

UT sets NCAA win mark

By KIRK BOHLS
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The phone rang in the coaches' office of the Texas locker room, interrupting the New Year's Eve-like festivities.

"Jones, Atlanta's calling," someone yelled out. "Hurry, Jerry, he wants to talk to YOU."

The President hadn't actually called. In fact, Jerry Jones probably wouldn't have noticed if he had.

Jones had already been given enough V.I.P. treatment as it was. Appropriately enough, it was Jones' important hit that gave Texas a razor-close 3-2 win over Minnesota Tuesday night at Disch-Falk Field.

With the bases loaded and two outs in the last inning, Texas trailed Minnesota 2-1, and Jones had a 2-2 count on him, putting the Longhorns just one pitch away from losing its 31-game win streak.

Jones sliced a belt-high fastball that just cleared the glove of the Gophers' all-American shortstop Paul Molitor and dropped into left field to score

two runs and give Texas its 32nd straight win of the year.

Three hours later, Texas had a 5-2 victory to go with it, making the 'Horns 33-0 and breaking the known all-time national collegiate baseball win streak of 32 consecutive victories set by Arizona State in 1972.

Compared with the first game, though, the second game was a rout.

If the ending in the opener made one think it seemed just like yesterday when Jones did the same thing, that's because it was yesterday. Jones had two similar clutch hits to tie games and keep the win streak alive Monday.

"I don't know what to say," said Jones, wearing a smile that refused to quit. "The same as yesterday. The one thing I didn't want to do was strike out. I was just guarding the plate and he (U.M. pitcher Brian Denman) was challenging me.

"I went up there waiting for the Wild Bunch to do their Johnny Carson line — you know,

'Heeeeeere's Jerry.' After I hit the ball, I saw the shortstop jumping up and then I saw it drop."

Jones was dropped soon after. Or maybe mugged is a better description as the Texas team swarmed around him with the crowd of 2,500 cheering madly. "It was like a gang fight," Jones said.

Minnesota, now 2-4 on the year, came close to blowing the game open on several occasions. A 385-foot, solo home run by Jeff Neutzling that bounced over the left-field fence and hit a moving shuttle bus gave the Gophers a 2-1 lead in the second inning.

"When he hit that one out of here, I said, 'Forget the fastball.' They'll rip you if you throw fastballs because they swing from the heels," said Mickey Reichenbach, the winning pitcher. "Coach came out in the fifth and told me I was throwing terrible but I already knew that."

Coach Cliff Gustafson reminded Reichenbach to go with breaking pitches, something he did twice to get out of bases-loaded, one-out situations without a run in the fifth and seventh.