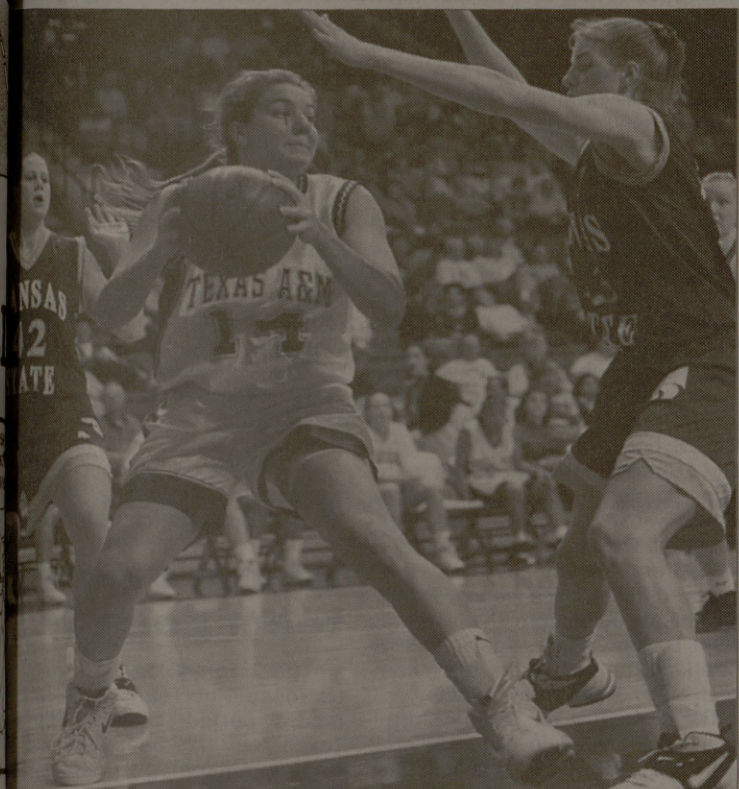


Women's team leaves G. Rollie with a bang

Alexander's 33 points, Tarkington's 11 rebounds, 14 assists lead A&M past Kansas St., 81-76



MIKE FUENTES/THE BATTALION

Sophomore Prissy Sharpe drives to the basket against Kansas St. last night.

By MICHAEL TAGLIANTI
Staff writer

It was said that Alexander the Great cried when he realized he couldn't conquer the world. Wednesday night a different Alexander was doing the conquering, and it was the Kansas State Wildcats who were doing the crying. Sophomore forward Kera Alexander scored a career high 33 points to lead the Texas A&M Women's Basketball Team to a 81 to 76 victory over the KSU Wildcats at G. Rollie White Coliseum.

On a night when the last women's basketball game would ever be played in G. Rollie, Alexander turned in a performance for the ages. Alexander's 33 points was the second highest scoring performance ever by an Aggie female basketball player in G. Rollie White's history (Evelyn Sanders scored 35 points against SMU in 1987).

The last game in G. Rollie was an exciting one, as KSU rushed out to a 9-0 lead, only to see that Aggies fight back and cut KSU's lead to 39-38 at the half. A&M's pressure defense forced two turnovers to start the first half, resulting in two Prissy Sharpe layups and a three point lead. A&M would never trail again

in the game. With 1:32 left in the game, Sharpe hit a free throw to complete a three-point play and put the Aggies up by six at 77-71.

KSU was able to close the gap to one with a three-pointer by Wildcat guard Kim Woodlee, and a layup by Angie Finkes. Alexander was fouled and hit two free throws to extend the lead back to three with 20 seconds left in the game. KSU was unable to connect on two three-point shots, and Sharpe was fouled when she grabbed the rebound. Sharpe sank both of her free throws to complete the scoring and give the Aggies a win.

Texas A&M Coach Candi Harvey said G. Rollie might have had something to do with the two three point shots that KSU missed down the stretch.

"I think G. Rollie took over at that point, and maybe the Gods of basketball went to our side right there," Harvey said.

Harvey said she was happy with the way the Aggies fought back after getting down early.

"We showed good poise in the first half to keep it close, and give us a chance to get our transition game going in the second half which was very

effective against them," Harvey said. Harvey said she was impressed with KSU's team.

"They are very very scrappy and hard nosed, and we were very fortunate to get out of this with a win. Kansas State did a great job on offense of executing, probably as good as anyone has done all year

"I think G. Rollie took over at that point, and maybe the Gods of basketball went to our side right there."

Candi Harvey
Women's Basketball Coach

long," Harvey said.

KSU Coach Deb Patterson said she was impressed with Alexander.

"It's not necessarily pretty, but she competes hard and she's smart enough to take advantage of every opportunity she has," Patterson said. "I thought she had a good all around game defensively and certainly on the offensive end. She was just phenomenal."

Alexander said that she has been trying to be more aggressive, but the credit for her performance belongs to her teammates.

"I've been trying to be more aggressive all year, but in some games different things are open. In this game the post game was open; that was just what they were leaving open so I was more aggressive because that was my responsibility. I'm the one who scored 33 points, but look at all the good passes I got. I just happened to be the one who put the ball in the hole."

Alexander's career night almost overshadowed a great performance by junior point guard Kim Tarkington. Tarkington had four points, 14 assists, 11 rebounds, and two steals on the night.

Besides Alexander, two other Aggies scored in double figures as Sharpe had 15 points, and Amy Yates had 13 points.

KSU was led by Finkes with 25 points and 12 rebounds. Three other Wildcats scored in double figures as Brit Jaconson had 13 points, and Nicky Ramage and Jenny Coalson each scored 10.

The Aggies next game is Saturday in Waco against Baylor at 7 p.m.

Women's swimming and diving team in town for Aggie Invitational meet

By MICHAEL TAGLIANTI
Staff writer

The Texas A&M Women's Swimming and Diving Team will host the Aggie Invitational today at the Student Recreation Center Natatorium. The Aggies are coming off a Big 12 meet where they placed third overall behind Nebraska and Texas.

As the swimming season comes to a close, swimmers start to focus all their energy on qualifying for the NCAA Championships. In order to qualify, a

"We had some good swims last weekend, but some people are kind of on the bubble as far as making the cut," Wagner said.

Coach Wagner said he felt that the team's taper was a little off last week, causing some of the swimmers to be tired. He said that the extra week of taper training will help the swimmers achieve faster times this weekend.

"I felt that as a team, we weren't rested enough, and more rest will only help us," Wagner said.

Sophomore Monica Stroman said



Wagner

"We had some good swims last weekend, but some people are on the bubble as far as making the cut."

the extra rest could not hurt.

"More rest can't do us any harm, and I think this meet will be more relaxed than the last one,"

said Stroman.

Right now A&M has a few swimmers who have consideration times, but do not have automatic qualifying times. One such swimmer is senior All-American Stacie Karnes. Karnes said she is looking to qualify for the NCAAs at the Aggie Invitational.

"I'm kind of on the bubble whether I'm going to go or not, so I just need to swim faster this weekend," Karnes said.

The Aggie Invitational starts Thursday and runs through Saturday.

Aggies host Big 12 Championships

By PHILIP W. PETER
Staff writer

The defining characteristic of a team is its work ethic. And although the Texas A&M Men's Swimming and Diving Team is 5-6 headed into the Big 12 Conference Championship at the Student Recreation Center this weekend, Coach Mel Nash said their work ethic has been their strength this year.

"Normally, in any group of athletes, you'll have a bell-curve work ethic," Nash said. "You'll have some that try to get away with doing the least they can. Even if it's just one or two that slack off, you always seem to have them. But we didn't have a single one this year. Even guys who in the past might have fallen into that category have gone to being the hardest workers in the world."

"Our bell curve just kind of dropped off in the middle. Nobody was backing off at all," Nash said. "For my assistant Jay Holmes and I, it has just been a joy to coach this crew all year."

That work ethic has made sophomore Devin Howard confident his team will perform well this weekend.

"I think with the way everyone is swimming right now we're going to do really well," Howard said. "Everyone has been looking great in the water and Mel has been pumping us up really well. This weekend, if we stay focused on how we're supposed to do as a team and as individuals, I think we'll come together and swim well."

According to junior captain Jerrod Kappler, staying focused on individual performance is the key to maintaining team focus.

"We're not focusing on placement," Kappler said. "Although that's something that's in the back of our minds, that's just the wrong way to approach a meet."

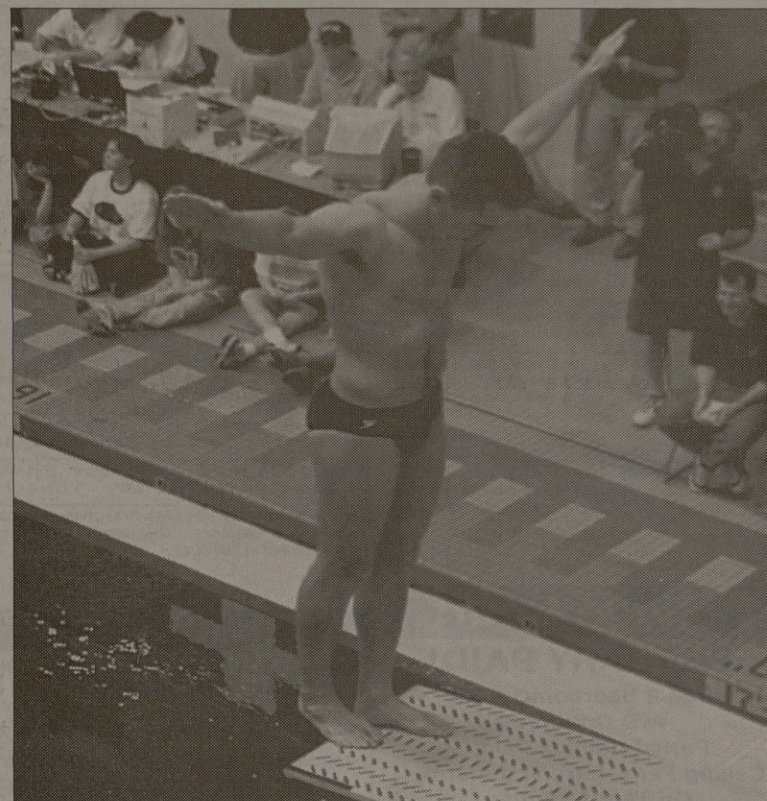
"We're just expecting everyone to focus on himself and do what he has to do to swim his best. We're just going to concentrate on swimming our races and if we do what's right, then the place will come and so will the times."

Nash said the team seems focused and looks good in the water.

"I think we're ready to swim well," Nash said. "We'll fight, claw and scratch for every thing we get, but we're going to let the chips fall where they may as far as placement goes. The biggest thing we're going for is getting guys to the NCAA (Championships in Auburn, Ala.)"

Nash said there is no true home-pool advantage, but being at home in the Rec Center helps swimmers stay focused.

"This is one of the top facilities in the nation," Nash said, "and most schools get excited to come in and swim in a facility of this caliber. Having guys sleeping in their own beds helps to keep them in their comfort zone. And I think the home crowd can help us a lot."



RYAN ROGERS/THE BATTALION

Junior Mark Naftanel and the rest of the Texas A&M Men's Swimming and Diving team will have the advantage of competing at their home pool.

Kappler said swimming at home makes the meet seem like a regular day.

"We swim here every day for five hours so it's real nice," Kappler said. "Plus, most of the guys on the team have already had two conference meets here so it's just a run-of-the-mill kind of thing."

The meet begins this morning and ends Saturday. Events will be all day each day.



RYAN ROGERS/THE BATTALION

Adrien Sawyer has broken three A&M records and qualified four times for the NCAA Indoor Championships this season.

Yo, ADRIEN

Senior Adrien Sawyer steps into new role for Texas A&M Women's Track and Field

By MICHAEL FERGUSON
Staff writer

At the end of last year's track and field season, Texas A&M lost three key members of its women's team. This left the team without an established leader and in somewhat of a state of disarray.

Enter Adrien Sawyer. The senior stepped up and assumed the role of team leader and hasn't looked back since.

"I knew I would have a greater responsibility being the only senior runner," Sawyer said. "I just had to prepare my mind for it."

Sawyer, from Lubbock, is having by far the best season of her career, and the outdoor season has not yet begun. She has already amassed three school records, three NCAA automatic qualifications and one provisional qualification heading into the Big 12 Indoor Conference Championships this weekend.

Sawyer became familiar with success in track and field at an early age, and even then had aspirations of reaching her current level of success.

"I've always wanted to continue

doing it (competing in track) because I knew I had a talent for it early," Sawyer said. "I had a dream of competing through college and beyond."

And compete she did.

While at Frenship High School in Lubbock, Sawyer earned prep All-American honors and was a state qualifier in the long jump and triple jump. She then went on to compete at Odessa Junior College where she earned JUCO All-American honors in both the long jump and triple jump on her way to a second-place finish in the long jump at the national indoor and outdoor meets.

Fortunately for Texas A&M, Sawyer chose to continue her career as an Aggie. While under the guidance of Coach Ted Nelson, Sawyer finely tuned her skills in the jumps and developed into one of the best hurdlers in the storied history of Texas A&M track and field.

In only two seasons at Texas A&M, she has earned All-American honors five times, and with her performance this indoor season, should add to that total.

Sophomore Chimika Carter certainly appreciates the benefits of

Adrien's presence on the team.

"She's been a big influence because she's one of our upperclassmen now, so she helps us out a lot, especially the young hurdlers like me, Kelly (Turner) and the other freshmen that we've had come in," Carter said.

The transition to a leadership role is not always a smooth one. It re-

"I knew I would have a greater responsibility being the only senior runner."

— Adrien Sawyer

quires adjustments in mentality and attitude. Nelson said Sawyer responded to her enhanced role on the team with ease.

"She really has stepped up her leadership role a lot and become a lot more mature as a leader," Nelson said. "She's not one of those vocal leaders that's a hollerer or screamer.

She just goes about her business and kind of leads by deeds."

However, according to Carter, Sawyer sometimes leads by more than just deeds.

"She keeps me in check a lot because a lot of times I want to slack off and she won't let me," Carter said. "She's like, 'You can do more than that.' Especially when we're in the weight room. She really stays after me."

Nelson said Sawyer realized the team's need for a leader and took the responsibility without any hesitation. "She's the kind of athlete that takes on the role on her own rather than you suggesting that she does that," Nelson said.

Sawyer's future looks much the same as her present — extremely bright. Sawyer, speaking about her future goals, said she would like to continue her track and field career after graduation.

"I see myself as the next Jackie Joyner-Kersey," Sawyer said. "I look up to her a lot."

With the accolades and accomplishments already achieved by Adrien Sawyer, that certainly appears to be a reachable goal.