Rice 'Hitless Wonders' Host Saint Mary Nine

By RONNIE KLINE

Winning two one run squeakers last week from TCU and Sam Houston State, the 1962 version of the Rice Owl Baseball Club established itself as the newest "hitless wonders." Garnering but eight hits in the two contests, the Owls managed to produce ten runs and edged the Frogs, 7-6 and the Bearkats 3-2.

AGAINST TCU, Owl lefthander, Ken Schoppe, got off to a shaky start, and the Frogs clipped him for three runs on six hits over the first three innings. All three markers came in a wild third inning which saw the Big Blue furnish the Frogs with two errors and a wild pitch. Four big hits, including a double by Don Reynolds, accounted for all the scoring.

However, the Owls bounced right back in the bottom of the third when Frog pitcher, Serben, walked the bases loaded. Kenny Pyle delivered a line single to right center which scored Raesener and Kirks. Then, Jim Fox smashed a towering triple to center scoring two more runs to give the Owls a 4-3 lead.

SCHOPPE PITCHED beautiful ball for the next five innings, allowing only two hits. The Owls, after loading the bases to no avail in the fifth, came back in the sixth with two big runs. Lee Raesener singled, Schoppe walked, Pyle walked, and two runs scored when the TCU third baseman, Leon Baze, threw Fox's easy grounder into right field.

The Owls added what proved to be the winning tally in the seventh inning. Gary West lined a double to left-center and took third on a wild pitch. Kirks' ground ball brought him home.

When the ninth inning rolled around, it became obvious that Schoppe was tiring. With two out and two on for the Frogs, right fielder Jay Walrath socked a three run homer which spelled the end for the Owl lefty. Wayne McClelland came in and struck out the last batter to give the Owls a hard fought 7-6 victory.

AGAINST THE Bearkats, the Owls faced a rugged righthander, Charley Willet. Willet gave up only two hits, struck out five, and walked two. However, Rice made everything count.

The Owls opened the scoring in the fourth inning when Kenny Pyle, who walked, became the first man to reach base off of Willet. Fox again came through with a big blow, this time a two run homer which stayed just fair down the left field line.

AFTER SAM HOUSTON added a run in the fifth and another in the seventh, the game went into the bottom of the ninth tied at 2-2. Willet walked Butch Blume, who then stole second base. Raesener reached first base on an error, moving Blume to third with none out. Billy Hale then chopped a little roller to the right of the mound; and before Willet could get it, Blume crossed the plate with the winning run.

Thus far, the thin Owl pitching staff has stood up remarkably well. McClelland and McKeown split the chores against Sam Houston, Schoppe having thrown eight and two-thirds against TCU. However, the Owls move into the Lion's den this Saturday as they journey to Clark Field in Austin, the only ball park in the world with a mountain in fair territory.

THE LONGHORNS have been beaten only once (Sam Houston) and have defeated Baylor in conference action. Their strength lies in a great pitching staff backed by lettermen Tom Belcher and Bob Calloway. Belcher has already thrown a string of fifteen scoreless innings this season.

Texas is very adept at the plate, also. Against Oklahoma University earlier in the year, they put together 29 runs in two games; fourteen of those runs came in one inning.

The Owls meet Saint Mary's today at 2:30 on the Rice diamond.