

From the pool to the court

Sophomore Kerrie Patterson directs the Lady Aggie attack

By JAMIE BURCH
THE BATTALION

Before sophomore Kerrie Patterson, a point guard on the Texas A&M Women's Basketball Team, discovered her love for hoops, she spent her summers not on the basketball court but in the swimming pool.

"The first thing I really liked was swimming," Patterson said. "That was my sport when I was really young. I played basketball and I was okay at it, but I would swim every summer at the University of Houston."

Even though Patterson spent the majority of her youth underwater, she discovered her love of basketball through her peers.

"I started playing when I was in the third grade," Patterson said. "I was always a tomboy. Growing up, I always played with boys. That was the sport to play, so that's what we did."

Patterson has since progressed to a higher level than that of her youth. She has gone from the black tops of Houston, to the hardwood of G. Rollie White.

Much of Patterson's first year at A&M was spent viewing the game from the bench. As a freshman, Patterson had the difficult task of playing behind senior point guard, Lisa Branch, who holds numerous school records, including total points (1,939), assists (795), and steals (309). Off the bench, Patterson averaged just seven minutes and two points per game.

Patterson said the experience of playing behind Branch helped her game.

"I learned a lot from just watching Lisa," Patterson said. "I learned what to do and what not to do. I tried to pick up things about the game while watching her."

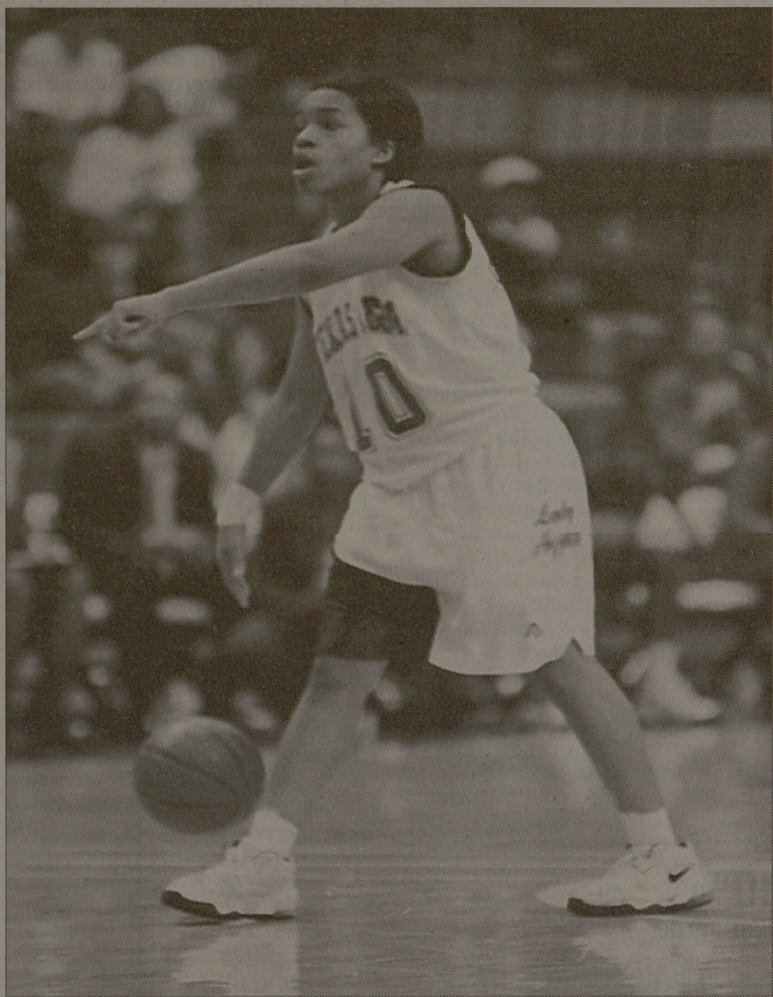
"She was a leader. You had no choice but to follow her because she was always doing something good. She just made every one around her better."

Because Patterson played behind an All-American her first year, Head Coach Candi Harvey contributes Patterson's slow start to limited time on the court.

"I probably did Kerrie a disservice last year by not playing her more," Harvey said. "But it was hard to take Branch off the floor. Experience-wise, Kerrie's a freshman point guard and it's taken her awhile to adjust."

Receiving the starting nod the last five games, Patterson has struggled, averaging five points, 4.8 assists, 2.6 rebounds and four turnovers per game.

Looking past the numbers, Patterson said she must get the job done and not make any excuses for her performance.



Amy Dunlap, THE BATTALION

Sophomore point guard Kerrie Patterson became the director of the Lady Aggie offense after All-American Lisa Branch graduated.

"I have to make the best of the situation," Patterson said. "As far as experience is concerned, I'm like a freshman because I received little playing time last year. Mentally, I'm expected to be a sophomore or an upperclassman."

"It's a no win situation. I have to do it or I'll be sitting down."

Though she admitted Harvey can press her hard in practice, Patterson said she knows it will only aid her play.

"She (Harvey) pushes me just as much as she pushes (Christy) Lake and Natalie (Tucker)," Patterson said. "She's always on the point guard because they're supposed to direct things on the floor."

"She won't let me back down. It's good because it will carry over into life. I won't let a situation beat me."

Contrary to Patterson's win or lose attitude, senior guard Lana Tucker said Patterson helps lighten the mood of the team in the locker room and on the court.

"She's the goofiest person on the team," Tucker said. "She's constantly making jokes and dancing around the locker room. She puts

the fun back into the game. Everyone can be so serious on the court and then Kerrie pops a joke to make everyone laugh."

"I think that's so important at this level. It becomes so much like a job, but you still want to keep the fun in the game."

Unlike her predecessor, Patterson has no aspirations for the newly founded professional women's basketball leagues. The five-foot-eight-inch Patterson said she will close this chapter of her life once her collegiate days are finished.

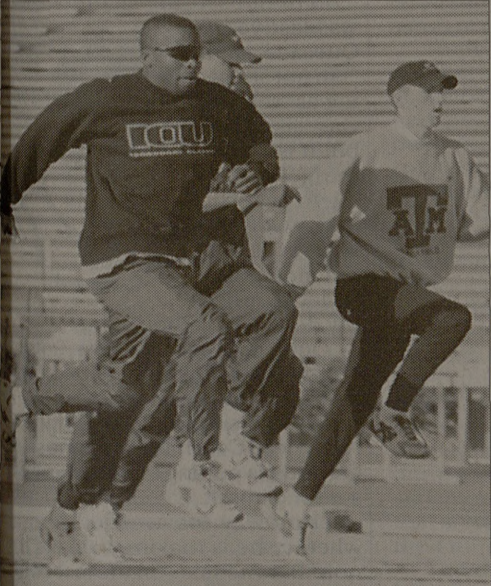
"I think if the WNBA (Women's National Basketball Association) or the ABL (American Basketball League) would have been created earlier on, it would have been an aspiration of mine," Patterson said. "It would have been something that I would have thought about more."

"It never was part of my agenda. I think the leagues are great for women's basketball, but it's not something that I want to do."

Although she still has two years left of eligibility, Patterson said she will be ready for a change when it is all said and done.

Aggies bring home gold, records

STAFF AND WIRE REPORTS



Tim Moog, THE BATTALION

Sophomore Michael Price leads the men's track team during practice at the A&M track.

OKLAHOMA CITY—The Texas A&M Men's and Women's Track and Field Teams definitely did not come back empty-handed from the 23rd annual Sooner Indoor Relays this weekend.

The Aggies brought back four first-place finishes and a pair of school records. Senior Teri Fojtik won the high jump and sophomore Mike Lowrance won the shot put with a career-best throw of 56-7 1/4. Senior Russell Nuti picked up a gold, with a throw of 51-11 3/4 in the weight throw and sophomore Mike Price rounded out the bunch with a leap for gold in the long jump.

"Overall, we had a solid meet, and I thought we made some improvement from last week," A&M Head Coach Ted Nelson said. "But we still have a long way to go before we're ready for the conference indoor meet."

Nuti and sophomore Kelli Schrader both set A&M records in the weight throw. Nuti outdistanced Rob Graf's previous record of 39-1 3/4 set in 1988, and Schrader edged out Lydia Herrera's former mark of 40-5 set in 1996.

"Russell Nuti continues to show improvement in his technique and should be a factor in the weight throw at the conference indoor meet," Nelson said.

"Mike Price was impressive in the long jump and looks ready to jump even further than he did. Teri Fojtik had her best meet in some time and really looked solid."

"Mike Lowrance won his first meet and it was against a very solid field of shot putters."

*Nominate someone special for
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Attend one of the following mandatory informational meetings:

Tuesday, January 28, 8:30 p.m., 707 Rudder

*If you have any questions, please call
The Parents' Weekend Committee at 845-3051*

Emergency Contraception

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PHI ETA SIGMA SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS

Phi Eta Sigma National Honor Society will this year award \$99,000 in graduate and undergraduate scholarships and awards to selected members of Phi Eta Sigma across the nation. There are \$2,000 awards for seniors who plan to enter graduate or professional schools in Fall 1997. There are \$1,000 awards that are to be given to juniors and sophomores for the Fall of 1997.

Any eligible member of Phi Eta Sigma who is interested in applying for one of the awards or scholarships should go by cubicle 9 in the Koldus Building and obtain a scholarship application. The deadline is February 26, 1997. The completed application should be returned to the cube by the deadline. If you have any questions contact Hosam (847-3097) or Dr. Curtis Lard (845-4746).



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Delta Gamma, a women's Fraternity, provides opportunities for:

- friendship
- beginning something new
- a traditional heritage shared with women internationally
- emphasis on scholastic achievement
- leadership development & leadership positions
- philanthropic work/community service
- a sisterhood of fun and many memories
- lifetime membership... and much more!



Attention all undergraduate women students at Texas A&M... **Delta Gamma is coming to campus!**

Join us at an Open House Information Party on Wednesday, February 5, in the Clayton Williams Alumni Center (off of Main Campus & George Bush). Choose the party time most convenient for you: 6-7:30 p.m. or 8-9:30 p.m.

We are excited to become a new organization on campus and look forward to sharing Delta Gamma with you! See you February 5-8!

Stop by the Delta Gamma information/registration table in the Memorial Student Center all day January 30-31 & February 3-5. If you have questions, contact the Student Activities Office.

Come sail with us and catch the Delta Gamma wave!