

Rice Raiders wrap up 2000 baseball season

Thanks to a great pitching effort, good defense and timely hitting, the Rice Raider baseball team won their first district 25-3A contest in a long, long time against the Hitchcock Bulldogs Monday, April 17, by the score of 11-6.

It's been five years since a Rice

baseball team has scratched out a win against a district foe. Five very long years. "The streak is over and that's definitely a good thing. These kids have worked their tails off this season and deserved this win. Hopefully, like I told them last night, they won't be satisfied. We need to keep working

hard and keep getting better. This was a great win for this program, but it's just a start," said their coach.

The Raiders got good starting pitching from their senior lefthander Matthew Ray and good relief from junior righty Adam Baird.

Ray started off the game on fire, striking out the first eight he faced. He continued to roll through the Bulldog lineup until he hit a wall in the top of the sixth. During the span, Ray struck out eight, gave up three hits and surrendered four runs, two of those in the sixth inning.

"Matthew pitched his tail off, again. The difference tonight was that we made plays behind him. He's pitched better games and lost, simply because we weren't making plays on defense earlier in the year," their coach stated.

This was especially a gutsy performance from Matthew considering last Monday he literally tore his upper lip in half as he collided with the outfield fence during practice. He just got his stitches out a couple of hours prior to the game. "He's a competitor... pure and simple."

The Raiders struck first in the bottom of the first inning thanks to two Bulldog fielding miscues. Matthew reached on an error by the Bulldog shortstop and two batters later, John Rucka again hit to the shortstop, scoring courtesy runner Andrew Powers on an errant throw.

The Raiders then unloaded on the Bulldogs in the bottom of the third, scoring five runs on four hits.

Lead-off hitter Ben Ortiz started the rally with a single, then stole second base. Ray then came to the plate and moved Ortiz to third on a bunt single.

Powers took over for Ray as the courtesy runner, soon stealing second base before John Rucka stepped to the plate and smashed a double to the right centerfield gap, scoring both Ortiz and Powers.

After back to back walks by Cody Thompson and Clint Korenek, Brett Boenisch singled. Three more runs scored, making the score 6-1.

The fourth inning was also productive for the Raiders as they scored three runs on four hits.

Ray led off the inning with a towering shot over the right field fence for his first home run of the year. Klay Korenek followed with a walk. Rucka then got a bloop single, putting runners on first and second.

Thompson stepped to the plate and tattooed the ball to the leftfielder, but Korenek was gunned down at third after he took a wide turn around the base. That again put runners on first and third.

Klint Korenek then grounded out, moving the runners to second and third. Boenisch once again came through, driving a double down the third base line and bringing home two.

The Raiders closed it out by scoring two more in the bottom of the sixth on a lead-off double by Rucka, a couple of walks, a fielder's choice and a Bulldog error. "Our kids played with emotion and enthusiasm tonight. We

needed this. All of us. I'm proud of each kid, especially these seniors," added their coach.

The Rice Raider baseball team got good pitching and great defense but fell short of a victory against district 25-3A foe Needville. The final score was 2-4.

The Raiders' pitcher, Klay Korenek, pitched four and one-third innings, giving up only two hits but ran into trouble in the bottom of the fourth inning as the Bluejays from Needville scored four runs to come away with the victory.

The Raiders led the contest 2-0 until that fifth inning breakdown. "I really thought we had them. They're a good ball club, especially offensively. Klay did a good job shutting down some highly potent bats," said the coach.

The Raiders struck first in the top of the fourth inning with two hits as Klay Korenek slapped a double to start things off.

A Bluejay error followed as Raider leftfielder Thompson stepped to the plate and tattooed the first pitch to drive in two runs.

The score stayed at 2-0 until the bottom of the fifth when Korenek gave up the only two hits of the night. In that inning, the Bluejays scored all four of their runs which proved to be enough for the victory.

The Raiders collected five hits while committing only one error. Their coach said, "I was very pleased with our defensive effort. Needville hit the ball, but our kids made the plays."

The Raiders' top five hitters collected all the hits as Ortiz, Ray, Klay Korenek, Rucka and Thompson all had one apiece. The Raiders fell to 1-7 in District play; 5-16 on the year.

Eight Raider errors, nine walks and two hit batters proved to be the downfall as the Stafford Spartans handed the Raiders their eighth district loss of the season by the score of 4-14.

"We weren't ready to play. We came out flat and never got anything going," said their coach.

The Raiders struck first in the top of the second as Boenisch drove home Thompson.

The lead didn't last long as the Spartans crossed the plate three times in the bottom of the third, going ahead 3-1.

The Raiders fought back in the top of the fourth as Thompson, Klint Korenek and Boenisch each crossed the plate, making the score 4-3 Raiders.

But then, the wheels fell off. The Spartans scored seven times in the bottom half of the fourth on three Raider errors, two walks and a hit batter.

"We were in a position to shut the door, but couldn't get the job done. We have to learn how to play with a lead. That's something we will do in the future."

The Spartans scored four more unanswered runs in the fifth and sixth to run away with a 14-4 victory.

The Raiders collected six hits on the night; Ray had two; and Rucka, Thompson, Boenisch and Baird each had one.

Rice dropped to 1-8 in District 25-3A; 5-17 on the year.

They faced Sealy for their final game of the season.

It was Parent's Night for the six Raider seniors as they got to showcase their talents for the last time in front of their home crowd when the Sealy Tigers came to town.

The night started off with the six Raider seniors and their parents being recognized. The seniors included Brett Boenisch (son of Mark and Cynthia Boenisch); Dale Hentzell (Denis and Kitty Hentzell); Cody Thompson (Michael and Denise Thompson); Klay Korenek (Buddy and Jennifer Korenek); Klint Korenek (Dennis and

Suzi Korenek); and Matthew Ray (Cliff and Ramona Ray).

"I want to give a special thanks to each of the kids. They've done everything we've asked them. They will definitely be missed and hard to replace. In addition, I would like to thank their parents for what they have contributed to this program. I have a lot of admiration for each of them as well."

The game wasn't quite as joyous as the pre-game entertainment, as the Tigers ended the Raiders season with a 15-4 victory, resulting in a 1-9 district and 5-18 overall record for the Raiders.

The Tigers struck quickly and often as they scratched out two runs in the first frame, five in the third, two in the fourth, one in the fifth and five in the sixth.

Meanwhile, the Raiders struggled as they scored in only two innings, the third (three runs) and sixth (one run).

The Raiders pitching was not what it needed to be as the Tigers collected 13 hits and walked nine times.

"Our pitchers (Klay Korenek, Adam Baird and Matthew Ray) just didn't have it tonight. Against a good hitting team like Sealy, you have to get ahead of hitters and make them hit your pitch. We weren't able to do that and it cost us. Defensively, we played good enough to win, but it's hard to defend walks."

Offensively, the Raiders scratched out seven hits, led by Klay Korenek with three and Boenisch with two. Ray

and Thompson (double) collected the other two.

"I really didn't know what to expect coming into this year. A lot of people told me a lot of things, but I tried to go in with an open mind. One thing I found out quickly though was that these kids would work their tails off and they did that every day. It's hard for people on the outside to see the improvement we saw as a coaching staff, especially when you win only five games. But when we look back at where we were at the beginning of the year and compare it to where we ended up, I can positively say that we got better and that's really all we can try to do. I'm looking forward to next season and I'll know what to expect then. I'll expect to win and I'll expect all the guys returning and those newcomers to expect nothing less. It's time to turn the tide."

Final District 25-3-A standings

School	Won/Loss
Needville*	9-1
Sealy**	8-2
Sweeny	4-6
Stafford	4-6
Hitchcock	4-6
Rice	1-9

Sweeny, Stafford and Hitchcock were involved in a playoff with Sweeny having a bye for the first game. Stafford defeated Hitchcock, then Sweeny defeated Stafford to claim third place and a play-off spot.

*District Champion

**Runner-up



Raider tennis team 2000

Members of the Rice High School tennis team this year were D.J. Sosa, Leslie Waddell, Jacqueline Thomas, Angela Phillips, Patrick Milentz, Tiffany Stern, Marques Johnson, Matt Hinz, Cliff Keith, Kristin Wesselski, Koehl Crane and Leila Baggett.

RHS Photo

A&M Club gives three scholarships locally

There were three scholarships of \$1,500 each presented at the Colorado County Texas A&M Club's Muster, held at the Weimar Veteran's Memorial Hall April 21.

Approximately 100 attended, including some of the previous years scholarship winners.

The Muster was conducted by Dr. William Rugely.

The three selected to receive

scholarships were Amy R. Macaulay of Weimar High School, daughter of Virginia Ohnheiser; Brandon Shanks, Rice High School, son of Debra and Eugene E. Shanks Jr.; and Micah Denton, Columbus High School, son of Nancy and David Denton.

These young people were selected from a group of excellent students from the three county high schools.

Korenek in 'Who's Who'

The 2000 edition of *Who's Who Among Students in American Junior Colleges* will include the names of 57 students from Wharton County Junior College who have been selected as national outstanding campus leaders.

On that list from this area is Valerie Korenek of Garwood.

Campus nominating committees and editors of the annual directory have included the names of these students based on their academic achievement, service to the community, leadership in extracurricular activities and potential for continued success.

Those selected join an elite group of students from more than 1,800 institutions of higher learning in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and several foreign nations.

Outstanding students have been honored in the annual directory since it was first published in 1996.

"Running for president must be like having babies. You have to forget what it was like the first time before you want to do it again."

— Sen. Phil Gramm (R-Texas)

RICE HIGH SCHOOL ALL-SPORTS BANQUET AWARDS

Raider Booster Club Scholarships

Brandon Shanks, Angela Phillips, Klay Korenek, Dale Hentzell, Klint Korenek and Brett Boenisch.

FOOTBALL

Linemen of the Year

John Rucka & Norris Powell

Most Valuable Players

Klay Korenek &

Brandon Shanks

Most Improved

Brett Boenisch

POWERLIFTING

Most Valuable Players

Sarah Gould & Norris Powell

VOLLEYBALL

Most Valuable Player

Angela Phillips

Defensive Player

Shelley Boenisch

BASEBALL

Most Valuable Player

Klay Korenek

Most Improved

Brett Boenisch

SOFTBALL

Most Valuable Players

Crystal Alcalar &

Lana Engstrom

Fighting Heart Award

Shelley Boenisch

Most Improved

Heather Henske

New-Comer of the Year

Lauren Spanihel

TRACK

Girls

Most Valuable Player

Stacy Schneider

Field Event Award

Erica Weems

Boys

Most Valuable Players

Jessie Upson &

Adrian Middleton

TRACK

Field Event Award

Dante Fuller

TENNIS

Outstanding Players, Girls

Angela Phillips &

Jacqueline Thomas

Most Valuable Players

Marques Johnson &

Patrick Milentz

BASKETBALL

Girls

Most Valuable Player

Erica Dunmore

Honorable Mention

Lakeisha Johnson &

Janna Janish

New-Comer of the Year

Crystal Alcalar

3-D Award

Janna Janish

Boys

Most Valuable Players

Adrian Middleton &

Marques Johnson

New-Comer of the Year

Marques Johnson

Honorable Mention

Jason Barrow

Fighting Heart Award

Jessie Upson

GOLF

Most Valuable Player

Patrick Milentz

MOST OUTSTANDING

CHEERLEADER

Jacqueline Thomas

SPECIAL OLYMPICS

MVPs

Bowling: J.L. Miller

Swimming: Erica Ellenbogen

Track & Field: Clifford Miller

Basketball: Eric Guthrie

The Raider Booster Club congratulates these athletes and all the students who participated in a sport this past year. Good job!

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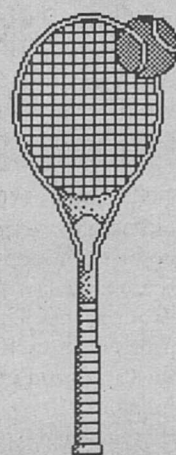
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