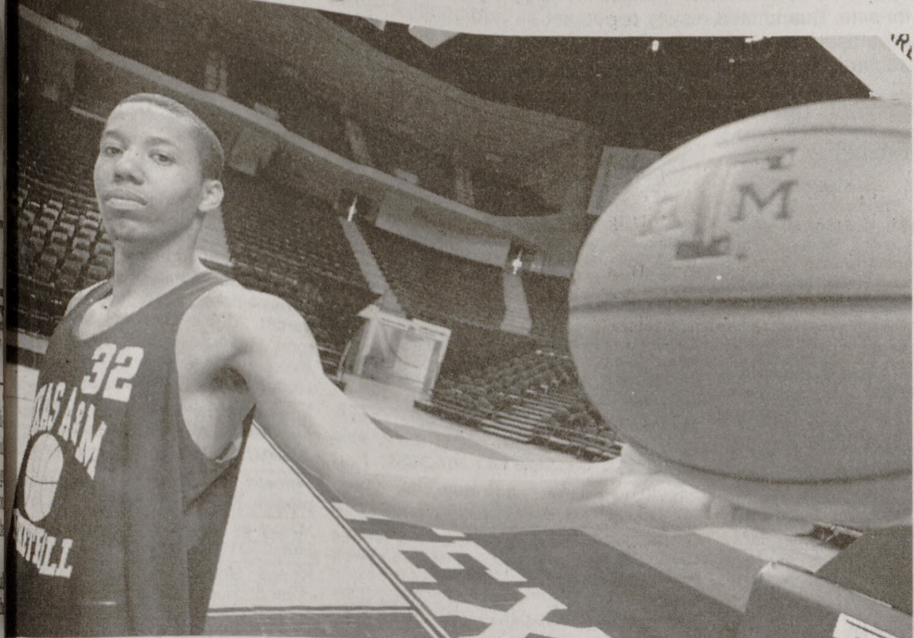


SPORTS

THE BATTALION

Page 1B • Thursday, January 23, 2003

King reflects on career, approaches records



RANDAL FORD • THE BATTALION

By Dallas Shipp
THE BATTALION

When Texas A&M men's basketball head coach Melvin Watkins arrived in Aggieland in 1998, he knew he had a daunting task ahead of him — to revitalize the Aggie basketball program at a school where football is a religion.

Watkins knew the player he needed to help make the turnaround was Bernard King, one of the nation's top 50 recruits from the small town of Gibsland, La., which has a population of around 1,600.

"When we got here, we needed to upgrade our talent and that was our first challenge," Watkins said. "That's not always easy when you come into a program that's been losing, but (King) was one of those kids we were able to convince to come in."

King said he knew when he came that it was not going to be easy, but he

wanted to be part of something special and be one of the key leaders who turned the program around at A&M.

"I heard A&M was a football school," King said. "But I wanted to come in and help Coach Watkins improve this program. My goal was to come in here and be the start of that."

King's mother, Vernita King, thought coming to A&M would be challenging for Bernard because so much pressure would be on his shoulders to prove himself as a freshman, but she knew that he was used to proving himself, on and off the court.

"Bernard was a scraggly little fella," she said. "When he played AAU (Amateur Athletic Union) basketball he was overlooked because he was kind of little, but once he had his first chance to show what he could do, everyone was sold on him."

As an eighth grader, King played AAU basketball with teammates who were juniors and seniors in high school. One day, one of the guards

Bernard King

RECORD WATCH:

| | |
|----------------|----|
| Points needed: | |
| A&M | 28 |
| Big XII | 80 |



fouled out and the coach was forced to play King. As the game came to a close, King showed what he could do.

"He hit three three-pointers in a row and we won the game. After that he never stopped playing," Vernita said.

He has not stopped playing since, and his mother has never stopped watching him play.

Throughout his career at A&M, King's mother, who often works nights, has been to nearly every home game.

After getting off work at 7 a.m.,

See King on page 3B

Track teams heading to Houston

By Marcus White
THE BATTALION

After an impressive showing earlier this week at the Oklahoma Track Classic, the Texas A&M men's and women's track and field teams face tough competition as they travel to the Yeoman Field House to compete in the Houston Indoor Opener Saturday.

Last week, the Aggies collected eight gold medals and saw strong performances from a host of A&M athletes.

The high-flying tandem of Ellison Collins and Chad Walters accounted for two of the Aggies' eight gold medals, putting up dominant showings in the men's high jump and pole

vault respectively.

Also posting an extraordinary effort was the entire men's 3,000 meter run team, which swept the event's honors.

The Aggie women also performed well and accounted for five gold medals in the high jump, long jump, pole vault, mile run and shotput competitions.

Freshman Abby Ruston placed first in the women's shotput to garner her first collegiate indoor medal. A&M track and field coach Ted Nelson told Assistant Media Relations Director Brad Marquardt that Ruston is an Aggie newcomer primed to make an instant contribution.

Marquardt said Nelson expressed excitement about

shotputter Abby Ruston.

"She was a state champion in both the shotput and discus last spring, and I think she'll contribute in the shot immediately during the indoor season," Marquardt said.

The Aggie men, ranked 15th nationally among Division IA schools, face stiff competition this weekend against some of the nation's best track and field teams, including No. 7 Texas Christian University.

The Horned Frogs earned an impressive six provisional marks this past weekend at the Oklahoma Indoor Classic in Norman.

See Track on page 3B

Men's tennis ready to open season

By Jeff Allen
THE BATTALION

It will be deja vu for the No. 13 Texas A&M men's tennis team when it takes to the court at the A&M Tennis Center Saturday morning. The Aggies are set to start the team portion of the 2003 season against Texas A&M Corpus Christi, Texas Pan-American and Trinity University.

The day-long triple header is reminiscent of a scene that took place a day short of a year ago, when the Aggies took the court to kick off the 2002 season in style by sweeping the three schools in 21 straight sets.

"I think it was a great way to start off the year," said assistant coach Shuon Madden. "It's good to get a few matches under our belt. Basically all Division I tennis teams are competitive, so it's not anything we can look

past, but I look forward to the weekend in that we should be able to build a little confidence after the matches."

This year the Aggie men are hoping to duplicate some of the success that they earned last season.

With four out of six starters returning from last year's team, the men will look to build from a solid showing last year, in which they finished No. 16 in the nation, earning a third consecutive Sweet 16 finish at the NCAA tournament.

After winning the Big 12 in 2001 with a perfect conference record, the Aggies slipped to third in 2002, suffering two conference losses. The Aggies lost to Texas before losing at home to eventual Big 12 champion Baylor University.

"One of our main priorities is always to win the Big 12," Madden said. "It is a very competitive conference so there is really no team you can look past. Baylor, Texas, Tech, and Colorado

See Tennis on page 3B

Earn TAMU Credit • Study Abroad in the Tropical Caribbean SS I - 2003

Field Studies in DOMINICA

More information: 845-0544 Dr. Wharton Rawbaw2@tamu.edu

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY STUDY ABROAD WANTS YOU TO GO AWAY!

- GLOBAL OPPORTUNITIES IN OVER 43 COUNTRIES
- OVER \$300,000 IN SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE
- ENHANCE YOUR JOB OPPORTUNITIES IN TODAY'S GLOBAL MARKET
- LEARN MORE AT STUDY ABROAD 101, 8 DATES & TIMES IN JAN/FEB
- LIMITED SPACE AVAILABLE. APPLY ONLINE TODAY!

STUDYABROAD.TAMU.EDU

Summer European Academy II Summer Session I 2003

- Courses Offered
 - POLS 306 Contemporary Issues: The Evolution of the European Union and the Foundations of the New Europe. From the Declaration of Europe to Euro (3 hrs)
 - POLS 489 Special Topics: Policy, Democracy and the Evolution of the European Union (3 hrs)

studyabroad.tamu.edu

Earn TAMU Credit Study Abroad in Angers, France SS I - 2003 Open to all Majors

For more information: Study Abroad Office Bizzell Hall West - 1st Floor 845-0544 or Dr. Lonnie Jones at LLJones@tamu.edu

Study Agriculture in Australia/New Zealand SS I 26May - 17June AGRO 489/685 - 6 hrs Dr. Mark Hussey Dr. Ed Runge

For more info: Study Abroad Programs Office Bizzell Hall West - 1st Floor Phone: 845-0544

Germany 2003 - Summer II Modernism/Garden History ARTS 350 & LAND 240 Prof. Taeg Nishimoto Prof. Tom Woodfin 06July-10August

For more info: Study Abroad Programs Office Bizzell Hall West - 1st Floor Telephone: 845-0544

Study Psychology in Germany PSYC/KINE 304 - Sports Psychology PSYC 306 - Abnormal Psychology SS I - 25May-30June Dr. Arnold LeUnes - adl@psyc.tamu.edu

For more info: Study Abroad Programs Office Bizzell Hall West - 1st Floor Telephone: 845-0544

Study Environmental Design in the United Kingdom Summer 2003!

Explore the United Kingdom, from St. Paul's Cathedral to quaint "flats" in England, from neighborhood pubs to Edinburgh Castle in Scotland — you'll have the opportunity to sketch, diagram and photograph your way through design history.

- Earn TAMU credit!
- All Majors Welcome!
- Courses Offered:
 - CARC 335 Field Studies in Interdisciplinary Design Theory
 - CARC 311 Field Studies in Design Communication
 - CARC 321 Field Studies in Design Technology
 - CARC 331 Field Studies in Design Philosophy

http://studyabroad.tamu.edu

South Africa Study Abroad in one of the most diverse & attractive tourist destinations in Africa!

Informational Meetings: Fri, Jan. 24, 3:00 pm Mon, Jan. 27, 5:15 pm Wed, Jan. 29, 5:15 pm

Animal Industries Bldg. Ar/nex, ANIN 103-A

Open to all Majors - Limited Spaces Available!

Join Dr. Urs Kreuter as he takes you from the Kruger National Park, to Lake St. Lucia, to Pietermaritzburg, all while earning 6 hours TAMU credit in RLEM and RENR!

Study Abroad Office ~ 845-0544 ~ http://studyabroad.tamu.edu

James Earl Rudder Normandy Program Study WWII and European Politics in France and Germany Summer II, 2003

Courses: HIST 489 World War II, at Home and Abroad POLS 306 European Democracies Since WW II

Study Abroad Programs Office First floor Bizzell Hall West 845-0544 studyabroad.tamu.edu