



Sophomore right-handed pitcher Jessica Mullins started and received the win in all three of Texas State's road games against Coastal Carolina this weekend, improving to 12-9 on the year. *Daily Record photo by Gerald Castillo*

Bobcats complete road sweep over Coastal Carolina

DREW KING
SPORTS EDITOR

Texas State Softball took a series sweep over Coastal Carolina on the road this weekend.

The Bobcats' offense came on late in the first game of the series. After the Chanticleers (12-17, 1-8 Sun Belt) took a 1-0 lead in the bottom of the fourth, the visitors responded in the next frame, scoring senior Cat Crenek on an error. A two-RBI home run by senior Caitlyn Rogers sparked a five-run, six-hit inning for the maroon and gold in the top of the sixth, taking their first lead of the game. The hosts got a run back in the bottom of the sixth, but Texas State added two insurance runs in the seventh to take the 8-2 win.

Rogers finished perfect at the plate, going 4-4.

"The biggest thing for (Caitlyn) was that she did a great job of standing behind the ball today and just staying in the middle of the zone and staying in the middle of the field. Any time she does that, she's going to be successful," head coach Ricci Woodard said in a statement. "She

did a great job for us in every area of the game today."

The offensive explosion carried over the next day as the team shut Coastal Carolina out for a 9-0 victory. The Bobcats batted 8-28 as a team and took advantage of their speed when they got runners on — four different players stole a base during the game. Freshman outfielder Ciara Trahan reached the dish three times while also driving in a run. Sophomore Hannah Earls crossed home twice and collected two RBIs.

"I liked our aggressiveness and the way we swung the bats and hit the ball back up the middle of the field today," Woodard stated. "I thought we did a great job of staying behind the ball all day today."

"The biggest goal for us with (our runners) is to get them on the basepaths, because I feel like when they get on the basepaths, we can be dangerous. But I thought they did a great job of adjusting their plans today and working through the middle of the field and sending pitches back to spots

that were left open for them."

With the series already clinched, the maroon and gold's goal was to earn the sweep on Sunday. The Chanticleers jumped in front twice, scoring two runs in the first, which was answered by two runs in the second by Texas State, and adding another two in the third to go up 4-2. The visitors responded by loading the bases in the fourth with one out. An RBI single by junior Sara Vanderford brought in one score. A base hit by Rogers brought in another and an error by the hosts allowed two more runners to cross the plate. Sophomore Anna Jones drove in one more, making it a 7-4 lead for the Bobcats.

CCU tied the game in the bottom of the sixth with a three-run inning. Jones led off the seventh with a double and senior Kylie George followed up with a base hit. Earls hit into a fielder's choice, putting Jones out at home and George advancing to third base. Earls stole second, putting two runners in scoring position. A wild pitch allowed George to

take home, Vanderford swung for an RBI single to bring in Earls and the team hung on to take the 9-7 victory.

"We definitely found a way," Woodard stated. "We just kept on answering back. It would be nice to be the aggressors every now and then, but I felt like today was just a respond day and we did a great job of responding today."

Sophomore ace Jessica Mullins started and received the win in all three outings, improving to 12-9. She pitched a total of 13.0 innings during the series, allowing a combined 13 hits, three walks and five earned runs while striking out 15.

Texas State (17-13, 5-4) will travel to San Antonio on Wednesday to take on I-35 rival UTSA (9-17, 3-3 Conference USA) at 6 p.m. The team will return home for another Sun Belt series, taking on Louisiana (20-8, 7-2) inside Bobcat Softball Stadium beginning Friday at 6 p.m.

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Verlander won't start opener, Astros plan for early off-days

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WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (AP) — Still sporting a 0.00 ERA after three spring training starts, Astros ace Justin Verlander won't start on opening day as Houston plans around the early-season schedule.

Manager Dusty Baker said skipping Verlander in the opener on April 7 at the Los Angeles Angels better positions him to take advantage of three off-days the Astros have in the first two weeks.

"We've got to be a little bit apprehensive in general in the beginning," Baker said Tuesday.

Returning from Tommy John surgery, the 39-year-old Verlander hasn't pitched in a major

league game since the delayed opening day of the COVID-19-shortened 2020 season. The two-time Cy Young Award winner threw six innings that July day before being shut down for the year.

Prior to 2021, Verlander had been Houston's opening day starter every season since his arrival via trade during the 2017 season. Prior to the start of spring training, Verlander's offseason workout had him aligned for a potential opening day start.

"Could I have tried to build up for opening day? Yes," Verlander said. "But after talking to the doctors, the coaches, everybody involved, it just didn't make lot of sense to put myself through that stress for just one start."

Verlander threw four scoreless innings against Washington on Tuesday, allowing two hits. He struck out six and walked one.

Overall this spring, the right-hander hasn't permitted a run in 8 2-3 innings and given up just five hits. He's fanned 10 and walked three.

Verlander started Houston's first Grapefruit League contest this spring, then made his second start five days later. This time around, Houston flipped Verlander and Framber Valdez in the rotation.

"It would be nice and fun to be out there opening day and kind of be back out there in that atmosphere," Verlander said. "But it's also, with all the perspective that I

have over the last couple of years, I'm going to really enjoy this opening day — not having to pitch and really watching the festivities."

Valdez, 28, made his first Grapefruit League appearance on Monday, and only a hit batter blemished three perfect innings. Should Valdez get the ball on April 7, it will be his first opening day start.

The right-hander owns a career 24-17 record with a 3.74 ERA across four major league seasons.

"It's nothing to do with anything other than we are trying to choose between he and Framber — which one is probably the strongest, can handle the second and third start after that," Baker said.

LBJ Museum of San Marcos to host annual Ted Breihan Open

STAFF WRITER

The LBJ Museum of San Marcos will be hosting its annual Golf Tournament, the Ted Breihan Open, on Wednesday, May 11, at the Plum Creek Golf Course in Kyle, Texas. The format of the tournament is a shotgun start and all proceeds benefit the museum. Registration is at 7 a.m. with tee off at 8 a.m. concluding with lunch and raffle.

Ted Breihan was a community leader for decades and the museum is proud to have had Mr. Breihan as a member of the Board of Directors from 2000-14. A 1953 graduate of Southwest Texas, now Texas State University, he served on the San Marcos City Council from 1974-80 as well as other community organizations such as the Southside Community Center, the Scheib Center and the United Methodist Church. The city was saddened when Mr. Breihan passed away on November 17, 2021 at the age of 95. The LBJ Museum of San Marcos is honored to name its annual golf tournament

in Ted's honor.

The Ted Breihan Open raised thousands of dollars for the museum in the past and is one of the museum's most successful fundraisers. Don't miss out on participating in this historic event, gather your golf clubs and sign up to play today. Other sponsorship opportunities are available including cart, raffle and hole sponsors.

For more details, you may call the museum 512-353-3300, visit our website www.lbjmuseum.com or email director@lbjmuseum.com.

The LBJ Museum, located on the square in downtown San Marcos, features exhibits and archives on the formative years of President Lyndon B. Johnson at Texas State University, where he was a student from 1927-1930. The museum is free and open Thursday-Saturday from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Facilities are available for rent for special events. For more information, contact the LBJ Museum at director@lbjmuseum.com or call 512-353-3300.

Murray scores career-high 33, Spurs outlast Rockets 123-120

KRISTIE RIEKEN
AP SPORTS WRITER

HOUSTON (AP) — Dejounte Murray scored a career-high 33 points and the San Antonio Spurs held on for a 123-120 win over the Houston Rockets Monday night to inch closer to the final play-in spot in the Western Conference.

It was the fourth straight victory for the Spurs, who moved within one-half game of the Los Angeles Lakers for the 10th spot in the West.

"We hung in there and got it done so I'm proud of the guys," coach Gregg Popovich said.

Keldon Johnson had 21 points and Jakob Poeltl added 17 points with 13 rebounds as the Spurs dominated inside, outscoring Houston 72-30 in the paint. San Antonio had a season-high 82 points in the paint in a win over Houston on Jan. 25.

Rookie Jalen Green had 30 points and Kevin Porter Jr. added 26 for the Rockets, whose two-game winning streak was snapped.

"I see growth in this group it seems like every day," coach Stephen Silas said. "Even when we lose I feel like there are moments where we grow."

A 3-pointer by Kenyon Martin Jr. got the Rockets within three points with 21.5 seconds to go. Murray's free throw gave San Antonio a 121-117 edge.

Josh Christopher hit a 3 for the Rockets to make it 121-120 with 9.6 seconds left. This time Murray made both free throws to push the lead to three.

The Rockets had a chance to tie it at the buzzer, but Martin's 3-pointer rolled in and out of the basket.

"I can't believe it didn't go in," he said. "But we fought until the end and I'm so proud of our guys."

San Antonio led by seven points with just over a minute remaining on two free throws by Murray, who had 11 assists and seven rebounds on his career scoring night.

Popovich joked that Murray should be fined for falling short of a triple-double.

"He's been special this year," Popovich said.

The Spurs led by 12 to start the fourth quarter and were up by the same amount when Houston used a 5-0 run to cut the lead to 107-100 with about seven minutes to go.