



LONE STAR CONFERENCE BASEBALL

WEEKLY RELEASE | MARCH 31, 2015

Contact: Melanie Robotham | Assistant Commissioner | Office: 972-234-0033 x. 103 |
E-mail: melanie@lonestarconference.org | www.lonestarconference.org | Twitter: @LoneStarConf

LSC BASEBALL

Texas A&M-Kingsville leads the Lone Star Conference after the first half of league play with a 13-6 record.

Teams will now start the three-game series portion of the conference schedule unless a game or games was cancelled during the four-game series, then teams are required to make up one of the games.

This week's league contests include TAMUK at West Texas A&M, Angelo State at Cameron, and Eastern New Mexico at Tarleton State. The Greyhounds and Texans will play a four-game set due inclement weather cancelling their previous series.

LSC teams are playing a 10-week schedule with a four-game series and three-game series against every other team. Each four-game series shall consist of a 9-inning game Friday, a 7x7 doubleheader Saturday and 9-inning contest Sunday, and each three-game series shall consist of a 9-inning game Friday and a 7x9 doubleheader Saturday.

The overall LSC Champion will be the team(s) with the best winning percentage in regular-season conference games, while the winner of the postseason championship will be recognized as LSC Tournament Champion and receive the league's automatic qualification into NCAA postseason. The championship will be played May 7-8-9, at the No. 1 seed.

LSC baseball teams are 94-81 overall this season. In the NCAA South Central Region, the teams are currently 19-7 combined versus Heartland Conference teams and 7-6 against the Rocky Mountain Athletic Conference.

PLAYERS OF THE WEEK

HITTER

Landon Merka, Tarleton State University, JR, IF, The Woodlands, Texas, The Woodlands HS

Merka had a big weekend at the dish to lead the Texans past the LSC-leading Texas A&M-Kingsville in three of four games in Stephenville last weekend. The junior second baseman hit .429 for the weekend with over half of his hits going for extra bases while driving in a team-high six RBIs. In the three Tarleton wins, Merka went 6-10 for a .600 average with two doubles, two triples, all six of his RBIs and five runs scored. He also stole a pair of bases in the three wins last weekend. For the series, Merka boasted an .857 slugging percentage and a .467 on-base percentage as well.

PITCHER

James Gray, Eastern New Mexico University, SR, RHP, St. Petersburg, Fla., Northeast HS

Gray cemented himself in Eastern New Mexico baseball history Saturday, pitching seven innings and recording the second most strikeouts ever in a ENMU game with 13 K's. The previous record of 14 strikeouts occurred in a 12-inning game, making Gray's 13 K's in seven innings all the more impressive. The senior gave up six hits and one run to earn his first win of the season. Gray now has 43 strikeouts on the season and 30 in conference play alone. He sits at No. 7 in the conference for total strikeouts and No. 15 in innings pitched.

OTHER TOP PERFORMERS

Clint Wallace, Texas A&M University - Kingsville, went 7-of-14 with three doubles this week and continues to be one of the best all-around catchers in the nation in 2015... Wallace has thrown out seven baserunners this season and is hitting a team-high .340 in 30 games, 29 starts... on the year, he has 14 RBI and six stolen bases and is second on the team with 33 hits.

Dylan Nault, Eastern New Mexico University, helped the Greyhounds take three of four games from the nationally ranked Angelo State University Rams over the weekend, giving ENMU some much needed wins. Nault went 6-for-13 from the plate, leading his team in hits and on base percentage for the week with his three walks as well. Twice Nault drove in the tying or winning run.

Trace Hansen, West Texas A&M University, belted his first two home runs as a Buff this weekend helping the team split a four game series at Cameron. He hit .462 on the week with six hits, a team-high six runs score with the two home runs and two RBI. Hansen slugged .923 to lead the team and reached base at a .611 clip drawing a team-high four walks.

Jonathan Reyes, Cameron University, batted .375 with six hits and seven RBI in a four game series against West Texas A&M. Reyes helped the Aggies come up a 2-1 win in the series opener with a sacrifice fly with two outs in the bottom of the eighth that would lead to a game winning fielder's choice in the eleventh inning. In game two of the series he had three hits and both of CU's runs to lead them to a 2-1 win. Reyes also had a pair of doubles and on the field he came up with three putouts and 11 assists.

Hunter Houston, Tarleton State University, continued his stellar work out of the Tarleton bullpen last weekend to help lift the Texans to three wins and a series victory over Texas A&M-Kingsville. Houston pitched in two games – both Tarleton wins – last weekend for 3.2 innings of scoreless relief, allowing just two hits and striking out four. He earned a save while holding opponents to just a .167 batting average.

Ryan Benitez, Texas A&M University - Kingsville, followed the first shutout of his career with 7.0 shutdown innings in a series opening win at Tarleton State Friday... the senior struck out eight and allowed just four hits in the victory and extended his scoreless innings streak to 14.0... the senior right-hander has not given up a run since the Eastern New Mexico University series... Benitez is now 5-1 on the year with a 2.28 ERA and 57 strikeouts to only six base on balls... he has recorded five or more punch outs in seven of his eight starts and registered his fourth consecutive quality start).

Steve Naemark, Angelo State University, recorded his third double-digit strikeout performance of the season by striking out 11 in a no-decision against Eastern New Mexico in the series opener last Friday in Portales.

STANDINGS

School	LSC	Overall	Streak
Texas A&M-Kingsville	13-6	19-12	L3
West Texas A&M	12-8	20-12	W2
Angelo State	10-9	20-10	L2
Cameron	8-11	14-16	L2
Tarleton State	6-9	12-13	W3
Eastern New Mexico	5-11	9-18	W2

SCHEDULE

Tuesday, March 31, 2015

St. Mary's at Angelo State, 6 p.m.

Eastern New Mexico at Lubbock Christian, 6 p.m.

Friday, April 3, 2015

*Angelo State at Cameron, 2 p.m.

*Eastern New Mexico at Tarleton State, 3 p.m.

*Texas A&M-Kingsville at West Texas A&M, 7 p.m.

*Eastern New Mexico at Tarleton State, TBA

Saturday, April 4, 2015

*Angelo State at Cameron, 1 p.m.

*Texas A&M-Kingsville at West Texas A&M, 1 p.m.

*Eastern New Mexico at Tarleton State, 1 p.m.

*Texas A&M-Kingsville at West Texas A&M, 3 p.m.

*Angelo State at Cameron, 3 p.m.

*Eastern New Mexico at Tarleton State, 3 p.m.

All times are CST; *denotes LSC game

LAST WEEK'S RESULTS

Complete results at lonestarconference.org.

WEEKLY AWARDS

Date Hitter

F-11	Jonathan Schmitz, Tarleton State
F-17	Dylan Dyson, West Texas A&M
F-24	Cline Andrews, Texas A&M-Kingsville
M-3	Nehwon Norkeh, Angelo State
M-10	J.C. Snyder, Angelo State
M-16	Justin Winters, Cameron
M-24	Jonathan Reyes, Cameron
M-31	Landon Merka, Tarleton State

Date Pitcher

F-11	Eythan Lenz, Tarleton State
F-17	Steve Naemark, Angelo State
F-24	Steve Naemark, Angelo State (2)
M-3	Tyler Gibson, West Texas A&M
M-10	Hayden James, Texas A&M-Kingsville
M-16	Brooks Trujillo, West Texas A&M
M-24	Ryan Benitez, Texas A&M-Kingsville
M-31	James Gray, Eastern New Mexico



Naemark, who also has 15 and 12 strikeout games on his resume, now leads the LSC with 74 strikeouts and a 0.64 ERA through nine starts. ENMU managed one earned run against the junior left-hander which was the first earned run in five LSC starts. He is 5-1 and is limiting opponents to a .185 batting average this season through nine starts and 56.0 innings of work.

Dirk Masters, Cameron University, tossed his third two-hitter of the season with a complete game 2-1 win against West Texas A&M. Masters used 99 pitches and had six strikeouts with forced two double plays; he also only faced 24 batters, three over the possible minimum. In eight appearances this season, Masters has 51 strikeouts in 45 innings of work with a 2.60 ERA.

Kyle Olason, West Texas A&M University, helped lead the Buffs to a 7-2 victory in the finale of a four game series at Cameron Sunday as the Buffs battled back from a 0-2 hole to earn a split in the series. Olason allowed five hits, two runs - one earned, one walk and fanned two while holding the Aggies to a .238 batting average for the game. It was Olason's third start of the season as he improved to 3-2 on the year and his eighth appearance.

NOTES (Submitted by LSC SID's)

Angelo State

The Rams completed the first half of conference play with a 10-9 record after dropping their second straight series - this time to Eastern New Mexico in Portales in a four-game series. ASU managed to win the second game of the series but were unable to salvage a split as the Greyhounds took the finale 5-2 last Sunday. ASU host St. Mary's on Tuesday night before traveling to Lawton this weekend for a three-game series against the Aggies on their home field where the Rams will complete an 11-game conference road trip. ASU swept CU in a four-game series in San Angelo a month ago.

Cameron

The Aggie baseball team split their double-header with West Texas A&M winning game one 2-1 in 11 innings and game two 2-1, but falling in games three and four 10-5 and 7-2. Jonathan Reyes led the way for CU as he collected six hits and seven RBI over the four day span, and also drove in the game winning run in the bottom of the seventh inning in game two. Dirk Masters pitched a gem in game two, going all seven innings and giving up only one run on two hits with six strikeouts and only two walks. Deven Youngstedt was also clutch for the Aggies on the mound, throwing the final two innings of game one to secure the win, and pitching six and a third scoreless innings in game four. Cameron will continue LSC play as they host Angelo State for a three-game series, April 3-4.

Eastern New Mexico

The Eastern New Mexico University baseball team not only took 3-of-4 games from nationally ranked Angelo State University over the weekend, but set a new school record and came close to breaking a second. While the Greyhounds have had winning series against the Rams in the past, never before has ENMU taken three games from Angelo State in a four game series. Only twice before in the series history have the Greyhounds taken 2-of-3 games. The other closely contest record over the weekend series was for the most strikeouts ever thrown in a game, a record held by Mark Jackson who threw 14 strikeouts in a 12 inning affair against Wayland Baptist in 1993. James Gray came within one strikeout of tying the record when he threw 13 strikeouts in the 3-1 victory for the Rams on Saturday in the second game of the doubleheader. Zach Shank also had an incredibly efficient weekend, coming in as a reliever twice pitching 5.2 innings while giving up only four hits and no runs. From the plate Dylan Nault earned a .462 average against the Rams, going 6-of-13 from the plate and recording three RBIs. Blake Cooper also had himself a week from the plate, hitting .333 with four hits and a team leading four RBIs. Justin Paul was the only other Greyhound with multiple RBIs, recording two during the four game series.

Tarleton State

Tarleton State won three of four against Texas A&M-Kingsville in Stephenville last weekend. The Texans dropped the first game before exploding for 33 runs in the last three games to win the series. Senior shortstop Evan Robinson also made school history when the final out of the sixth - a routine grounder - gave him his 503rd career defensive assist, passing AJ Hall as the school's all-time leader in that category. The Texans will stay home next weekend for a three-game set against Eastern New Mexico, beginning Friday at 3 p.m.

Texas A&M-Kingsville

Ryan Benitez and Ryan Scott combined for 13.0 shutout innings and 15 strikeouts in five games this week, but nationally-ranked Texas A&M-Kingsville went 1-4... the Hogs end the first half of LSC play in first place with a 13-6 record.

West Texas A&M

The Buffs battled back to split a four game series at Cameron this weekend...The Aggies won the first two games in comeback fashion winning each 2-1...WT closed the series with a pair of wins in games three and four...The Buffs now are 6-8 in one run games this season...Junior Trace Hansen belted his first two career home runs and hit .462 for the series with six hits, six runs scored and two RBI...He slugged .923 and reached base at a .611 clip...On the mound WT held a 1.09 ERA for the series with 11 runs allowed, but just four were earned...The Buffs fanned 27 and held Cameron to a .234 average...WT hit much better going with a .278 clip on 37 hits with seven doubles and two home runs...The Buffs outscored Cameron 19-11 for the series...Beginning the back half of conference play, TAMUK who leads the league visits WT this weekend for a key three-game series. TAMUK won the first series 3-1 in Kingsville.



**LSC BASEBALL CHAMPIONSHIP
MAY 7-8-9 | NO. 1 SEED**

