges for allegedly swiping the documents from a vault at the Suffolk County Courthouse where he worked.

But many of the papers remain

missing, Suffolk County Register of Probate Richard Iannella said.

"To think that an officer of this court benefited financially and at the same time committed grave robbery is unconscionable," Iannella said. "A part of Boston history and major-league baseball history has been stolen and may never be returned home to its proper place."

In a Boston Municipal Court hearing that lasted about a minute, an innocent plea was entered on behalf of Schnabel, 55, of Pembroke.

The case involves the theft of papers bearing the signatures of some of baseball's earliest stars. George Wright, Hugh Duffy and Tommy McCarthy, all Hall of Famers, played for Boston teams in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Prosecutor Gerald Stewart said Schnabel admitted to Boston police and FBI agents that he stole two documents in 1996. He told investigators that he sold a paper issued on the death of Wright's wife for \$1,700.

Also missing was the will of Samuel Wright, George's brother.

Samuel Wright's will has since been recovered from an Oregon memorabilia dealer, Iannella said.

Iannella realized the records were missing from a vault at the Suffolk County Courthouse in October when a document signed in 1913 by Wright was listed in the catalog of a New York auction house.

That led to the realization that the will of Wright and his wife were missing, along with the wills of McCarthy and Duffy. In fact, McCarthy's entire file appeared to have been stolen.

Transitions to Schools of the Future

WHAT?..... Rowlett Lecture/Educational Facilities Symposium
WHEN?..... Friday, February 12, 1999, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.
WHERE?..... Rudder Theatre, Texas A&M University

Texas A&M's Colleges of Architecture and Education, along with the Center for Distance Learning Research and the Texas Architectural Foundation, are pleased to present a day-long symposium on trends in the planning, design, and construction of K-12 educational facilities. In addition to school design and construction, the symposium will address issues involving school environments and integration of information technology and instruction from the viewpoints of architects, educational leaders and technology experts.

Admission is free to all Texas A&M faculty, staff, and students. For more information, contact the CRS Center (409-847-9357) or visit our web site:

<http://archone.tamu.edu/~crscenter/programs/rowlett99.html>

- Williams Communications Presentation
When: Monday, February 15, 6:30-8:00 p.m.
Where: Rudder Tower, Room 308
- All students are invited to attend.

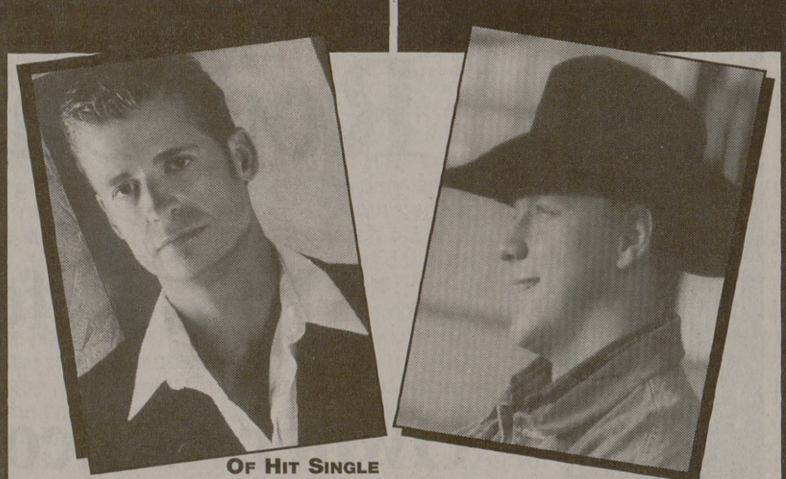
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If the idea of working for a Fortune 500 company that's ranked as one of the top 50 places to work in the U.S. appeals to you, then don't miss our presentation on February 8. Williams Communications is poised to be one of the leaders in information and communications technologies and is looking for individuals who are ready to challenge themselves in a benefit driven work environment.

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