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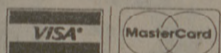


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Tatum: a female Moses Malone

By CHAREAN WILLIAMS
Assistant Sports Editor

"Moses, Moses, Moses," echoed through an empty G. Rollie White Coliseum. Texas A&M guard Todd Holloway was calling the Aggie Ladies' center — Michell Tatum.

The Aggie men's team gave Tatum that title because they said she played like NBA All-Star Moses Malone of the Philadelphia 76ers.

"Most of the guys on the men's basketball team call me Baby Moses," Tatum said. "We both play a physical style and really go after the offensive rebounds. I'm listed as 6-foot-3 on the roster, but I'm really only 6-foot 3/4, so I'm four inches shorter than most players I go up against."

Tatum is indeed a bully on the boards. She is averaging 10.8 rebounds per game in Southwest Conference play, not to mention her 16 point scoring average.

"Getting good position is all you have to do to get the rebounds," Tatum said. "You just have to block out and know when the other players are going to shoot."

Tatum's success has not come easily, however. In the Aggie's second game this season against Sam Houston, Tatum suffered a knee injury which at the time seemed to signal an end to her A&M career.

"I got hit from the outside and it pushed my knee inside," Tatum said. "It tore my medial ligaments. It was just a freak accident."

Tatum heavily tapes her knee before games and practices, but has encountered a few problems.

"When it gets cold, it aches," Tatum laughed. "I was a little hesitant at first. (A&M) Coach (Lynn) Hickey worked me back into it slowly."

"I was really just glad to be back, but it was hard to realize how many limitations I had. I have a lot of proving to do. I'm never satisfied."

During her Jacksonville High School career, Tatum earned All-District, All-Region and MVP in 1981. She was recruited by most teams in the SWC and almost every junior college in Texas.

The choice was easy for Tatum after she visited the A&M campus.

"I liked the corps," Tatum said. "The people were so friendly. Everyone said, 'Howdy.' I didn't like the atmosphere of t.u."

The University of Texas was the first team to recruit Tatum. This season the Horns have a 24-2 record and are ranked No. 1 in the nation. The Aggies are 12-12. Does Tatum have any regrets?

"Winning isn't everything," she said. "I'm proud of being an Aggie and have enjoyed playing with the people on our team. You never know what might have happened if I had gone there."

"I didn't want to jump into a winning team. I wanted to go where I could help out."

She has done more than just help out. As Tatum's senior season draws to a close, she wants nothing more than to end it in a flurry.

"I've been very pleased with this season," she said. "We weren't expected to do much before the season began. We lost some close games we should have won, but we're just thinking about the games we have left."

"I think we're starting to reach our peak now. We're getting to know where our teammates are going to be on the floor. We'll probably get into the (Southwest Conference) tournament. We want to be the underdog. We want to go in and surprise some people."

"That reminds me of North Carolina State (when they won the National Championship in 1983). That's what I dream about."

Tatum is currently the Aggies' career scoring leader, having passed teammate Jenni Edgar Wednesday night. If her current rebounding average continues, she will leave A&M with an average of 13 rebounds per game, another Aggie record.

"It's always a good feeling to have your name in the record books," she said. "But, it doesn't mean that much if we don't do well the rest of the season. I couldn't have done it without the four others on the floor and the six or seven on the bench."

The women's professional league or a coaching career await Tatum after graduation.

"If all goes well with the knee, I'd



Photo by DEAN

Texas A&M center Michell Tatum goes up for a shot against Texas' C.J. Jones (32) in Wednesday night's 101-73 loss to No. 1 Longhorns. Since returning from a knee injury in 1984, Tatum has led the Ags in rebounding and scoring.

like to give the pro league a shot," she said. "I will graduate sometime next year and would like to coach and teach. I also want to own my own sporting goods store and health spa."

However, when she leaves A&M won't be leaving A&M. "I wish I had several more years here. I came here to play ball and I will hate to leave when time comes."

Ag netters overcome problems, scalp Indians

By BRANDON BERRY
Sports Writer

The No. 14 Texas A&M men's tennis team overcame wind, drizzling rain and the underrated Northeast Louisiana Indians to record its eighth dual-match win of the year Thursday at the Omar Smith Tennis Center.

"This is a great win for us," said A&M Coach David Kent. "Northeast Louisiana has got a great team. You're gonna really hear from them

in the national rankings. We're really lucky to have eaked out a win because it was close out there."

The standings were tied going into the doubles matches at three singles victories apiece. Marcel Vos, who hadn't lost a match all season, was beaten in straight sets and there were three three-set matches and four tie-breakers.

In fact, the Aggies could have been down 4-2 after singles play were it not for the comeback win by

Kimmo Alkio in No. 2 singles.

Alkio, trailing 5-4 in the third and final set, fought off two match points to win the game and went on to win the match on a passing shot.

"I've seen him do it time and time again," Kent said. "Kimmo has a heart this (stretching his arms wide) big. And Marcel and Greg (Hill) came back from not playing very well in singles to just play super in doubles."

"This may be the best doubles

we've played at A&M."

The Aggies won the match in the No. 2 doubles team of Hill came through, 6-3, 6-3 winners for the Aggies. Mark Smith and Russ Smith won No. 3 doubles and Dean Goff No. 6 singles.

Grant Connell, A&M's singles player, had a hard time in his service games, but finished for a 7-6, 6-3 victory over the garded Jon Trembl of NLSU.

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