

# Atkinson ready to ignite unit

## Linebacker leads defense by example and experience

By William Harrison

THE BATTALION

There is one play coaches and players talk about when they describe A&M inside linebacker Jason Atkinson.

"A play that stands out in my mind - (Rice's) Bert Emanuel is one of the fastest quarterbacks in the country and (Atkinson) chased him down and tackled him behind the line for a loss," A&M defensive tackle Eric England said.

A&M defensive coordinator Bob Davie remembers the play as well.

"That's probably his claim to fame right now is that he got the fastest kid in the conference on a roll-out pass by chasing him down," Davie said.

"And he's not the fastest kid on our team, but one thing you know when you go out there to play, you can expect a certain level from him and you're going to get it."

Atkinson, an All-America and Butkus award candidate, heads into his third season as a starter. He has played all four years since he stepped in as a redshirt freshman in 1990 against the University of Texas, responding with 10 tackles.

He has played side-by-side with NFL A&M linebacking alumni Quentin Coryatt, William Thomas and Marcus Buckley and has spent two years as the signal-caller in Davie's defense.

Atkinson has also been busy off the field. Academically, he will be working on his Masters degree this fall after graduating last spring with a degree in civil engineering. Plus, he got married June 19.

And he savors the heat. "I love the heat - when it's about 110-120 degrees," Atkinson said. "Especially when you're on the field like at the LSU game early in the season and you look across the line and it's just roasting the guy across the line from you."

"Man, that just gets me so excited because it's not affecting me, and it gives me an extra, added advantage."

Getting a leg-up is something Davie said Atkinson has done over the years. Davie said he sat down with Atkinson after his redshirt year and went over the things he had to do in order to play at A&M.

Davie said he was amazed at what he saw when Atkinson returned for his second year.

"As a freshman, he had some limitations as far as his quickness, his footwork and change of direction," Davie said. "A lot of players really don't want to work at their weaknesses; Jason works at his weaknesses and I think has overcome some things."

"I think the thing that separates Jason



Darrin Hill/The Battalion

Atkinson

maybe from some of the other guys is if you tell Jason something, he will take it to heart and work on it."

Atkinson, who was not highly recruited out of Westfield high school under former A&M

coach Emory Bellard, credits A&M and Davie's system for giving him the opportunity to play and excel.

"I've gotten to play a lot more than I ever thought possible, and it's incredible to think that five years ago, I thought that I'd be here just going to school," Atkinson said.

"It's real exciting to play at Texas A&M, especially for (Coach Davie). As soon as a defense is played anywhere in the nation or world, amateur, pro or semi-pro, the coaches are watching it to see if it's going to work and we put it in for a little while to see if it fits in our scheme."

Davie said the defense will emphasize Atkinson's blitzing more this season than last.

"We've always had a good blitzer at that position, and we do a lot of inside plug stunts," Davie said. "Jason has a good knack for getting the feel for (an opposing team's) snap count - he times those real well."

"Plus he's fearless - he's not afraid to throw his body in there."

England said Atkinson gives the players security because he is backing them up, and said Atkinson's technical knowledge of the game and fearlessness allow Atkinson to make plays that people don't expect him to make.

"He brings a controlled relentless pursuit and recklessness," England said. "He gets excited, gets (the rest of) us pumped, makes big plays and makes a lot of noise."

Atkinson says he is looking forward to his final year at A&M and wants to bring the defense together and keep last year's blowout Cotton Bowl loss to Notre Dame in perspective.

"Since I first became a starter we've lost three games, and I definitely think that it is the worst loss I've ever taken at A&M," Atkinson said. "I knew there was an extreme possibility of us getting embarrassed because of the affect the press was having and the fact that we were losing focus."

"If we ever get the chance to do it again, we will not lose focus."

With talk of awards as well as Cotton Bowl and national championship possibilities again being mentioned in the same breath with many of A&M's players, including himself, Atkinson said he wants to keep the hype from squandering the team's promising outlook this fall.

"It's fun to talk about Outland Trophy, Thorpe and Butkus and all that, but you really have to concentrate during the season on the season," Atkinson said. "When you try to highlight one or two players that takes away from your team, and you're taking away from your ability to win games."

"You might be trying to win a trophy here and there, but you'd do a better job if you just forgot about the trophy and played football."

## Tips for Aggie fans: Don't leave home without them

If you are planning to watch some Aggie football at Kyle Field this season (and you should be), there are a few things you need to know before venturing out. The following tips are provided to help make your life a little easier, so you can enjoy watching the Aggies "beat the hell outta" all their opponents.

### TICKET INFORMATION

Most students purchase their football tickets during registration. But if you have not purchased tickets, you can go to the Athletic Ticket Office in 113 G. Rollie White Coliseum to add the ticket option to your fees. If you are not interested in buying a season ticket, individual tickets can be purchased on Fridays if they are available. Ticket prices range from \$20 to \$30.

The week following a game, there are designated days for each class to pick up their reserved tickets.

Monday: graduates and seniors  
 Tuesday: juniors  
 Wednesday: sophomores  
 Thursday: freshmen  
 Friday: all classes and non-season

Each day a specific section is designated and tickets are randomly distributed from that area.

One student can pick up no more than 10 tickets (you must have an I.D. for each ticket). However, at least half of the I.D.s must be of the classification designated for that day, or higher.

### GUESTS

Students who have season tickets can purchase one guest ticket per I.D. or convert a student ticket to a guest ticket for half the price of a regular guest ticket.

Note: Guests tickets purchased with a student I.D. will be located on the student section in Kyle Field.

### PARKING

The following parking lots are reserved on game days and are not available to the general public:

- 37 (across from the MSC)
- 46, 48, 62, 69, 91, 95 (all surrounding Kyle Field)
- 49 (long, staff lot off Welborn Rd.)
- 56 (fish lot off of Joe Routt Blvd.)
- 63 (Park & Ride by Olsen Field)
- 96 (fish lot on north side of Joe Routt Blvd.)

Additionally, these lots must be vacated by 4:00, if they are commuter lots, and 6:30, if they are staff lots, on the day preceding the game.

Signs will be posted at these areas.

Suggested parking areas include the parking garages, lot 89 and 61 (fish lots), and the streets.

The most important thing to do to avoid a parking hassle is to

leave early. Arriving two hours prior to the game should leave you plenty of time.

### WHAT TO BRING

If you have ever stood for four hours at an Aggie football game in the extreme heat - or occasionally, the cold - you know that you can't go empty-handed. Here is list of things you may consider to bring to make the day more bearable:

- I.D. (You can't get in without it.)
- ticket
- 12th Man towel
- money (Drinks aren't cheap, but at least you can keep the cup).
- sunblock (The afternoon games can be killers.)
- baseball hat (Just make sure to take it off doing yells.)
- binoculars (Freshmen.)
- Hershey's Kisses (If you don't want to kiss your date.)
- And hopefully for the Texas game, cotton.

**\$18 SEARS AUTHORIZED DRIVING SCHOOL \$18**  
**DEFENSIVE DRIVING CLASSES**

**Ticket Dismissal \$18.00 Insurance Discount**  
 With this coupon

Every Sunday At Post Oak Mall 11:00 AM to 6:00 PM For Info or Reservations Call: 1-800-767-3677

**DURANGO COUNTRY DANCING**

**C & W DANCE LESSONS**

**Beginning: Learn the Basics -**  
 2-Step, Polka, Waltz and Turns.  
 Dates: Sept. 6, 13, 20, & 27 - Time: 7:15-8:45 p.m.  
 Dates: Sept. 7, 14, 21, & 28 - Time: 7:30-9:00 p.m.

**Intermediate: Beyond the Basics-**  
 Pretzel, Lariat, The El Paso, Jitterbug, & More.  
 Dates: Sept. 6, 13, 20, & 27 - Time: 8:45-10:15 p.m.

**Advanced: Add more Swing -**  
 Learn the Whip, Donna, Reverse Pass, Thread-the-Needle, & More.  
 Dates: Sept. 8, 15, 22, & 29 - Time: 7:30-9:00 p.m.

Where: Jazzercise Cost: \$20/Student \$22/Non-Student  
**846-7023**

**CAREER CENTER UPCOMING EVENTS**

**Week of August 30 - September 3**

**Monday, August 30:**  
 Placement Orientation 2:00 p.m. 111 SSB  
 Placement Orientation 7:00 p.m. 102 Zachry

**Tuesday, August 31:**  
 Placement Orientation 10:00 a.m. 111 SSB  
 Coop Orientation 4:00 p.m. 111 SSB  
 Placement Orientation 7:00 p.m. RT

**Wednesday, September 1:**  
 Placement Orientation 10:00 a.m. 111 SSB  
 Resume Writing 4:00 p.m. 111 SSB  
 Placement Orientation 7:00 p.m. 102 Blocker

**Thursday, September 2:**  
 Placement Orientation 2:00 p.m. 111 SSB  
 Interviewing Techniques 4:00 p.m. 111 SSB  
 Coop Orientation 5:30 p.m. 111 SSB  
 Placement Orientation 7:00 p.m. 115 Kleberg

**Friday, September 3:**  
 Placement Orientation 2:00 p.m. 302 Rudder

SSB = Student Services Building  
 RT = Rudder Theatre

**FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL: 845-5139**



## SMART MONEY.

With a complete range of banking services,  
 First Interstate Bank is  
 the smart choice for smart money.



### SPECIAL STUDENT CHECKING OFFER

Limited offer

If you are currently enrolled in a college or university, bring this coupon to any participating branch for no monthly service charge on a new Basic Checking account for 12 months and receive your first order of checks free!

Offer valid only at participating branches listed below:

**College Station**  
 615A University East  
 (Located inside Randall's)  
 846-9338

Offer valid only with coupon for a limited time, offer expires December 31, 1993.

## DANCE

### Beginning Country & Western

Wed. Sept 15, 22, 29, Oct 6, 13 6pm  
 Wed. Sept 15, 22, 29, Oct 6, 13 7:30pm

### Advanced Country & Western

Wed. Oct 20, 25, Nov 3, 10, 17 6pm

### Jitterbug

Thurs. Sept 23, 30, Oct 7, 14, 21 6pm  
 Wed. Oct 20, 25, Nov 3, 10, 17 7:30pm

### Ballroom Dance

Tues. Sept 28, Oct 5, 12, 19, 26 6pm

Registration Begins Sept 6th  
 in the University PLUS Craft Center  
 MSC Basement Level

## AEROBICS

### Beginning Aerobics

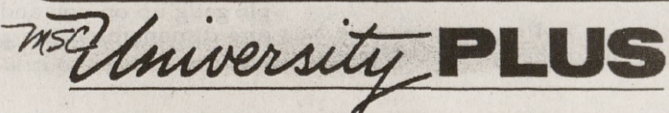
\*M/W Sept 6 - Dec 1  
 5:30-6:30pm \$30/student

\*T/Th Sept 7 - Dec 2  
 5:30-6:30pm \$30/student

\*T/Th Sept 7 - Dec 2  
 6:45-7:45pm \$30/student

Registration Begins Aug 30th  
 in the University PLUS Craft Center  
 MSC Basement Level

Located in the MSC Basement Level - University PLUS Craft Center - 845-1631  
 Look for a complete listing of Fall '93 classes in the blue boxes on campus.



A Tradition At Its Best...  
 Call 845-1631