

DUO

Continued from Page 9

fateful trip to Ames, Iowa, Louisiana basketball fans had to deal with it all over again.

King passed it all up to go to Texas A&M, a school that had not had a winning season since 1994.

Louisiana basketball experienced a case of déjà vu as King took Fizer's

same path.

The freshman shooting guard quickly stepped to the forefront of the Aggie line-up and became the team's most formidable offensive threat.

On Jan. 22, King had 17 points and nine rebounds to lead A&M to an upset of No. 12 Oklahoma State. From that point on, there was no doubt he was the biggest impact freshman in the 2000 Big 12 Conference.

On his way to Freshman of the Year honors, King shattered Fizer's freshman records, scoring 16.9 points per game and 468 points.

After the final game of the regular season, a win over Nebraska, King was anticipating the opportunity to call Fizer, one of his "best friends," and brag about breaking his records. To the A&M freshman, that was more important than any

Big 12 honors he received.

"Records they come and they go so it really doesn't matter, but it sure feels good," King said after scoring 30 points in the win over Nebraska.

After that there was no doubt that King had all the ingredients to be a Division I hoops standout, but could he be a Fizer?

In the wake of an eight-win season, A&M coach Melvin Watkins is hop-

ing King can have the same transformation effects on the team during the next two years.

"He broke Fizer's freshman record," Watkins said. "Now, can he be a Fizer — we'll take it."

King shows no signs of letting his coach down as Watkins builds an effective supporting cast that will prevent teams from focusing only on King.

The pair both took a gamble on underdog programs that appeared to be a terminal sentence to the back pages of basketball sports sections. In a few short months each brought the school onto the front pages and into the highlight reels.

Now in the middle of "March Madness" two questions remain: How can Fizer take Iowa State and will he continue to follow in his footsteps?

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