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SECTION

THE BATTALION

nage that has 2001 TEXAS A&M BASKETBALL By DOUG FUENTES

The 2001-2002 Texas A&M men's basketball team begins its two-game exhibition season against Australia's Team ezybonds at 7 p.m. at Reed Arena.

The Aggies are anxious to return to the court and improve on last season's 10-20 record that included a 3-13 record in Big 12 play.

"I think we're excited about starting off again," said A&M men's basketball coach Melvin Watkins. "Any time you come off of a losto surprise ing season, if you have the right type of players, they want to get out here and prove that they are winners. So, I hope this group is no different than that.

> This season's team will be relatively young but not short on experience.

> > A&M returns four starters and nine lettermen from last season. Despite this, the Aggies are among the youngest teams in the Big 12 with only one

senior on the roster. Of the 15 players on the roster, nine either are freshmen or sophomores.

Still, 12 team members have at least one year of Division I college basketball experience.

The Aggies will again rely on the play of junior shooting guard Bernard King. King, who has been a fixture in the starting lineup since his freshman season, ranked third in the Big 12 with an 18.0 scoring average and was listed among the league's top 10 in assists (4.8), steals (1.5) and threepoint field goals (2.1).

'He was kind of thrust into that [leadership] roll probably a little unfairly," Watkins said. "But we had no choice, and I think he's done a pretty good job."

t 2-14, the Texas A&M women's basketball team did not have the kind of conference season most would hope for. This season, the Aggies will try to improve on their 2-14 conference record, but they will have to do it with a young team that is now without one of the most decorated players in A&M women's basketball.

Jaynetta Saunders, who is the first Aggie on a Women's Professional Basketball Association roster, is only the second Aggie to score 1,000 points in her career. Saunders accomplished the feat in just two years with the Aggies.

She set the career record for average points, with an 18.6 points per game average dur-

ing her two years at A&M. 'She was just instant offense,' said A&M women's basketball coach Peggie Gillom. "[This season], we have more than one person who can score.'

Gillom is in her fourth year at the helm of the Aggie squad. Gillom was an assistant with the Houston Comets before coming to A&M.

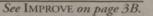
Senior guard LaToya Rose and sophomore guard Toccara Williams will team up in 2001-2002 to replace the offense that was lost with Saunders' graduation.

Rose averaged 9.6 points per game for the Aggies, and was named to the All-tournament team at last year's Aggie Invitational.

Williams was a standout freshman for the Aggies during the 2000-2001 season. Williams started every game last season and set the school freshman record for assists,

SOPHOMORE **TOCCARA WILLIAMS**

See YOUNG on page 3B.



APO, OCA, & TAMU Athletic Dept. Sponsor the "Everyone Bleeds Maroon "Blood Drive! November 12-16, 2001



By BRIAN RUFF THE BATTALION Ags look to improve on Big 12 record

Page 1B



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Live! w/ special guest Geoft Spahr \$2.50 Chuggers All Night Doors open @ 8:00

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Vet School-Lounge Mon.-Fri. 10:00-4:00

Rudder-Bus Mon.-Fri. 9:45-5:45

Sbisa-Bus Mon.-Thurs.-12:00-7:00 Fri.-12:00-5:45

Rec Center-Lobby Mon.-Thurs.-3:00-9:00 Fri.-11:00-5:00

Duncan-Bus Mon.-Wed. 12:30-7:30

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