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File photo by KEVIN M. COX, Leader Staff
Roger Clemens will grace the mound at the Dell Diamond on June 16. As of press time, tickets were going fast. Call 255-BALL to order them.

Clemens to make start with Express

Leader Staff Report

Roger Clemens officially signed with the Houston Astros on Wednesday and his journey back to the big club includes a stop in Round Rock.

The surefire Hall of Famer will throw in a tuneup stint with the Triple-A Round Rock Express on June 16 when the club takes on the New Orleans Zephyrs at 7:05 p.m.

The Rocket's minor-league tuneup tour begins on June 6 with the Single-A Lexington Legends. Clemens' 19-year-old son, Koby, plays third base for the Legends.

Clemens will pitch for the Double-A Corpus Christi Hooks on June 11 when the Texas League team faces San Antonio.

The 43-year-old Clemens accepted a deal that will pay him approximately \$14 million — the pro-rated value of his one-year, \$22-million deal — to finish out the season with the Astros.

He is scheduled to join the Astros rotation on June 22 to start against the Minnesota Twins.

Clemens, a seven-time Cy Young award winner, has not appeared in a minor-league game since 2002 when he threw for the New York Yankees' Single- and Double-A affiliates.

The Dell Diamond start will bring Clemens close to his collegiate home, the University of Texas.

This will be Clemens' 23rd season in a big-league uniform.

Ironically, Clemens is second all-time with 4,502 career strikeouts. Nolan Ryan, who belongs to the Express ownership group, is Major League Baseball's all-time leader with 5,714 strikeouts.

15-5A All-District Softball



Co-MVPs

Rachel Zabriskie, McNeil
 Carrie Monroe, Westwood

COACH OF THE YEAR

Tiffany Gates, Westwood

NEWCOMER OF THE YEAR

Tatum Boltinghouse, Pflugerville



Photos by KEVIN M. COX, Leader Staff
 Pictured from left to right are: District 15-5A co-MVP Carrie Monroe, Coach of the Year Tiffany Gates and co-MVP Rachel Zabriskie.

FIRST TEAM ALL-DISTRICT

Jen Lee	McNeil
Alyce Ghedi	McNeil
Kelsey Cogdell	McNeil
Courtney Ostrout	Westwood
Claire Bensimon	Westwood
Brittany Mack	Westwood
Haylee Staton	Westwood
Kim Crouse	Round Rock
Alex DiBari	Round Rock
Anna Guzman	Round Rock
Kolby Fesmire	Georgetown
Sam Dominguez	Georgetown
Ashley Kirk	Stony Point
Bobby Neff	Stony Point
Alex Robertson	Leander
Jessica Rocco	Cedar Park
Jessica Rattan	Cedar Park

SECOND TEAM ALL-DISTRICT

Cheyenne Parrish	McNeil
Kate Purdom	McNeil
Erin Ford	McNeil
Laura Jones	Westwood
Courtney Mack	Westwood
Chrissy Short	Westwood
Mackenzie Baack	Round Rock
Brittany Cluck	Round Rock
Samme Lisowsky	Georgetown
Kim Bluntzer	Stony Point
Jessica Robertson	Stony Point
Melanie Montelongo	Leander
Danica Martinez	Leander
Nichole Peck	Pflugerville
Christina Ramos	Pflugerville

Monroe, Zabriskie share MVP

After ending playoff drought, Gates takes coaching honor

By JEFF CASPERSEN
 Sports Editor

The District 15-5A softball MVP race ended in a deadlock between McNeil pitcher Rachel Zabriskie and Westwood shortstop Carrie Monroe.

Zabriskie recorded a 12-1 record and 0.58 ERA for the season. She also .394 for the district champion Mavericks, who finished the season 21-2-1.

Monroe finished the regular season with a .328 average with a homer and 16 RBIs for the Warriors, who finished second in the 15-5A standings.

Both are juniors.

First-year Westwood coach Tiffany Gates took home the district's Coach of the Year honor. She guided the Warriors to a 12-2 district mark and the school's first postseason appearance since 2001.

Round Rock ISD dominated the All-District list, taking 12 of the 17 spots on the first team and 10 of 15 second-team spots.

Jen Lee, Alyce Ghedi and Kelsey Cogdell were first-teamers for McNeil. Lee hit .459 with 19 runs and 16 RBIs, while Cogdell batted .354 with 19 runs and Ghedi posted a .382 average with 14 RBIs and two home runs.

The Mavericks' playoff run was cut short by The Woodlands in the area round of the UIL state playoffs.

Westwood led all schools with four first-teamers. Courtney Ostrout, Haylee Staton and pitching duo Claire Bensimon and Brittany Mack made the squad.

The Warriors saw their season end in the area round as well, with Huntsville taking a best-of-three series.

Round Rock, which took third place with a 11-3 district mark,

15-5A SOFTBALL

2006 Final Standings

Teams	W	L	GB	Pct.
McNeil	13	1	—	.929
Westwood	12	2	1.0	.857
Round Rock	11	3	2.0	.786
Stony Point	7	7	6.0	.500
Georgetown	7	7	6.0	.500
Cedar Park	3	11	10.0	.214
Leander	2	12	11.0	.143
Pflugerville	1	13	12.0	.071

placed Alex DiBari, Anna Guzman and pitcher Kim Crouse on the first team.

The Dragons too made it as far as the area round, in which the team lost to Bryan in a best-of-three set.

Stony Point placed a pair of players on the first team in Ashley Kirk and Bobby Neff. The Tigers wrapped up district play with a 7-7 record, good enough to earn a fourth-place tie with Georgetown.

Express suffer another 1-run loss

Late Redbird rally capped by Hanson game-winning double



Photo by KEVIN M. COX, Leader Staff
Round Rock Express reliever Joe Valentine sits alone in the dugout after surrendering the lead to the Memphis Redbirds on Tuesday.

By JEFF CASPERSEN
 Sports Editor

The ball didn't fly quite as freely, but the result was the same. The Round Rock Express, back home after a brutal trek into the thin air of Albuquerque, dropped a fourth consecutive game by one run on Tuesday.

An eighth-inning double by Travis Hanson drove in two runs and lifted the Memphis Redbirds a 3-2 win over the Express at the Dell Diamond.

The streak of one-run losses is a franchise record. "That's just part of the game," said Round Rock first baseman Royce Huffman. "You don't like to lose, whether you lose by one run or 10 runs."

Hanson's hit capped a wild eighth inning that saw both first baseman Brian Daubach and manager Danny Scheaffer earn ejections.

With the Redbirds trailing 2-1 and a runner on second, Daubach ripped a chalk-hugging grounder down the first-base line that had extra bases written all over it.

To Daubach's dismay, the ball was ruled foul. The 6-foot-1, 230-pounder slammed the ground with his helmet and shouted some choice words at the home plate umpire. While Daubach survived that barrage,

Minors, striking umps agree on labor deal

Regular umpires set to return on or before June 12

Leader Staff Report

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. — The men in blue finally got their due. Well, they at least found middle ground.

Minor League Baseball received word on Tuesday that its striking umpires ratified a six-year collective bargaining agreement, halting a season-long impasse.

Members of the Association of Minor League Umpires and Minor League Baseball agreed to a deal that provides for a \$100 per month across-the-board salary increase and a \$90 monthly

jump in per diem. Both increases begin this season.

Umpires are expected back on the diamond on or before June 12 and the leagues are responsible for bringing the strikers back to work.

"We are happy to have reached a deal that will assure labor peace with our umpires through the 2011 season," said Minor League Baseball Vice President Pat O'Conner. "We look forward to continuing another great season of baseball without the distraction of a strike."

Replacement umpires had been working games as independent contractors since minor league games began on April 6.

After a lengthy stall in talks, a federal mediator last week helped to resume negotiations between the two sides.