

SPORTS

THE BATTALION

Page 3 • Friday, March 7, 2003

Antoine has Aggies on the Wright track

A&M boasts one of nation's elite young players

By Dallas Shipp
THE BATTALION

He's only a freshman, but forward Antoine Wright has already made an impact on this year's Aggie basketball squad, which will finish with a .500 record or better for the first time since 1994.

Wright has been one of the biggest factors in revitalizing the pulse of basketball at Texas A&M this year and leads the Aggies (14-12, 6-9 Big 12) with 6.6 rebounds per game and is second in scoring with 15 points per game behind senior guard Bernard King.

The 6-foot-7 forward from San Bernardino, Calif., was ranked the No. 1 prep shooting guard in the nation and the No. 4 overall prospect in the country out of high school last year by ESPN.com after leading

Lawrence Academy in Groton, Mass. to the state championship.

Wright was also a member of the gold medal-winning 2002 USA Basketball Junior World Team, which he said is his most memorable experience as an athlete.

"It's always an honor for anyone to represent their country," Wright said. "Just to be asked to try out was something special."

Athlon rated Wright among the top 10 freshmen in the country and ESPN long-time college basketball analyst Dick Vitale named him a "Diaper-Dandy." As one of the top recruits in the nation, Wright was courted by some of the top basketball programs in the country, including No. 1 Arizona, No. 4 Texas and No. 12 Maryland. So, why did he choose A&M?

Wright's Amateur Athletic Union basketball coach from California, Elvert Perry, said that

he contacted A&M Assistant Coach Lew Hill, who he grew up with in New York, to tell him about Wright.

TEXAS A&M AGGIES VS. OKLAHOMA STATE
Saturday, 12:45 p.m.
Gallagher-Iba Arena
Stillwater, Oklahoma

"I told him I had a kid that's gonna be a great one and they needed to get on him early, which they did," Perry said. "(A&M) recruited him the longest, they were on him as early as his sophomore year and it was an ideal situation. (A&M) had good players, they just needed a great player and he fits right in."

Perry said that he told Wright that anyone could go to a school like Arizona or Texas and play with five or six McDonald's All-

Americans, but it took someone special who could go anywhere and make a difference.

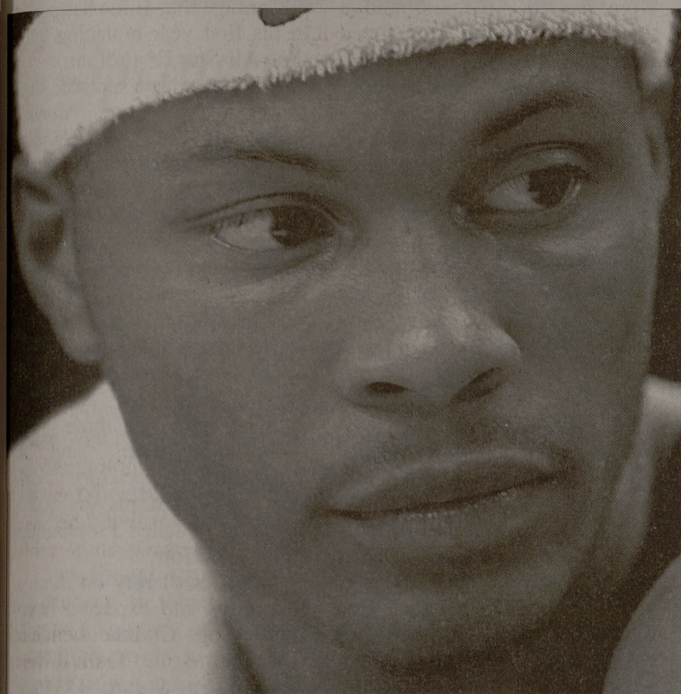
"I told him A&M will not stop him from going to the (NBA), if anything it will help you get into the (NBA)," Perry said. "(A&M) was 12th last year and now they are sixth or seventh, great players can go anywhere and get it done."

Wright said that the coaching staff at A&M was the main reason he chose to play for the Aggies, along with the fact that he would get to start as a freshman.

"At a lot of other schools I would have had to come off the bench," Wright said. "(At A&M) I had the chance to start right away."

With that chance to play early came high expectations,

See **Wright** on page 4



RANDAL FORD • THE BATTALION

A&M freshman Antoine Wright leads the Aggies in rebounds per game and is second on the team in scoring, behind senior Bernard King.

Softball team to spend break in Florida tournament series

By Pete Burks
THE BATTALION

After traveling to play the University of Texas at Arlington only to have its game rained out, the No. 21 Texas A&M softball team will visit the Sunshine State to compete in the Tallahassee Democrat Invitational in Tallahassee, Fla. This will be the fourth tournament the Aggies have played in in as many weekends.

A&M is shooting for its fourth tournament championship in a row. The Aggies will start off the tournament facing the Georgia State Panthers and the Iowa Hawkeyes on Friday night. On Saturday,

they will face the Florida A&M Rattlettes before heading into bracket play Saturday night and Sunday afternoon. National powers Florida State University and University of Michigan may face the Aggies in bracket play.

For Aggie Head Coach Jo Evans, the tournament will present the Aggies with a number of opportunities to improve their play against talented competition.

"I am really looking forward to playing in this tournament," she said. "I know we play Iowa, who's ranked and who has a great program. They've been to the World Series many times, and facing them should provide for a really competitive atmosphere."

The Aggies will face a veteran team in the

Hawkeyes (6-5), led by junior first baseman Amanda Hentges. Hentges has hit an impressive .556 with runners on base.

The Aggies should come into this tournament with momentum, having beaten some talented teams in the Stanford Classic last weekend. The Aggies put away host team No. 11 Stanford University and No. 12 University of Georgia.

A&M junior pitcher Lindsay Wilhelmson led A&M to the tournament victory and was named Big 12 Pitcher of the Week. Wilhelmson was the winning pitcher in three

of the Aggies' four wins last weekend and knocked in the winning runs in the championship game of the Stanford Classic to notch her third win.

"I've just been trying to go out there and trust my defense because I'm not a strikeout pitcher," Wilhelmson said. "I know as long as I'm relaxed and having fun, it will all work out. We should play some great games this weekend and hopefully come back with a few more wins under our belts."

After finishing the tournament in Tallahassee, the Aggies will get to spend their spring break in south Florida, taking on the likes of Florida International, the University of Massachusetts, Florida Atlantic University and Syracuse University in the Florida International Tournament in Miami.



WILHELMSON

Spend your Spring Break with us!



LL Cool J
Friday, March 7, 7 p.m.
Black Heritage Day
sponsored by Kroger



Ashanti



Bon Jovi
Wednesday,
March 12, 7 p.m.



Thursday, March 13, 7 p.m.
Miller Lite presents
Pat Green



Saturday, March 15, 4 p.m.
Rockin' Roadhouse Tour,
featuring
Joe Diffie, Mark Chesnutt
and **Tracy Lawrence**

Wednesday, March 5
Ford presents
Toby Keith

Thursday, March 6
Clay Walker

Saturday, March 8
Phil Vassar and
Jamie O'Neal

Sunday, March 9
Intocable and
Los Tres Amigos,
featuring
Little Joe,
Roberto Pulido
and
Ruben Ramos,
with special
guests
Johnny and
Rocky
Hernandez
Go Tejano Day
sponsored by
Houston Chronicle

Monday, March 10
Clint Black and
Jerry Jeff Walker

Tuesday, March 11
Brooks & Dunn

Friday, March 14
Ray Charles and
Ronnie Milsap

Sunday, March 16
Target presents
Alabama

FORD HIDEOUT HEADLINERS

9:30 p.m. daily (ages 21 and older only)

March 5 - Clay Farmer

March 6 - Luther & The Healers

March 7 - Mel Walters Revue with special guest Patrick Green

March 8 - Dave Alexander and His Big Texas Swing Band

March 9 - Los Desperadoz

March 10 - Jennifer Hanson

March 11 - Emerson Drive

March 12 - Two Tons of Steel

March 13 - Cooder Graw

March 14 - Rodney Foster

March 15 - Pinmonkey

March 16 - Ezra Charles and the Works

Ride the Rodeo METRO Express, sponsored by Ford and Your Texas Ford Dealers,
from 8 locations around Houston. Rodeo METRO Express ticket is
\$2 for ages 13 and older, and FREE for ages 12 and younger.

(Weekday Parking, Monday to Friday, is available on-site at Reliant Park.)

Check out rodeo ticket availability at rodeohouston.com - updated daily.

Rodeo tickets and season passes are
available at ALL Ticketmaster locations, on the Internet at
www.ticketmaster.com, and by phone at 713.629.3700.

2003 HOUSTON LIVESTOCK SHOW AND RODEO™ YOU'VE NEVER SEEN IT LIKE THIS!

For more information:
rodeohouston.com or hlsr.com

Thanks to Our Heritage Partners:
Reliant Energy, Ford, Coca-Cola, Gallery Furniture and Miller Lite

NEW
THE BATTALION
break
continued from page 1
insurance, if possible.
For students who are traveling for spring break, simple measures can be taken to ensure safety. Barone said students should stay together while traveling to popular spring break destinations.
"The biggest mistake students make is not staying in their groups," he said. "That's why people get into trouble." Before leaving, make sure your vehicles are serviced and running well and always know where you are by taking note of the closest city in case of a breakdown, he said.
Barone said that if the car breaks down, pull over to the side of the road, turn the flashers on and wait for a law enforcement official for help. "Police officers, sheriff's deputies and highway patrol officers all have uniform shoulder patches identifying the agencies they serve," he said. "Look at these closely to verify they are police officials."
The number for Texas roadside Assistance, which is the back of all Texas driver licenses, is 1-800-525-5555. Police also said students should let someone they trust know of their arrival and departure times in case of an emergency.
You can't control the conditions of others," Barone said. "But taking these precautions will reduce criminal opportunity and increase your safety as well as enjoyment of your break."

Downtown Bryan
in the Brazos Valley

LOS MORTENOS CAFE
Authentic Mexican Food

LOS MORTENOS CAFE
Authentic Mexican Food

ALION
Chief

High Friday during the fall and spring semesters of University holidays and exam periods at Station, TX 77840. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to THE BATTALION, P.O. Box 11111, Station, TX 77840-1111.
As A&M University in the Division of Student Activities, 014 Reed McDonald Building, Newberry, TX 77840. For advertising information, call 845-0569. Advertising rates: Monday through Friday, \$45-\$200 per copy. For A&M students to pick up a single copy of this page, call 845-0569. For a full rate card, call 845-0569. Charge by Visa, MasterCard, Discover.

Melrose
www.melrose.com