



Crayton, Lady Rattlers Obtain Redemption: San Marcos softball holds off Dripping Springs in extra frames

By Randy Stevens, Sports Editor – The Daily Record – April 4, 2001

DRIPPING SPRINGS – Redemption can come in many forms. Friday night at Dripping Springs, reparation was in the form of a hard-hit double by San Marcos junior Jennifer Crayton.

Crayton's hard shot into left-center field in the top of the ninth inning – scoring Linda Spytek – not only helped give the Lady Rattlers a 3-2 win over the Lady Tigers, it made up for an error the third baseman made in the top of the sixth inning which allowed the Lady Tigers to tie the score and send the game into extra innings.

“I felt bad after (the sixth inning error) but I didn't let it get to me,” said Crayton. “But I stopped thinking about it, got out there and thought only about getting a hit and getting on base.”

The significance of the hit was even greater with a glance at the District 26-4A standings. With its second win over Dripping Springs and a 5-2 record, San Marcos is now tied for first place with the Lady Tigers, but holds the tie-breaking advantage.

“That put us in the driver's seat,” sad San Marcos head coach Dennis Moe. “This game meant the difference of being in first or third place and I know which spot we prefer to be in.”

The lady rattlers held a 2-0 lead going into the sixth inning, as junior right-hander Jessica Nusbaum baffled the Lady Tigers at the plate, allowing only one hit in the first five innings.

But with two outs in their half of the sixth, the Lady Tigers started to mount a comeback.



The rally started when Meagan Stewart reached base on a bunt to Nusbaum, but was called safe after the umpire had started to call her out. Leanne Pettus followed with a single center field to put runners at first and second as Sara Kinney followed with a single to right field. The right fielder's inability to field the ball cleanly allowed Stewart to score from second base, cutting San Marcos' lead to 2-1.

Dripping Springs tied the game when Kristy Springfield popped up a short, playable fly between home and third base, but a collision by Crayton and SMHS catcher Kristen Williams allowed the ball to fall to the ground, as Pettus scored from third base.

"We should have been out of that inning," said Moe. "I think we found out why we can afford any mistakes."

As the game went into extra innings both teams struggled to mount any offense until the Lady Rattlers generated the winning run in the top of the ninth.

With two outs, Spytek reached base and later took second on a passed ball. With 2-2 count, Crayton got hold of a fast rise ball and which shot quickly out to right center field, as the Dripping Springs outfielders chase the ball to the wall. Spytek scored easily second and was greeted at the plate by her enthusiastic teammates.

Dripping Springs didn't give in, as Springfield led off the bottom of the ninth a hard-hit single to center field. A huge out was recorded when Kim Dunn backed off a bunt attempt and popped up a fly ball SMHS second baseman Amy Picasio, as Keely Tucker provided the second out with a successful sacrifice bunt that moved Springfield to second base.

But Dripping Springs' hopes of a comeback were dashed when Brittany Sandall hit a hard grounder to SMHS shortstop Nina Trevino, who promptly scooped up the ball and made the play at first to secure a win.

"That's the way the game should be played," said Moe. "To have a close game, that goes nine innings and a close score throughout, that's the way good softball games are supposed to be.

"We just hung in there. We had one bad inning, but we didn't let it get us down," added Moe. "We came back and did what we had to do."



San Marcos took a 1-0 lead in the first inning after two Dripping Springs errors allowed Crayton to score after reaching base with a walk.

The Lady Rattlers scored their second run in the third, as singles from Ashley Brannan and Williams scored Trevino, who also reached base on a single.

Nusbaum went the distance for the Lady rattlers, allowing only five hits and no earned runs in the nine innings of work. She also truck out nine hitters while allowing no walks.

San Marcos is back in action Tuesday night with a 7 p.m. game at Lake Travis.