

STEPPING INTO THE SPOTLIGHT

Sophomore Chimika Carter is back for a run at the NCAA's

By **TRAVIS HARSCH**
Staff writer

Most athletes have a hard time making an impact during their freshman years. Getting adjusted to the glare of the college sports spotlight usually has its effect on athletes in their first season on campus. But with every rule, there are exceptions, and Chimika Carter, a sophomore on the Texas A&M Women's Track Team, is one of the biggest.

In her first season, Carter qualified for the NCAA championships in the 100-meter hurdles. She has already established herself among A&M's all-time elite in the triple jump, and has the fourth-fastest 100-meter hurdles time in Aggie history at 13.42. And the truly impressive thing about her is she is just starting to get a feel for things, coach Ted Nelson said.

"She's always had the talent, but I think the mental aspect will be a big improvement for her," Nelson said. "It's hard for those kids (freshmen) to line up and imagine being able to compete with these people that are two or three years older."

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TED NELSON
HEAD TRACK COACH

Carter said she did seem overwhelmed at times last season.

"I thought, especially being a freshman, that I really didn't have a chance to make it to nationals and compete," Carter said.

Assistant Coach Abe Brown said Carter will have a better season this spring because she is used to the longer season and heavier practices of college.

"It was hard for her last year, coming in with a workload that was a lot more than what she was used to," Brown said. "She was broken down a lot, with the basic wear and tear. This year I think she'll hold up and be able to contribute strongly."

Senior Adrien Sawyer Carter will be more successful this season, with a year of competition behind her.

"Last year, she was a freshman, and now she has a feel for things," Sawyer said. "She has experience in the college area, and I think she's got the hang of things this year."

Even with her ability to score points for the team, Nelson said Carter also contributes with her intangibles.

"She's really a solid person, she brings a lot of stability to some of our younger athletes, even though she's only a sophomore herself," Nelson said.

Brown said he believes Carter gives the team versatility.

"She brings a winning attitude to our program, she's very talented in more than just one event," Brown said. "She's a very accomplished hurdler, and is going to get much, much better, she's also a very strong long jumper and triple jumper."

After last year's success and a better taste for what to expect, Carter has set her goals high for this season.

"I want to make it to nationals in the 100 (-meter) hurdles and in one of the jumps, preferably the long jump," Carter said.

With the way she has been going, anything is possible.



RYAN ROGERS/THE BATTALION

Sophomore **Chimika Carter** is the latest athlete to join the ranks of A&M's elite.

RUNNING THE ROAD OF GLO

1997 National Champion Toya Jones is ready for a re

By **AL LAZARUS**
Staff writer

Everybody loves a winner.

This phrase accurately sums up society's views toward people who are the best at what they do. Many times though, people try their hardest and do not win, but still receive praise and recognition. Many athletes realize this, and are comforted by it, knowing that even if they do not win, they might still be admired by many.

But do not count Texas A&M track and field star Toya Jones as one of these athletes. Jones has won at every level of competition he has competed at, and does not plan on changing his winning tradition anytime soon.

Jones, a 6-foot-2-inch, 190-pound junior, was a member of the Aggie national champion 400-meter relay team last year, and is poised to help defend the title. In addition to the NCAA championships, Jones and teammates junior Michael Price, senior Billy Fobbs and Danny McCray won every other 400-meter relay they participated in last year, which included the ultra-competitive, high-profile Penn Relays, as well as the Texas Relays and Big 12 Championships.

"We were always comfortable with each other," Jones said, "and we're always confident."

Jones said that last year's confidence has carried over to this year, despite the loss of McCray to graduation.

"We had a lot of backups last year, so we feel confident that we will be able to replace him," Jones said.

Being around other talented runners in practice everyday has been helpful to Jones.

"We all compete hard against each other in practice," he said.

In fact, Jones says that Price is the best athlete he has ever competed against. Price returns the favor.

"Toya gives us a chance to be consistent, we know we can count on him to come through," Price said.

Jones' accomplishments in the 400-meter relay last year are made even more impressive by the fact that he does not have the opportunity to practice much in the fall, because he is busy performing his duties as a safety on the Texas A&M Football Team. When football season is over, Jones still can not concentrate solely on the 400-meter relay, as he also participates in the long jump, triple jump and 55-, 100- and 200-meter dashes.

Winning is nothing new for Toya Jones. His illustrious career at Refugio High School included winning 13 gold medals at four state meets. He also set class 3A state records in the long jump, 100-meter dash and 200-meter dash. Jones said he feels that high school competition helped prepare him for competition on the col-



PHOTO COURTESY: SPORTS

Junior **Toya Jones** is fighting for a second national

legiate level.

"Coming out of high school, I felt I was wanted to be," Jones said.

A winner is often considered to be a role model to those around him, and Jones is no exception.

"Winning the national championship last year, the 4-by-100 sort of made his role as a model trainer, because he's a guy who's won the national championship," coach Ted Nelson said.

Price said he agrees with Nelson.

"With all the high school records he has set, college success, many of the team members look up to Toya," he said.

As Toya Jones looks ahead to this year's season, he can not help but feel confident.

"I'll be running the second leg (of the 400-meter relay) again, and I know we can win," he said.

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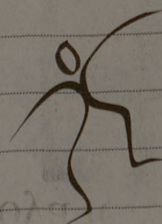
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