



MIKE FUENTES/THE BATTALION

A&M freshman Neal Stephenson slides safely into second base during the Aggies' 6-1 victory over the visiting Iowa State University Cyclones Saturday at Olsen Field.

Ags travel to face Cougars

A&M Baseball Team looks to move to .500 in road games

BY AARON COHAN
The Battalion

One of the hardest problems a baseball team has is winning on the road. Despite a perfect 13-0 record at Olsen Field, the Texas A&M Baseball Team has produced only a 2-3 record on the road, but has now moved up to No. 3 in the nation thanks to a sweep of the Iowa State University Cyclones this past weekend.

"I was really happy with the performance of the team as a whole this weekend," A&M coach Mark Johnson said. "I was impressed with our pitchers because each one gave us a chance to win."

The Aggies improved their overall record to 15-3 and have not been ranked this high in three years. A&M has posted some impressive wins this season, winning 12 of its last 13 contests.

Tuesday will be one of the Aggies' biggest road tests of the year as they

travel to the confines of Cougar Field to face the University of Houston at 7 p.m. The Cougars are in a rebuilding process this year but have managed to post an 8-8 overall record.

Preseason favorites to win Conference USA, the Cougars have had a tough schedule in the early part of the season. The Cougars have lost four straight, but have played the likes of No. 19 Baylor University and No. 16 Cal. State-Fullerton.

Houston is led by junior Brandon Caraway, who boasts a .403 batting average and has helped the Cougars to an overall team average of .271. The defensive side has not been quite as strong for UH, as the Cougar pitching staff holds a 4.25 ERA.

Despite the stats, the Aggies know how hard it will be to win at Cougar Field.

"We have to be mentally prepared to play at their place," sophomore Daylan Holt said. "They are a real tough team to play at home."

A&M will look to exploit the Cougar pitching with a heavy barrage of hitting. The Aggies are boasting a team batting average of over .350, headed by preseason All-American Daylan Holt.

The right fielder leads the Aggies in nine offensive categories, including home runs (9), RBIs (33), and runs (23). A&M is averaging over 9.5 runs per game, which has given their pitching staff leeway to work with this season.

The probable starter for A&M will be sophomore Chris Scarcella. The righthander has seen limited action this year but has been effective in his appearances, with a 1.80 ERA and four K's in five innings of work.

Holt said the Aggies know these Tuesday games are just as important as the conference games to be able to host a regional series again.

"We just need to go over there with our guns loaded because it's a win we need to have," Holt said.

Joe DiMaggio dead at age 84

HOLLYWOOD, Fla. (AP) — He was simply and forever the Yankee Clipper, amazing America with The Streak, captivating it with his class and inspiring wistful lines in literature and song.

Joe DiMaggio died at home Monday, surrounded by family and friends, following a five-month battle with lung cancer.

At age 84, "Joltin' Joe" has left and gone away.

But his legend lingers, shoulder-to-shoulder with the likes of Babe Ruth and Lou Gehrig, his fellow Yankees. Very few others could measure up to them on the sports scene this century.

DiMaggio underwent surgery in October, battling complications for weeks afterward and even falling into a coma briefly during his 99-day hospitalization. But he also astounded his doctors by repeatedly bouncing back.

DiMaggio left the hospital Jan. 19 to recuperate at home, where his bed was decorated with a sign that said, "April 9, Yankee Stadium or Bust."

He died shortly after midnight, said Morris Engelberg, his longtime friend and attorney. At his bedside were brother Dominick, a former major league outfielder; two grandchildren; Engelberg; and Joe Nacchio, his friend of 59 years.

Tributes poured in from baseball's past and present.

Ted Williams, who shared the spotlight with DiMaggio in 1941 by batting .406 for Boston, the last time anyone batted .400, said: "There is no one Ted Williams admired, respected and envied more than Joe DiMaggio. Because of my close relationship with the DiMaggio family, I feel a very deep personal loss."

Major League Baseball commissioner Bud Selig said he idolized DiMaggio: "I never saw a player who was as graceful. There was an aura about him that was amazing."

The Hall of Fame flag in Cooperstown, N.Y., was lowered to half-staff, and a wreath was placed around DiMaggio's plaque. U.S. flags at Yankee Stadium, including the one in left field's hallowed Mon-

President, others praise Yankee star

(AP) In mid-century, when baseball stood above all American sports, Joe DiMaggio symbolized what fans loved about the game. Fifty years later, he had lost little of his star quality.

To those who knew him and to those who merely admired him, DiMaggio was the quintessential American hero.

"This son of Italian immigrants gave every American something to believe in," President Clinton said.

"He became the very symbol of American grace, power and skill. I have no doubt that when future generations look back at the best of America in the 20th century, they will think of the Yankee Clipper and all that he achieved."

"In this century, there have been three baseball players who transcended their sport to become part of American legend," Vice President Al Gore said. "Where Babe Ruth was known for his power and Jackie Robinson was known for his courage, Joe DiMaggio was known for dignity and grace."

DiMaggio roamed center field and ran the basepaths for 13 years, playing for 10 pennant winners and nine World Series champions despite missing three years because of service in World War II.

He batted .325 lifetime with 361 home runs. He won three American League Most Valuable Player awards, appeared in 11 All-Star games, and entered the Hall of Fame in 1955. For 50 years, he was introduced as "the greatest living player."

Only twice did DiMaggio bat less than .300. He accumulated 3,948 total bases and drove in 1,537 runs. He finished his career with 2,214 hits.

DiMaggio served briefly as a vice president and coach of the Oakland A's and as a member of the board of directors of the Baltimore Orioles. When he was not traveling, DiMaggio lived alone in his home on exclusive Harbour Island, Fla.

SPORTS IN BRIEF

A&M golf recruit wins Mexico title

Texas A&M Women's Golf Team recruit Lorena Ochoa of Guadalajara, Mexico, captured the Mexican Women's Amateur Championships Friday.

Ochoa, who signed a letter of intent with the Aggies in November, recorded a three-over-par 291 to win the four-round tournament by nine strokes.

"I'm really proud of Lorena for winning the tournament," A&M coach Jeanne Sutherland said. "Winning a tournament of this caliber shows the potential she has to be an outstanding player."

Aggie sophomore Marta Ostos, who captured the Big 12 Fall Preview title in October, placed sixth with a score of 76-76-73-79=304.

Baseball America ranks Aggies third

The Texas A&M Baseball Team moved up to third in the weekly Baseball America poll following a three-game sweep of the Iowa State University Cyclones this weekend.

The Aggies (15-3) currently trail No. 1 Rice University (20-3) and No. 2 Florida State University (16-3).

A&M jumped ahead of the University of Miami, which was ranked third last week but fell to seventh in the latest poll.

The Aggies are one of four Big 12 teams in the Baseball America Top 25. The University of Texas (15-6) moved up two spots to No. 10. Texas Tech University (16-5) and Baylor University (15-5) also moved up to 18th and 19th, respectively.

Doubles pair named February's top duo

Texas A&M sophomores Shuon Madden and Dumitru Caradima were named National Doubles Team of the Month Monday by the Intercollegiate Tennis Association.

The Aggie duo, who have recorded a 13-1 overall record and a 4-1 dual-match record, are ranked No. 1 in the nation. The pair is the first A&M doubles tandem to earn the top national ranking.

The Texas A&M Men's Tennis Team, which leads the Big 12 with 3-0 conference record, boasts a 6-0 record and is ranked 14th nationally.

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